

Report on the EPIC International Youth Project
In partnership with Y Sort It & You Before 2
2021/2022



WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF £2,405 FROM THE HUGH FRASER FOUNDATION FOR MAKING THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE.



Project Introduction

The EPIC International Youth Project was developed during the Covid-19 pandemic to address findings that lockdown restrictions had severely impacted our young people's mental health, confidence in their skills, and prospects for the future (UK Youth "Impact of COVID-19 on Youth Organisations" March 2021).

EPIC Assist (EPIC) has created this project to help address this mental health crisis for young people, to help instil a sense of social confidence and equip our young people with key life skills. We want to encourage our young people to engage in international thinking and to acquire empathy of and a desire to understand global issues, the earth, and humanity. This project gives young people the opportunity to learn and have meaningful discussions with people from all over the world, by introducing our participants to international guest consultants from the US to Australia, to London, to Greece, and beyond!

EPIC's partnership with Y Sort it and West Dunbartonshire Council began prior to the pandemic with the Scottish Girls Project, in 2019. It targeted girls aged 11-16 who were either from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds or were recently resettled refugees. The funding was provided by the Alexander Cross Cameron Bequest. It was delivered at an introductory level project for girls aged 5-11, which focused personal development topics, such as communication, self-esteem, healthy eating, exercise, body image, stress relief, and gender roles.

In 2021, EPIC and Y-sort it designed an online project to support young people in West Dunbartonshire during lockdown restrictions. This progressed in 2022, to a bespoke program of the EPIC International Youth Project to be delivered to participants, in keeping with the needs of service users post-lockdown restrictions. We were therefore able to consistently support our participants prior, during and post Covid-19 pandemic.





Our Team

Candace G. Thomas is a Program Coordinator with EPIC Assist Scotland and will be delivering any ongoing/newly developed projects. Candace has an MPhil in Sociology from the University of Cambridge and is currently undertaking a PhD in Sociology at University College Dublin. She has extensive experience designing and implementing various integration/community education projects both in the UK, and internationally. Candace has worked with children of various ages, with insight into the experiences of refugee and ethnic minority children (providing psychosocial support to residents of the Serres refugee camp, in Northern Greece). Candace is also a Team Coordinator at the United Nations House Scotland and therefore benefits from an up-

to-date understanding of international development and contemporary human rights issues. She has undergone trauma and recovery training with Rape Crisis Glasgow and Clyde, in cooperation with the University of Glasgow, which included an induction and triage sessions on childhood trauma, ACE's, and domestic violence.

Candace is knowledgeable in universal safeguard training and is therefore well equipped to handle any upsets or unforeseeable circumstances which may arise with respectful ease. Our team is also required, to undergo mandatory training each month on various relevant subjects, which keeps our employees up to date on policies and procedures protecting our service users and staff.



EPIC Partners



Y Sort It youth centre provides a dedicated youth friendly space with various weekly youth activities offered throughout the West Dunbartonshire area. Our Y Sort It outreach bus helps provide youth activities across the local communities of West Dunbartonshire and our unique Carbeth hut, the Gillie Dhu, provides an opportunity for young people and children to enjoy the outdoors located in the Carbeth Hutting Community,

Stirlingshire. We also developed a local shop front into a bike maintenance workshop & training space for our StreetBikes initiative. <https://ysortit.com/>

Yoga Mandala Project is a not-for-profit initiative based in Arizona, US that supports the well-being of refugees, humanitarians working within these communities, and activists, globally. The Yoga Mandala Project hosts trauma-informed training develops sustainable yoga programs, volunteer yoga teachers, provides self-care support, and organises crisis relief projects. <https://www.yogamandalaproject.org/>



Mahdi Saki is an Iranian activist and refugee advocate based in Glasgow. Mahdi is one of our international guest consultants and the Participation Manager at Safe in Scotland (formally, Glasgow Night Shelter). Mahdi is also the former Community Engagement and Projects Coordinator at the Refugee Survival Trust. Mahdi has designed and delivered

several asylum seeker and refugee rights awareness projects, which he delivers to schools, churches, and community groups in Glasgow.

<https://www.safeinscotland.com/>



Pomegranate House is multi-faceted organisation, with a unique approach of consultancy that dives into the layers of gender misconception, globally, nationally and locally. Examining the cultural reasoning in every client setting, making women truly integrated without being disruptive. Pomegranate House focuses on gender dividends through the prism of research, individualism and philosophy. Within

these three prisms, cultural identity, tradition, academic theories mixed with secondary and primary research will be conducted to get to the root of the cause for every client. <https://www.pomegranatehouse.org/>



You Before Two is a new charitable foundation created to promote the sexual and mental health education given to secondary school aged children in the North Nottinghamshire area. We aim to empower young men and women to truly understand key concepts such as, the true meaning of sexual consent, good mental resilience and the planned wanted baby.



Project Description

In 2021, EPIC and Y-Sort it designed a joint delivery of the Scottish Girls Project 2. The three topics of the SGP2 were chosen by the participants during a prior consultation. The young people involved expressed a desire to not only learn about personal development topics like mental health or healthy relationships but wanted to learn more about community wellbeing and social issues. Given this, we decided to create 6 online workshops: 1) New Scots & Cultural Awareness (Guest Consultant: Mahdi Saki - works with refugees at the Glasgow Night Shelter) (02/02/21); 2) Communication and Self-Awareness (09/02/21); 3) Physical Health & Body Positivity (Guest Consultant: Molly from Mandala Yoga - based in Arizona US - activity pack) (16/02/21); 4) Gender Stereotypes & LGBTQ+ identities (Guest Consultant: Hana Sadat Mosavie lead at Pomegranate House & Lecturer on Gender Dividends) (23/02/21); 5) Mental Health and Wellbeing (Jenna Barnes Childrens Psychologist based in California - Sand Therapist) (02/03/21); 6) Homelessness in Scotland (09/03/21).

In 2022, EPIC, You Before 2 and Y- Sort it designed a joint delivery of 3 sessions of the International Youth Project (EPIC You Before 2, funded by Population Matters). The three sessions of IYP included: 1) Relation and Consent EYB2 (19/01/22); 2) Art and Design in the Community (26/01/22) and 3) Mental Health and Wellbeing (02/02/22). Sessions will be delivered in-person (at Y-Sort it, Clydebank).

The project included guest consultants organised by EPIC: Dr Rebecca Foljambe from You before 2 and Sheldon Chadwick Yoga/Meditation Practitioner. Participants will be given an activity pack as a take home (EPIC – bag, bottle/cup, fidget spinner/pop grip, pen, printed IYP booklet chapter and mental health/mindfulness materials). Additionally, EPIC You before 2 will provide: an information lanyard, bracelets x2, custom T-shirt, NHS information materials, love heart sweets, Y-Sort it will receive a contraceptive display kit and a consent pack FPA as the project's legacy.



Methodological Approach to Data Monitoring

The participants were given a survey at the beginning of each independent session. The survey was comprised of questions related to whether the sessions were being enjoyed so far, if participants felt respected/able to ask questions, if they found the information provided accessible/helpful, and which types of group activities they enjoyed doing the most and least.

As well as this, Y- Sort it, You Before 2 and Yoga Mandala were involved in the evaluation process both through providing constant feedback and a follow-up meeting after the final session.

The Findings

An analysis of the data collected found that 100% of participants felt respected by the instructor and 75% enjoyed sessions. 90% felt that they could freely ask questions. 75% of participants understood the information provided with 25% opting to answer: “not sure”.

Some of the details found in the “further comments” section included:

“Was really good should do more 😊”

“More of these lessons, more meditation, some more art”

And

“Was good but could do with more information”



Budget Breakdowns

EPIC was awarded £2,405 from the Hugh Fraser Foundation. This was used in the following ways:

9x IYP sessions:

Budget - EPIC INTERNATIONAL YOUTH PROJECT

Item	Rate	
Project Lead:	Candace Thomas	
Hours Per Session:		2.5
Rate/Hour:	£ 9.62	
		50
		Total Labour
Activity Materials for 1 Session	£ 50.00	
E-booklets to accompany the project session	£ 5.00	
Guest Consultation fee	£ 50.00	
Planning Meeting expenses		
Binding and Printing reports		
Miles Travelled (delivered activity packs)	£ 15.00	
Mobile Phone per month		
Laptop/Mobile Phone		
Laptop data per month		
Office Rent per month	£ 10.00	
Legal, Insurance & professional fees		
Sundries per month	£ 25.00	
Overheads/margin	£ 45.00	

Total Project Costs including margin

Total Revenue	£	250.00	
Costs - per session			205
Margin			45

EPIC donated a third session (approx. cost £270) to give a more well-rounded delivery of IYP, and as a gesture to compensate for delays, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Aspiration for the Future

The EPIC International Youth Project has proved to encourage our young people to adopt healthy behaviours and habits which are important to live a fulfilled life. However, most importantly, these behaviours and habits are likely to continue later in life. Given this, the EPIC International Youth Project has the capacity to make an impact on not only our participants lives, but the communities in which they live, long after the completion of the project.

EPIC Assist Charity Scotland will continue to be in contact with Y-Sort it and hope to be able to run another project in the future.

EPIC has had a very positive experience delivering the EPIC International Youth Project to various partners in 2021, which has motivated EPIC to replicate the project elsewhere. In early 2022, we are set to run a series of sessions with WHALE Arts, The Showmen's Mental Health Awareness Charity in Leeds/Kirkcaldt and have partnered with You Before 2 to create a workshop on 'relationships and consent' (funded by Empower 2 Plan).

