# Raising awareness of autism – performance festival in Stourbridge

**Wednesday 8 May, 2013**

A student from Stourbridge is holding a performance festival at his college to showcase the talents of local people who have learning disabilities.

Fixer Jordan Stratham, 20, is using his skills as a singer/songwriter to show there's more to him than autism.

With support from Glasshouse College, he has organised the performance festival with music, talent and top-secret guests on Saturday 11 May from 7-9pm.

Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, will be filming the event to create a 'behind the scenes' music documentary for Jordan to use in schools and colleges to raise awareness of autism and other learning disabilities.

"There are so many people, of all different ages, who do not understand what autism is, especially as the disability isn't visible or obvious," says Jordan.

"I want to educate people about autism in a creative way and let them know that although I have autism, there is so much I am, can, and will do if I have the right support in place.

"This project is different as there are not that many autism / learning disability projects or support in place for young people in the West Midlands. This means a lot of young people can feel isolated.

"The music video that Fixers will be creating will tackle other disabilities, not just autism. It will have all the performances from the night and interviews with all the artists.

"I want everyone to see that having a disability doesn't have to stop you from achieving your hopes and dreams."

**Tickets cost £10 and can be purchased from Gail Hickman on 01384 399459 or gail.hickman@ghc.rmt.org. All proceeds are going towards Autism West Midlands.**

Glasshouse College in Stourbridge is one of three independent specialist further education colleges operated by Ruskin Mill Trust, providing Practical Skill Therapeutic Education for young people aged 16 to 25 years who have a range of learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorders and behaviours that challenge.

Fixers can address any issue they feel strongly about. How each Fixer tackles an issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported 7,400 young people aged 16 to 25 across the UK to have an authentic voice in their community.

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.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need to make their chosen project a success, with creative help from media professionals to make their own promotional material, such as films, websites or print work.

Fixers is a trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.

"Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea… an idea given a voice by some 7,000 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,

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Festival :: Fixers :: Autism :: Learning Difficulties :: Performance :: Stourbridge :: Singer :: Songwriter ::

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not just for themselves."

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, says: "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."

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:**

• Since 2008 some 7,000 young people in England have become Fixers and created 800 projects. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.
• 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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