

A stroke at 21 didn't stop me achieving my dreams

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A young Brighton woman who suffered a stroke at the age of 21 wants to show that with the right support you can still go on to achieve your goals.

Working with Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, Becki Cobb, now 23, also wants more people to be aware of the warning signs in both old and young people.

"I want people to realise that if you can see signs of stroke in anybody you've got to act quickly," she says.

"There's a certain amount of time they can be given a clot busting drug or brain surgery. That sort of treatment can greatly reduce the after effects of a stroke.

"I know it would have been a lot worse for me if I hadn't been found so quickly and treated."

A report about Becki's Fixers campaign will feature on ITV News Meridian on Thursday 9 May, from 6pm.

Becki was half way through her final year at university and planning to go travelling when her life completely changed.

"I decided to walk to work because it was a really sunny day," she says.

"I started to feel a little bit light headed; I remember trying to find an apple in my bag. Then I fell over and I was trying to crawl to a bin to pick myself up.

"I remember people looking at me and carrying on walking so I thought maybe it wasn't that serious and maybe I'd fainted. Then eventually two policemen stopped to help me."

PC Stuart Brown remembers seeing Becki crawling on the floor.

"She was on her hands and knees and seemed very, very confused," he said. "Our initial thoughts were that it was probably drink or drugs. I think although the symptoms shouted out stroke, we initially discounted it because of her age."

The stroke was caused by a small hole in Becki's heart, a condition which around a third of young adults in the UK have. A blood clot passed through the hole and caused a blockage.

As part of the film, Becki met Jodie Mickleburgh from the charity Different Strokes to talk about how common strokes are in young people.

"Around 40 thousand strokes a year in the UK will happen to people of working age and younger," says Jodie.

"Having someone as young and as vibrant as Becki to prove there is life after stroke is inspirational."

Becki was in hospital for six weeks, and still receives physiotherapy to regain movement.

Despite the stroke, Becki graduated from university and even went travelling to Southeast Asia.

Fixers is charity which supports young people across the UK to take action and change things for the better, addressing any issue they feel strongly about.

How each Fixer tackles their chosen issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported over 7,400 young people to have an authentic voice in their community.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need - such as films, websites or print work - to make their chosen project a success.

Related Sectors:

Health :: Women & Beauty ::

Related Keywords:

Young Stroke :: Stroke ::
Warning Signs :: Blood Clot ::
Hole In Heart ::

Scan Me:



Now, thanks to a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers aims to work with a further 20,000 young people over the next three years.

Fixers is a trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT).

“Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea... an idea given a voice by over 7,400 young people over the past five years,” says Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of PSBT.

“They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves.”

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, said: “The Big Lottery Fund is extremely happy to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Thousands of public-spirited young people across the UK are campaigning to make improvements in their own communities. By providing a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements, Fixers demonstrates the positive contribution thousands of committed young people are making at a local level and challenges negative stereotypes.”

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sue Meaden in the Fixers Communications Team by email sue@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:

<http://www.fixers.org.uk>

<http://www.twitter.com/FixersUK>

<http://www.facebook.com/FixersUK>

Notes to editors:

- Fixers started in England in 2008. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. To date, over 7,400 young people across the UK have become Fixers and created 900 projects.
- The Public Service Broadcasting Trust is a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.
- The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
- BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
- Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

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