

VANGUARD: Better Care Together

Case study:

Children across the Bay learn the difference between 'Big SICK' and 'Little SICK'



Purpose:

The Beggars Theatre from Millom teamed up with Better Care Together to put on a comedy production called 'SICK' to school children across the Bay. The play helps children learn how to use NHS services appropriately.

The performance also delivers important health and wellbeing messages to children in a way that they can relate to.

Children are encouraged to go home and pass on their learning to their parents/carers.

How it works:

The SICK play was commissioned by Better Care Together and was written and performed by Jakki Moore from the Beggars Theatre in Millom and Gary Bridgens from the Headzuptheatre group in Barrow in Furness.

Primary school children in years three and four from Barrow, Lancaster, Carnforth and Morecambe were invited to attend the performances which took place over two days. The show was hosted at both The Forum in Barrow in Furness and at The Platform in Morecambe.

The performers used stories and songs along with interactive games to engage with the audience, made up of school children and their teachers. The performance involved inviting the pupils onto the stage and asking them to

	<p>decide if an illness was a 'big sick' (when an ambulance needs called) or a 'little sick' (something that can be treated at home such as a cold).</p> <p>The show also concentrated on how to maintain good health through physical activity, healthy eating and preventing the spread of viruses and bacteria through hand washing.</p>
<p>Success so far:</p>	<p>Over 1000 children saw the SICK performance over the two days.</p> <p>A question and answer session at the end of each performance found that the children had absorbed lots of new information; in particular when to use the different health services such as the pharmacy for 'little sick'.</p> <p>The children left the theatre singing the catchy songs from the show, reiterating the effectiveness of educating young people in this way.</p> <p>The feedback from some of the children showed how the fun approach really caught their attention:</p> <p>Emily, year four pupil at Scotforth primary school in Lancaster said: "I really enjoyed it; we didn't just sit and watch we got to join in!"</p> <p>Extremely positive feedback has been received from school teachers following the performance:</p> <p>Lisa Newton, year three teacher at Westgate Primary School in Morecambe said:</p> <p>"The children all loved the performance and were talking about it and singing the songs all the way back to school and for the rest of the day. We talked with the children afterwards about what they had learnt and they were able to tell us loads so it was clearly a worthwhile trip out."</p>
<p>Lessons learnt:</p>	<p>Schools need to be aware of event details as early as possible to encourage attendance.</p> <p>It is important to allow spare time in the running order of the day in case transport bringing school children runs late or breaks down.</p> <p>Venues need to be visited prior to the show day to ensure that they are suitable and to find out whether necessary alternations need to be made.</p> <p>It is very important that teachers and teaching assistants are approached for permission to take photographs.</p>
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