

# Allsorts Report

1999 - 2000

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# Introduction

Allsorts as it is now known originated through a chance meeting one cold, January morning in 1999 between Jess Wood, a volunteer mentor for social services and myself, James Newton, a youth worker with the Young Men's Sexual Health Project. We had within the space of half an hour decided that we were interested in providing 'something' for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people in the Brighton area.

After a great deal of liaison and negotiation with organizations and individuals, the Allsorts Youth Project was born. We have been asked a number of times what made us decide to call ourselves the Allsorts Youth Project. Simply, we were of the opinion that many of the other national lesbian, gay and bisexual youth groups contained the term 'out' in a very dynamic, almost aggressive context. We felt that many young people would find this off-putting; that actually they may just want to explore their sexuality in their own, quiet ways. We also recognised that some young people were desperate to come out in as loud and proud a way as possible: therefore **we** wanted to appeal to all sorts of young people, the ones who had had little formal education as well as the university educated, the homeless as well as the homed, the unemployed as well as the computer programmers.

We eventually decided that the Allsorts Youth Project had two fundamental aims:

- *To engage vulnerable, alienated or marginalized young people in Brighton d Hove and the surrounding area who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or unsure of their sexuality (L&B) and provide them with a variety of support services designed to promote and protect their well being as they emerge into an L&B adult identity.*
- *To do outreach work in the wider community in two ways: firstly by providing workshops for young people in schools and colleges, to promote awareness of L&B issues and to provide positive modelling for L&B young people, secondly, by offering training to people working with young people in the statutory services and voluntary agencies in order to raise awareness, promote good practice and facilitate the creation of safer and more supportive environments for L&B young people in the wider community.*

The first Drop-In session was held at the very end of October 1999, to which 9 young people came along. Allsorts has continued to grow and develop through 2000 and into 2001, to our satisfaction and hopefully to that of the young people. We are looking to diversify our services over time and hope to really become a project that is of national significance to LGB youth work. **We have been** very fortunate to have had a lot of support, but **we** have also worked very hard to ensure our success. Our vision of Allsorts and our commitment helped us through the difficult times and ultimately the young people have proved to us that **we** are providing a very necessary 'something'.

## FUNDING

At the beginning of the project, we begged and borrowed everything from re-usable envelopes to meeting space and we would not have been able to survive this period had we not been offered so much brilliant support from the Young People's Centre ( PACT Community Projects) and the Brighton & Hove Youth and Community Service.

We also received financial support from Brighton and Hove Council, who gave us a Small Grant of £1000 for 1999 and 2000 and a further Community Chest Small Grant of £500 for Pride 2000. Unison also made a donation of £150.

The HIV Prevention Office Small Grants *Scheme* gave us a grant of £5000 for 2000 and have given us further grants of £1350 and £2896 to run residential in 2000 and 2001. Pride made a donation of £500 and finally, we received major funding from the Diana, Princess of Wales, Memorial Fund of £220,180 to run from November 2000 to January 2004.

We'd like to thank everyone who has supported our work.

# REVIEW

## 1999 - 2000

### Autumn/Winter 1999 - 2000

- Training delivered to agencies working with young people
- First *Allsorts* Drop-In session attracts nine young people
- First 1-2-1 sessions take place
- Drop-In averages 6 young people a night

### Spring 2000

- Small grants received from Brighton & Hove Council and HIV Prevention
- Six young men from Allsorts attend the 'Out Under the Stars' residential.
- Four young people elected onto the management committee
- Delivered two anti-homophobia workshops to a group of 23 young people aged 13 - 17 at a youth club in Seaford.
- Drop-In averages 11 young people a night
- *Allsorts* young people take the lead in buying resources for the project.
- Training delivered to Young Peoples Centre Drop-In workers

### Summer 2000

- Delivered an anti-homophobia workshop to a youth club in Polegate with a group of 15 young people aged between 11 and 16.
- Small grant received from Brighton PRIDE community chest
- Allsorts trip to the Devils Dyke
- Drop-In averages 17 young people a night
- Allsorts receive a grant of £220,180 from the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund
- Allsorts helped to facilitate a Youth Space at Brighton Pride 2000
- Barbeque and bonfire on the beach attended by 18 young people
- Training delivered to foster carers

### Autumn/ Winter 2000/ 2001

- Young people begin to develop an Allsorts website
- Project cocoordinator employed
- PRIDE donation from Brighton Cares
- Drop-In averages 18 young people a night
- Small grant received from HIV Small Grants to facilitate two residentials in 2001
- Two youth support workers interviewed and appointed to begin in post in January 2001
- Allsorts receive funding for a Christmas residential to Telscombe Youth Hostel.

# TUESDAY DROP-IN SESSIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Allsorts operated its first Drop-In on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 1999. Seven young women and two young men attended this first Drop-In; the young people ranged in age from 15 to 25. Four of these young people never repeated this first contact. Even so, the Allsorts volunteer workers were very surprised by such a large number of young people on the first night. Minimal advertising had been released and the workers were expecting a maximum of three young people that first evening.

The following part of this report looks at various aspects of the Tuesday Drop-In Sessions. This information was taken from attendance registers and new member record forms (see appendices i and ii). This information has been divided into two separate sections.

### **1. Patterns of Attendance**

### **2. Profile of Allsorts User Group**

Throughout the history of Allsorts, 6 women and 3 men have worked as volunteers in the Drop-In sessions ranging in *age* from 23 to 45. When young people first stated that they wanted to come along to an Allsorts Drop-In one or two of the volunteers with perhaps one of the already attending members would meet the new member at a safe place in central Brighton; somewhere like the Clocktower for example.

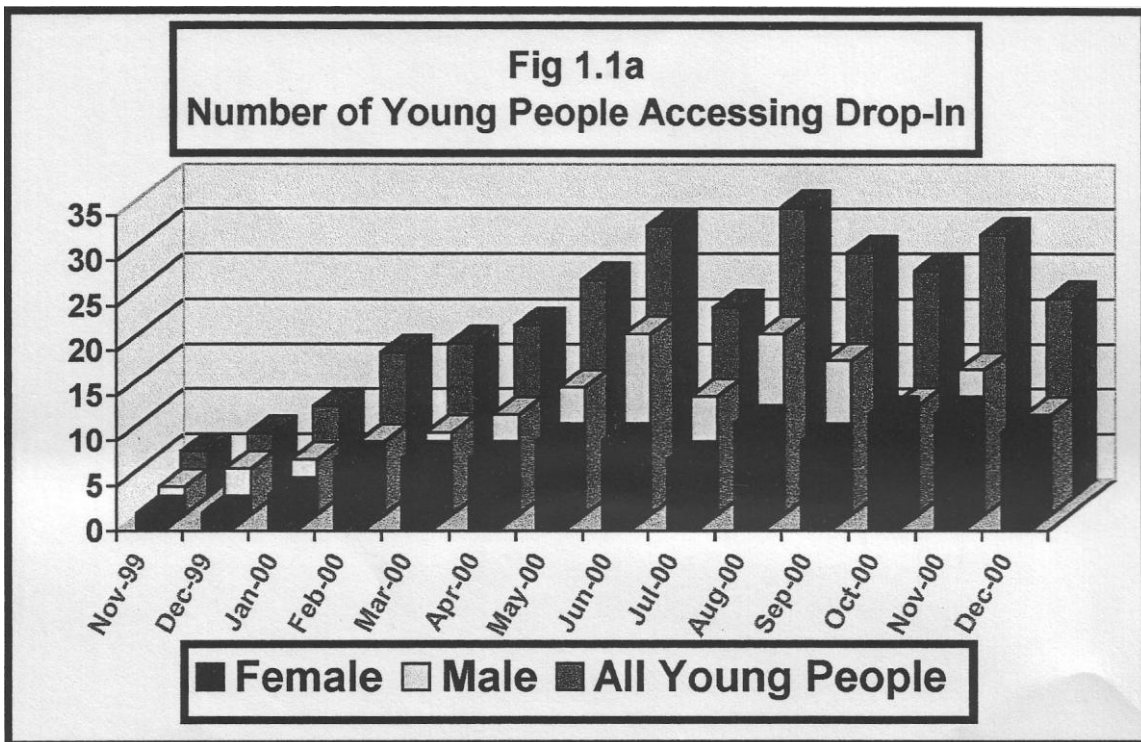
Between October 1999 and December 2000 a total of 92 young people accessed Allsorts drop-In sessions of whom 36 (39%) were young women, and 56 (61%) were young men. When young people first came along to an Allsorts Drop-In session they were asked to fill out a new member record form. It was made clear to young people that they did not have to fill out anything they did not want to, although they **were** strongly encouraged to state their date of birth and the first part of their postcode.

As previously stated, four of the initial nine people who attended the first Drop-In session never repeated their contact. Four of the remaining five formed the first Allsorts core membership group. It is thanks to this group of young people and the five volunteer workers that Allsorts owed its early *success* and sustainability.

# PATTERNS OF ATTENDANCE

## ATTENDANCE

Figure 1.1 represents the total number of individual young people that accessed the Allsorts Drop-In between November 1999 and December 2000. It can be seen that from the beginning there was a steady increase that continued up to June. There was a rather sudden dip in July, but numbers rebounded back in August, followed by another, lesser, dip in September and October.



If the figures for all young people are compared with those for both young men and young women, then they generally mirror the overall trend. The main area of difference appears in the autumn of 2000 when the number of young women in the group began to match and in October surpassed the number of young men accessing the Drop-In.

Throughout 1999 and 2000 Allsorts regularly received new members. For some reason, between February and June the numbers of new members were greater than before this time or since then. Over the whole period Allsorts received an average of 6 new contacts per month, but between February and June the group received 9 new contacts per month. This would explain the period of growth during this period.