

Leicestershire young mums take heart

Wednesday 8 May, 2013

A young single mum from Leicester is urging others in her position to take pride in themselves and the responsibility of having children in their stride.

Sandra Kabodi, now 19, was shunned by her family after falling pregnant at the age of 16. With her child's father estranged to her, Sandra's experience of being a mum has been a difficult one.

Working with Fixers, the national movement of young people fixing the future, Sandra has written and performed a song aimed at motivating young mother's to 'move on' and take control of their lives.

"My Fixers project is to let young mums know there is support and people out there willing to help and provide the right information they need to look after themselves and their baby," says Sandra.

A report about her Fixers campaign will feature on ITV News Central on Thursday, May 9, from 6pm.

Sandra said: "Being a mum at the age of 16, I was not ready, at all. I still wanted to have fun with my friends and do the things they were doing.

"After I found out I was pregnant, it was scary, I didn't tell my parents because I didn't know how they were going to react. I ran away from home because the way I was raised was a bit strict."

Sandra, who took to writing songs to express her feelings, had her song recorded at a professional studio and aired live on Radio Warwickshire.

She said: "I decided to write songs about my life and what I have been through. Sometimes it's not easy to sit down and talk about it. But with a pen and paper, you can write it out.

"The first time I heard my song was live on the radio. After hearing it, I had a big smile on my face, because I was proud of myself."

Karen Lambert from youth group Leicester Y believes Sandra's example can motivate other young mums to be ambitious and chase their dreams.

She said: "Often teenage mothers don't have the confidence to go into training or to follow their ambition in life.

"I feel the Fixers project Sandra has been involved in is going to have a real impact on other young mothers as they will be able to see that they can achieve their dreams."

Sandra feels lucky that her own mother took her and her son back into her life but wants to ensure other mums are made aware of the support available outside of the family unit.

"I was very lucky, because my mum took me and my son back into the house," Sandra says. "But for other teenage mums out there, if they don't have that support, there are professionals who are willing to give them that advice.

"I hope my project can help teenage mums realise they are not alone and they can move on."

Fixers is a 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.

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

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

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“Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea... an idea given a voice by some 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 proud to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Fixers has a tremendous potential – one young person’s initial idea can be transformed into reality, spread across a community and make a positive influence on a wide range of people. There are thousands of young people campaigning to make improvements in their neighbourhoods and Fixers provides a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements.”

One photo attached. Caption:

1. Sandra singing

For more information, please contact Maggie Morgan in the Fixers Communications Team by email maggie@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:

www.fixers.org.uk
www.twitter.com/FixersUK
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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