DSM Foundation’s work in Scotland garners positive feedback and outcomes, says academic evaluation

Tuesday 16 July, 2024

The 2023-24 academic year has seen the DSM Foundation piloting a comprehensive programme of drugs education in a number of schools in the Grampian region of Scotland. An interim report from the University of Aberdeen, which is conducting an evaluation of the pilot, has shown overwhelmingly positive outcomes and feedback, ahead of the full report being published by the university in the autumn.

Fiona Spargo-Mabbs OBE, Director and Founder of drug education charity the DSM Foundation, said: “We were incredibly pleased to see the impact our drug education pilot in the Northeast of Scotland has had on pupils, staff and families, and to read the outcomes of the University of Aberdeen’s evaluation. It’s also been so valuable during the pilot to listen to young people and teachers, and make adjustments where these were needed, so all our resources and approaches are as effective as they can be in these different schools across the Grampian region. We’re very excited about the next chapter, building on this positive start to embed and extend our provision across the region and beyond, working with others to support young people in Scotland to make safer choices about drugs.”

Information for editors:

The DSM Foundation was established in 2014 following the death of 16 year old Daniel Spargo-Mabbs from an accidental overdose of ecstasy. His family felt that he simply hadn’t known enough to be able to make decisions that would keep him safe, and realized there was a huge gap in the resources and support available to schools, so set up the charity in order to spare other families going through what they had experienced.

The aim of the DSM Foundation is to provide young people with relevant, age-appropriate, up to date and evidence-based information about drugs so they develop the skills to make choices that will keep themselves and their friends as safe as possible. To this end, the charity does a lot of work in schools, colleges and community organisations with children and young people, and also provides workshops for parents and caregivers, and training for school and college staff – the two groups shown by NHS survey data as the most likely sources of information about drugs and alcohol sought out by 11-15 year olds. Educational settings are also able to access “I Love You Mum, I Promise I Won’t Die”, a verbatim play by Mark Wheeller that was commissioned by the charity to tell Dan’s story in the words of his family and friends, through studying the work itself, or booking a Theatre in Education performance. Schools and colleges can also download age-appropriate, relevant, up to date and evidence-based drugs education resources free of charge from the DSM Foundation website for delivery by teachers through PSHE/PSE provision.

For more information about the DSM Foundation, go to https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/.

Media enquiries about this press release or the work of the DSM Foundation should be sent to media@dsmfoundation.org.uk.

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