



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2011

G:XL Latest New Resources Catalyst project Opportunities

G:up is an alliance of West Midlands children, young people and families', voluntary and community sector (CYPF VCS) organisations, networks, and partners.

G:up works in a regional space to develop networks, collaboration and communications, build capacity and shape policy. Joining G:up is free! For more, read on or visit the G:up website: www.gup.org.uk



Welcome to G:up's summer newsletter! Once again we have a range of new resources, updates and opportunities. See the menu below and click the links if you're reading the electronic copy.

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How Is Our Sector Represented at Strategic Levels? - 2 New G:XL Tools

G:XL Strategic Representation Audit Report

In these uncertain times ensuring that the voices of children and young people's voluntary and community sector (CYP VCS) organisations are heard at strategic levels is more important than ever.

G:up's new G:XL Strategic Representation Report maps CYP VCS strategic representation in every West Midlands local authority, analysing changing and emerging structures, good practice, barriers and underrepresentation issues faced by organisations and strategic representatives.

The audit comprised a questionnaire survey completed by organisations and interviews with those representing the sector at strategic forums e.g. Children's Trust boards, local safeguarding trusts or equivalent and similar bodies.

In this way the report reveals the situation now, across the West Midlands. It also includes a number of resources on best practice for strategic representation (in the Appendices).

G:XL Strategic Representation Action Plan

Based on the findings of the above report, the G:XL Strategic Representation Action Plan is designed to support the CYP VCS, by developing the role of CYP VCS strategic representatives, improving and increasing representation, including of underrepresented organisations and exploring sustainability beyond 2011/2012.

The action plan is therefore addressing real needs and provides a proposed programme for development and overcoming barriers, essential in difficult and changing climates when strong and effective representation for the sector and support for strategic representatives is vitally important.

Download for free from the G:up website
 Report: www.gup.org.uk/repauditreport
 Action Plan: www.gup.org.uk/repactionplan

These documents were produced through G:up's three-year, Big Lottery-funded, G:XL project, in partnership with G:XL contract holder Midlands Youth and Common Sense (Leadership and Management) Solutions CIC.



Your Feedback

We have already had very positive feedback from G:up members and partners on the usefulness of these resources. As with all our work, we really like to hear what you think, so please send any comments to us or contact us if you have any queries via: gup@bayc.org or 0121 460 5870.



G:XL

Save the Date to Participate

on

Saturday 21st January 2012



People who work with children and young people across the West Midlands are invited to join our big, regional Participation event:

Participation...the way forward

- A great opportunity for networking, discussion and learning
- Meet national participation organisations and experts, regional and local contacts
- A range of interactive workshops
- A chance to find out all about and celebrate children and young people's participation!

For more info contact Tracy Hayes of Midlands Youth on tracy.hayes@wayc.org.uk or 01926 450 156 or visit the G:up website: www.gup.org.uk/qxl

Save Money On Essential Services Money Saving Packages Through G:XL

For the last 12 months, the G:XL Collaboration and Back Office Services Learning Cluster has been meeting regularly to find collaborative, money saving solutions for the sector through both bulk or collaborative purchasing and outsourcing opportunities.

The results of this work are the opportunities listed with links below, offering great savings on essential products and services including stationery, utilities, office equipment and Accountancy services.

You can view all of the packages on the G:up website via the following link:

www.gup.org.uk/packages

These packages could be so positive for your organisation so have a good look through and contact us if you have any questions or feedback!

The individual 5 packages are as follows and if you're reading the electronic version of this newsletter (www.gup.org.uk/newsletter) you can click each of these links.



- Charity Buying Group - Bulk Purchasing Opportunity
- ESPO - Bulk Purchasing Opportunity
- National Energy Control - Bulk Purchasing Opportunity
- Midlands Accountancy Payroll Service – Outsourcing Opportunity
- Community Accountancy Service – Outsourcing Opportunity



What is G:XL?

G:up's three-year, Big Lottery-funded, G:XL project, is designed to develop infrastructure, capacity and collaboration in the West Midlands children and young people's, voluntary and community sector (CYP VCS). This work is part of the Collaboration and Back Office Services work stream which aims to save organisations money by developing cost-efficient, collaborative solutions. For resources, opportunities and to shape work visit the G:up website: www.gup.org.uk/gxl

What is this Learning Cluster?

Like all G:XL Learning Clusters, this one brings together CYP VCS staff from across region, to share ideas and learning and develop new solutions. For more info or to get involved visit the G:XL section of the G:up website: www.gup.org.uk/backofficeLC

Download G:up's New Collaborative Purchasing Guide

G:up has written a brief guide for the sector on collaborative purchasing - getting together with other organisations to increase your purchasing power and get better deals - critical as organisations look for efficiency savings and survival strategies as budgets and resources are squeezed.

This new guide partners the work of G:up's Big Lottery-funded G:XL project, aiming to increase collaboration in the sector (see previous page).

Collaborative purchasing is buying selected products or services together with other, like minded organisations for mutual benefit. Many third sector organisations, especially smaller ones, rely on hard negotiations with wholesalers or service providers, but by combining with other organisations they can gain stronger purchasing power, driving down prices and getting better deals!

G:up's new guide contains tips on things to consider when entering into an agreement and how to take things further. It also explains outsourcing, another potentially money saving solution which has its own benefits and drawbacks.

Fill In G:XL Collaboration Resources Survey

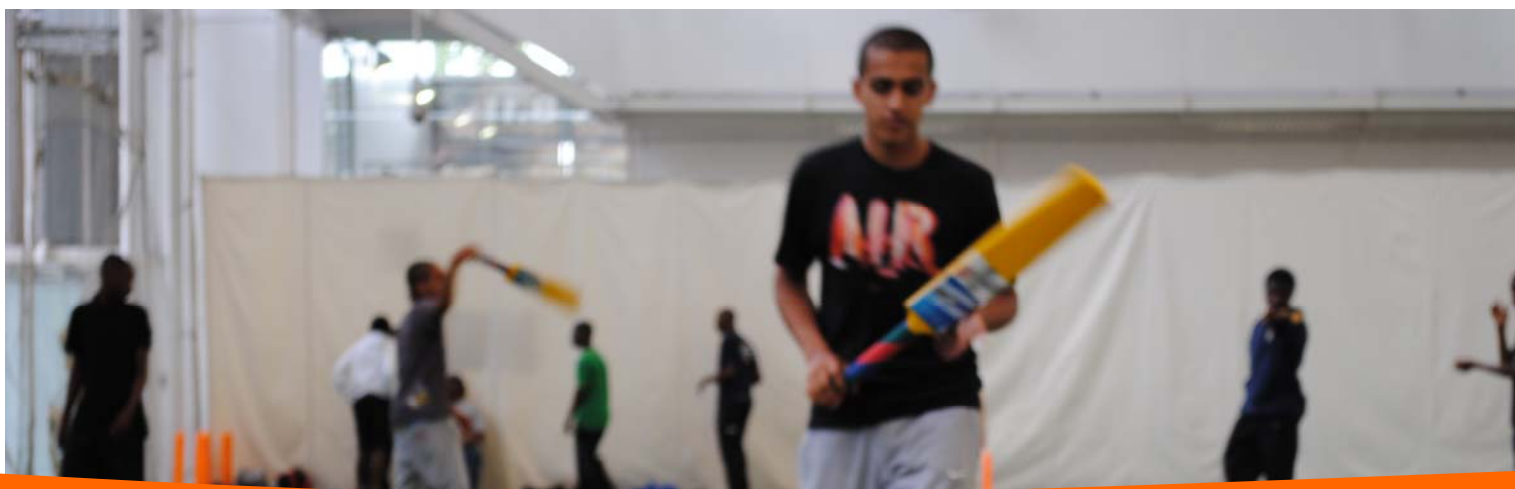
Now you've read all about our new collaborative purchasing and money saving resources, developed through the G:XL project, please fill in our quick, online survey to help us measure their use and impact:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/SQPGT9D

We hope these resources and the Collaboration and Back Office Services Learning Cluster help to stimulate collaboration in the children and young people's, voluntary and community sector, increasing organisations' knowledge, efficiency and sustainability. For more information and to view all the new resources visit: www.gup.org.uk/category/gxl/increase-collaboration

The survey consists of 11 simple questions and should take between 5-10 minutes to complete. We would really appreciate your support by filling it in, so we can understand the value of this work and ensure that our future projects meet your needs.

Deadline to contribute: 23rd September 2011.



National Catalyst Project - G:up Coordinates Regional Bid

Catalyst in the West Midlands Latest

After the success of bringing over £135,000 of investment into the West Midlands CYP VCS through the Progress project, G:up acted quickly to advertise and build a partnership when the new, national, training and capacity building project Catalyst was put out to tender.

G:up coordinated a meeting in August and brought together key regional partners to look at how best to develop a regional VCS training partnership and bring this funding and opportunity to the region.

G:up invited Gethyn Williams, Director of Workforce Development at Catalyst funder NCVYS who attended and supported the meeting. Attendees approved the need for a regional training partnership and that G:up should coordinate this and an initial framework for a partnership was drawn up.

Key information and next steps:

- See the meeting notes and the latest Catalyst information at: www.gup.org.uk/catalyst
- The next meeting will be held at bayc on 12th September 2011, where a draft regional bid will be discussed
- G:up will submit the final bid before the deadline of 19th September
- To join the partnership or for more details, contact G:up on: catalyst@bayc.org

About Catalyst

NCVYS Training Partnerships

Catalyst is a consortium of 4 organisations working with the Department for Education (DfE) as the strategic partner for young people, as part of the Department's wider transition programme for the sector. Catalyst will work to deliver three key objectives over a two year period. It will:

1. Strengthen the youth sector market
2. Equip the sector to work in partnership with Government
3. Coordinate skills development for the youth sector workforce

As part of the Catalyst project NCVYS is seeking to work with a small number of voluntary sector-led training partnerships working across a number of local authority areas, to increase their ability to bid or tender for skills funding from a range of sources and develop a more sustainable business model.

Successful partnerships will work with NCVYS to develop an outcomes-focused individual support package - to include financial aid and access to specialist advice and guidance.

Initial activity to support the partnerships will take place between October 2011 and March 2012, although the support will extend into 2012/13.

Opportunities to collaborate with others and share effective practice will also be available.

Visit the G:up website for all the latest Catalyst info: www.gup.org.uk/catalyst

Have you checked out these G:up tools and services?

- **G:up regional Training and Events Calendar** - www.gup.org.uk/calendar
You can also upload your own training and events, contact G:up or visit the website for details
- **G:up Organisational Self Assessment Toolkit** - www.gup.org.uk/toolkit
Great development tool—download it for free!
- **G:up Signposting Database** - www.gup.org.uk/providers
Find orgs, tools and services to support your work
- **G:up automatic email Updates** - www.gup.org.uk/user/register
Full of sector news, events and opportunities

Ready made news for your newsletter!

G:up's new service to its members

In addition to the usual G:up quarterly newsletter, G:up is now sending out a monthly Spotlight, summarising its key latest news, events and opportunities as a Publisher document, so you can insert whole pages or selected pieces straight into your newsletter!

You now have an easy way to promote G:up's regional information which could benefit your members and fill any spaces in your newsletter!

G:up's work and resources are designed to support and benefit the West Midlands children, young people and families', voluntary and community sector (CYPF VCS), and this could help G:up reach and benefit wider audiences, including smaller organisations.

G:up will also disseminate the monthly Spotlight as a pdf – complete with loads of links! – which you can email out or promote on your websites etc.

Many of G:up's members and partners produce newsletters and Spotlight makes it easier for us to work together to further our shared aims of a more informed, connected and developed sector.



In Brief—Review of G:up

The review of G:up by the G:up Interim Steering Group is moving on apace.

G:up members were emailed G:up's proposed new constitution at the end of July and given over a month, until Fri Sept 2nd to vote to endorse it.

You can see the proposed new constitution and compare it to G:up's existing constitution at: www.gup.org.uk/newconstitution

How to vote

Please simply email gup@bayc.org and state YES if you'd like to endorse the proposed new constitution or NO if you would not!

It's really important that we gain our members' feedback to ensure that this proposed new governing document and G:up's future work are appropriate for G:up members and the sector's needs.

Next Steps

G:up will compile the results of the vote and announce this in early September. If the proposed constitution is endorsed by a majority of voters, an AGM to ratify the constitution will take place, on 3rd November 2011.

Get involved!

To ensure that G:XL genuinely represents and benefits the West Midlands children and young people's, voluntary and community sector we need your input!



There are many ways to take part and make your views count including commenting on our work, joining a G:XL Learning Cluster, participating in G:XL events, filling in G:XL surveys etc. Keep up to date with the latest developments and opportunities on the G:up website:

Forthcoming G:up Events

G:up Coordinated Regional Catalyst Bid meeting , 12 th Sept 2011, 1pm-4pm, bayc, Birmingham	See page 6, above, full details available here: www.gup.org.uk/catalyst
G:XL Workforce Development Learning Cluster meeting , 22 nd Sept 2011, The Ackers, Birmingham	All details via: www.gup.org.uk/TrainingWFDandQualityLC
G:XL Information and Communications Learning Cluster meeting , 28 th Sept 2011, 10am-12pm, bayc	Training: writing an effective press release and taking good photos.
G:XL Regional Participation Event Sat 11 th Oct 2011, Bayc venue TBC	See poster on page 3, above. Find out all about and celebrate CYP participation! Network, discuss and learn.
G:up Conference and AGM , 3 rd Nov 2011, Birmingham (all day event with AGM held during lunch break)	Details TBC. Send us your AGM agenda items.



Are you a member of G:up?

It is **free** to join G:up and being a member enables you to:

- Be linked in with a large and diverse network of CYPF VCS organisations, staff and partners right across the West Midlands and beyond
- Get a login for the G:up website to upload your news and events yourself – in order to reach wide and diverse audiences across the West Midlands through G:up's online news centre (www.gup.org.uk/news), regional training and events calendar (www.gup.org.uk/calendar) and daily automatic Updates filled with the latest news, events and opportunities
- Be featured amongst G:up's members on the G:up website (www.gup.org.uk/gupmembers) – raising the profile of your organisation and work, including to new audiences and increasing connections within and to the sector

To join G:up or for further information, email gup@bayc.org, phone **0121 460 5870** or download a membership form at: www.gup.org.uk/join. We look forward to hearing from you!