



AdFest 2024

This is me



All Wales People First

19 & 20 June
Future Inn
Cardiff

Introductions

*“Labels aren’t necessarily a bad thing - we all have them. Labels only become a problem when we are typed by the same labels” **Joe Powell***

Day 1

Tracy Austin - Chair, and **Samantha Hall** - Vice Chair of the All Wales People First National Council, welcomed everyone to AdFest 2024.

Joe opened the ‘who are you?’ Session with Sarah Griffiths and James Tyler

Joe said it is important to explain what People First is about. It is about being seen as people first, disability second. We are all defined by many things, not just our label.

Sarah talked about her labels and explained who she is as a person in the lives of those who know her.

James explained all of the things he’s been labelled with, and shared what those who know him have said about him.

Joe talked about his labels and said that he believes in order to be a self-advocate we have to



Who are you?



“How have your own experiences shaped your lives? do other people influence you?”

understand who we are as people; What works for us and what doesn't work for us.

We need to be honest with ourselves about that.

Joe said he used to make the mistake of comparing himself with other people of his own age. Once he realised that his journey was different to other people's, he started to focus on what was right for him. He stopped trying to follow the same path as other people, because it didn't feel right for him.

Joe asked self-advocates throughout AdFest to use the event to focus on what is right for them. Think about how they want to get there. And to be honest and open enough to say 'this is me'.



ID, what to use and how to get it

"ID is short for identification. It is used to prove who we are. But why do we need to prove who we are?"
Tracey Drew

ID can be used to prove your name, your address, your age and sometimes, your disability.

We shouted our ideas about why we need ID:

To vote; get services like healthcare and support; get bus passes and disabled rail cards; when you start a job; to get into places; buy age related items like alcohol and cigarettes; to leave or enter a country; open a bank account.

People with learning disabilities do not always have ID or find it hard to get ID. We looked at some of the reasons why: ID can cost a lot of money, for example, a new passport can cost £100. If you live with family or others, the bills are often in someone else's name.

We talked about the ID we can use for voting.

We learnt what can make it easier to get ID. Things like: Ask your parents or appointee for your birth certificate; Open a bank account; Find a friendly professional like a nurse or social worker, who will say that they know you and will sign to confirm you are who you say.



What does the term learning disability mean?

“Examples of labels are ‘colleague’, ‘swimmer’, and lots more. These types of labels are there because we want them ”

Ruth Wyn Williams



We discussed labels and how we use them. Some of our labels like ‘swimmer’ can be thrown away when we no longer want them.

A diagnosis is like a label but it is done by a medical professional. They consider symptoms and make the diagnosis. Learning disability is not an illness and it is not a disease. It is given to us by a health professional. Professionals look into things like: How we learn; How we understand things. Most people get a diagnosis before they are 18.

We are all unique, but some things about us can be similar.

Sometimes people have more than one diagnosis. Labels can be useful to professionals, but they don't define you and what communities you want to be part of.

“Sometimes I want to be like everyone else, but then I wouldn't have been a Paralympian and a record breaker”

Overcoming day to day challenges

“Organisations like Autistic Minds and People First can increase help and help people to be independent”

Rhys from Autistic Minds explained his day to day challenges. He went through diagnosis so that he could get help to tackle the challenges he was experiencing.

He said having the right support in education is essential. Rhys had gained a Law degree and a Masters with the right support.

Rhys explained that he finds friendships and relationships a struggle. Also recalling facts and information about people.

We shared some of the things we've found challenging. Like being misunderstood - “sometimes people take things the wrong way” “ I find it difficult when it's a free for all and people talk over one another”.

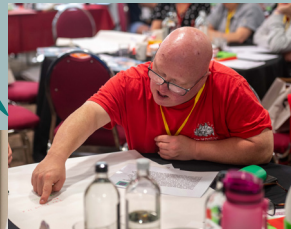
We shared some things we've done to overcome challenges “We set ground rules at the start of our group meetings” “ I find interrupting difficult, I ask them to wait”



Loving life, getting the most out of my friendships, romance and sex

“This is a very serious topic for me and I want to learn as much as I can about how to have a happy relationship”

**CWMNI
ADDYSG
RHYW!**
sex education
company



We talked about relationships and what we should have the right to choose for ourselves. Things like:
We should be able to choose whether our partner stays the night with us.
We don't think family or keyworkers should be able to make decisions about us choosing to have sex.
We should be able to have a double bed if we want one.
We should be allowed to stay up late if we want to.

We looked at some relationship stories and we said what we thought. We shared ideas about working together to overcome barriers to having a relationship and/ or sex life.

“If you aren't successful speaking to parents or support workers, try speaking to your local self advocacy group”.

“Let's make travel easier for people to meet up”.

What's my story?

"I was worried about writing a book because I don't read or write, but it wasn't a problem because I have a Personal Assistant to help"



"I've attended and discovered groups all over Wales and internationally. Positive feedback helped motivate me"

We looked at a book which Cardiff People First helped to write: Rights in practice for people with a learning disability.

As part of the book writing, Cardiff People First members shared their lived experiences and achievements. Things like winning a Womenspire Award, running groups, producing information. The group is run by members and most of the paid jobs are carried out by people with learning disabilities.

Dawn said, she knows what she wants to say but she just needs some support with reading and writing.

Access to Work funding has helped with this.

Zarah said "When my college studies finished, I felt like an outsider. Becoming part of People First made me realise I have a learning disability and a power to change things" "I was able to do paid work for people with learning disabilities" "I've overcome barriers like travelling and time keeping".

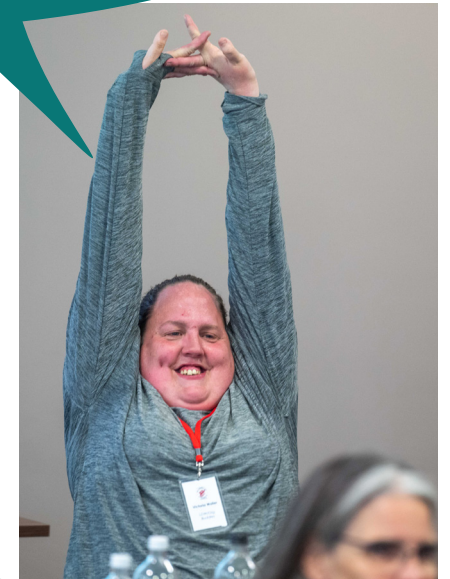
Joanna has written a book of poems, which has been published as an e-Book.

Whole room rain cloud

*“Cappuccino
blueberry; Cappuccino tea;
Coffee coffee; Coffee lemonade;
Lemonade blueberry;
Lemonade tea”*

Caroline Venter led an energiser session after the lunch break. Everyone in the room used word patterns to clap and make sounds that built in intensity to recreate the sounds of a thunder storm.

*“It really helped to energise me
after lunch. I enjoyed working with
everyone else in the room”*



*“The clapping was hilarious, I
couldn't stop laughing. It was too
fast but enjoyable”*

Members - The Linton Gower Memorial Award, for a member who has done something outstanding towards the running of their self-advocacy group.

Sponsored by: Mencap Cymru

Award winners: Martin Heffron; Fran Holmes; Craig Channell



Ideas - a member, or a group, who have worked with others on an idea. The idea should be something that improves the lives of people with learning disabilities in Wales.

Sponsored by: Learning Disability Wales

Award Winners: Vale People First; Lucy Hinksman



Learning Disability Wales



Rights - a member or group who has helped people know about or access their rights.

Sponsored by: First Choice Housing

Award winners: Ffion Poole; Blaenau Gwent People First



Building Independence
Adeiladu Annibyniaeth



Awards

Reflect - a member or group who can show they have learnt from their experiences and made a change.

Sponsored by: Improvement Cymru

Award winner: Faye Parrington



Organisation - for a group that has worked together to be a strong group and included everyone.

Sponsored by: Drive

Award winner: Conwy Connect



Review - for a group or member who has achieved something special.

Sponsored by: Iris Care Group

Award winner: Torfaen People First



Congratulations to award winners!

Thanks to award sponsors and guest presenter

Dawn Bowden MS - Minister for Children and Social Care









INTRODUCING GERRAINT'S Nightclub





Photobooth





#ThroughOurEyes0

#ThroughOurEyes0

#ThroughOurEyes0

Challenging stereotypes of people with learning disabilities through pictures

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#ThroughOurEyes0

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AdFest St
All Wales People

Speakers tent

The logo for Bild (British Institute of Learning Disabilities) consists of the lowercase letters 'bild' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

BILD (British Institute of Learning Disabilities) talked about their work supporting people with learning disabilities to live long, happy and healthy lives. Health Checkers work with Health Services to improve things like Annual Health Checks. Bild would like to hear from anyone who is doing good work to improve people's health and wellbeing. Email: l.allen@bild.org.uk



Drive talked about their work as a supported living provider for adults with a learning disability in south east Wales. They support people to live their best lives within their local communities. The presentation focussed on digital stories and how powerful they can be. Anyone can make a digital story!



Improvement Cymru showed a video about delivering projects and working to improve the health and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities in Wales. To find out more about their work or to become part of the community, you can email improvementcymru@wales.nhs.uk



North Wales Together talked about Chilltastic, a wellness app, transforming lives for everyone.

Speakers tent



Lisa Harwood talked about 'Yoga for Me', which is accessible and inclusive yoga for everyone. Lisa shared the benefits of yoga in feeling less anxious, improving strength, balance, flexibility and sleep. She explained how you can do yoga: Using a chair or on the floor. Lisa is doing research to see if yoga improves standing and walking balance for adults with learning disabilities.



**BWRDD PARTNERIAETH
RHANBARTHOL
CAERDYDD A'R FRO
CARDIFF & VALE
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP
BOARD**



Cardiff & Vale Regional Partnership Board

Joanna Jones gave a presentation about her journey to receiving an autism diagnosis, and her thoughts about being a disabled person. Joanna said her creative talents bring her joy and help with self expression. Stacey said she likes to inspire other disabled people to achieve their goals. Stacey and Joanna work for the Partnership Board.



Sex Education Company talked about their work, their values, and vision of wellbeing through inclusive relationships and sex education

Speakers tent



Learning Disability Wales and Gig Buddies

Victoria talked about her experience as a social media volunteer for Gig Buddies Cymru. her talk 'This is me' was about Victoria's journey as a person with a learning disability, and how volunteering is a huge part of her identity.

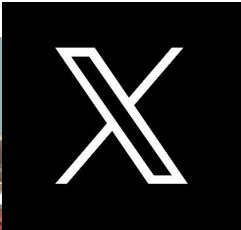


Mirus showed a video about Mirus Ambassadors Adam and Alex's journeys in their new roles. We also heard from Erin, the Electoral Services Officer for the City and County of Cardiff. Alex and Erin have worked together on raising awareness to vote. Adam and Claire explained how they work together on autism training.



Disclosure and Barring Service talked about their purpose in protecting the public by helping employers to make safer recruitment decisions, and their vision around making recruitment and employment safer. They explained the role of the DBS service. More information on the web page www.gov.uk/dbs

What did X say?



Andrea Meek Conference dinner done, waiting for bowling and disco with @ncmh_wales Tyler and Andrew and Michael from @LdWales #LDAdFest2023



Ruth Wyn Williams RNLD Our first day at #LDAdFest2024 was brilliant & our workshop exploring the diagnosis of learning disability was well received. Looking forward to enjoying the rest of the conference with @paultaylorw



Dawn Bowden It was an absolute pleasure to speak at, and present certificates, at the All Wales People First Mirror Awards in Cardiff last night. Some inspirational work and stories for us to celebrate #LDAdFest2024 #LearningDisabilityWeek



Mirus Today @AllWalesPF #LDAdFest2024 we announced that Alex and Adam are now paid Mirus Ambassadors. Their work is crucial in shaping decisions that affect people with learning disabilities. Join us in celebrating their journey!



South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner A big thanks to @AllWalesPF for having us at #LDAdFest2024 @FutureInns yesterday!! Thank you to everyone who came to our stall and shared their experiences with us. It was brilliant to be part of the celebrations!





Disclosure & Barring Service



Gogledd Cymru Gyda'n Gilydd North Wales Together

Gwasanaethau Ddi-dor i bobl ag Anableddau Dysgu
Seamless services for people with Learning Disabilities



Learning Disability Wales
Anabledd Dysgu Cymru



De Cymru
Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddau
Police and Crime Commissioner
South Wales





What did you think of AdFest?

"As researchers we value Adfest! It's the one event where people with learning disabilities control the content, so having their voices heard means we learn so much from their experiences."

"It was really nice seeing everyone at AdFest. Also seeing new people as well"

"Adfest was amazing! it was great to see so many people involved"

"Ad Fest was great. The Hotel was great. I really enjoyed visiting the stalls. I'd like to see more stalls in the future".

AdFest means I can stay away from home in a hotel with friends, I can go to the bar whenever I want. I love it!

"It is a fantastic event. Really liked the MIRROR awards as part of the evening and in between courses"



“Adfest was well attended and it’s great to see everyone”

“I really enjoyed Adfest this year. The venue was accessible and I enjoyed the workshops”

“Everyone enjoyed the conference and it was the best one yet!”

AdFest is the self advocacy event of the year, and what an event it was once again this year!

Thanks to delegates, members, groups, support staff, contributors, sponsors and exhibitors. Thanks to Welsh Government, which funds our Hear me! Include me! Respect me! project.

You all helped to make AdFest happen so spectacularly in 2024!

Thanks also to official photographer Natasha Hirst for the beautiful pictures we’ve used throughout this report.



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government



#LDAdFest





est2024



“See you all next year!”

