

# RESPONDING & ADAPTING TO COVID19

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Young Peoples Foundations 25 March 2020

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# The Winch

- Youth & Community charity in Camden, London
- ‘Cradle to Career’ young persons offer (0-25yrs) –open access, in-school, sports, enterprise, social action & Promise Work.
- Host Projects:
  - Take Back the Power
  - North Camden Zone
  - Outstanding After School Provision (now providing extended-day keyworker support in school)
  - Belsize Community Library

# Business Agility (& Business Continuation)

1. Set out our priorities simply to reduce complexity
  - To *safeguard* beneficiaries and staff & deliver our *mission*.
  - Suspend our annual plan
2. Deal with *probability*, to manage uncertainty. Accept margin for error.
3. Agreed an explicit, shared working timetable. 3 Overlapping phases:
  - **First Response** - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020
  - **Adaptation** - April-October 2020
  - **Refocus**- October – April 21
4. This will impact unequally- so find a focus/find 'your lane'.
5. This is bigger than anyone of us –collaboration/humility will be critical.

# First Response- Our Work to Date

## Intense Focus

- Shift to physically-remote working (*more spend*)
- First 100 Calls- Checking in with Young People and Families – gathering insight & data
- Financial Challenges–weekly calls/ scenario planning – and Funder engagement

## Safeguard

- Emergency Care – food, money, care & connectivity (data) to beneficiaries (*more spend*)
- Staff support- new check-ins/employee assistance offer (*more spend here*)
- Mindful of peoples capacity to absorb change/anxiety, self isolation and health vulnerabilities

## Digital Mirroring

- Scaffolding change & maintaining consistency for beneficiaries and staff
- Initial effort on boosting engagement on existing & ‘dormant’ channels & then testing new
- Trial & error of new offers

# First Response- Our Work to Date

## Configure

- It feels like its everyone's first day, as we reconfigure around capability requirements.
- There are skills gap and no new investment opportunities, which could force paralysis.
- Financial risk is **very** real. Do we furlough everything or deliver new mission?

## Redesign

- Insight from next 100 Conversations & partners. Needs will change & gaps emerge in pandemic
- Need to designate & protect space for co-design/co-delivery.
- Currently peer-led online content- but is it just 'content' or can it effect social change?

## Test & Learn

- Peer-led work groups now working to test new solutions and learn, as they themselves grow
- Our culture is our anchor. Community & relationships matter as much as ever. (Sense of loss)
- Be mindful of COVID19 transmission & health risks, as well as new safeguarding challenges.

# Refocus & Rebuild

- We not there yet –so don't worry to much (except about £) !!
- Don't assume you can go 'back to normal'. It won't all be there!
- Learn as you go- or you'll rewrite the past to suit the present
- You'll acquire new skills- celebrate this!
- Beware of FOMO (fear of missing out) –you don't need to be at every meeting or doing the same as everyone else.
- Beware of digital homogeneity and backdoor corporatisation. Not all digital is for the common good/unbiased & some will accentuate inequality.
- Look after yourselves & each other. It's a marathon not a sprint.

# Challenges Ahead for us & our sector

The first response phase is overwhelming.

Adaptation is messy & confusing.

We must to keep our eyes on :

- Finances- This is long term. Its difficult to catch up. Set aside time to focus .
- Safeguarding- New territory for lots of organisations and new risks esp. in crisis. Underdeveloped process & tricky professional judgements.
- Figure out how to channel and manage goodwill. Generosity is the lifeblood of our sector, but it doesn't always come perfectly wrapped. You'll spend more time managing *the* help rather than managing *to* help! Agree volunteer codes of conduct & safeguarding arrangements upfront.
- Beware the 'free' tools you accept. What's the real cost? Are you protecting YP's data? We risk reducing our mission to 'content providers'.
- Keep it simple & clear whilst you figure it out; Don't reinvent the wheel.
- Challenges for 'holistic' services- you can't do everything well remotely. Is setting up a food bank what you are best at? Are there partners you can work with better? Collaboration is key & not everyone is good at it.
- Prepare for difficult days. There will be lots of trauma. You'll experience defeat. You need to take time out (accept some people will judge you, but that's on them). Its our job to find hope.