**Case Studies**

In the Pride organiser’s words: Chris Porter, LGBT+ youth worker in Liverpool; ran Liverpool Pride’s first official youth zone in 2019

*2019 was our first year of opening up beyond our organisation’s building to other groups. The Youth Zone was overall well-received, although the rain all day obviously affected things - but we had a large marquee! We had an open mic for the young people and a dance floor, as well as free food. Young people told us that they liked having a designated separate area.*

*Our event was open to lots of community groups and had young people performing. We planned the whole thing based on ongoing consultation with young people. We could have done with some activities that facilitated mingling between the attendees. Young people said afterwards that a bigger space or marquee would have been good and that they would have liked a separated quiet space. Young people also reported wanting more seating and tabletop activities.*

*We did have some stuff like this: Charlie Craggs doing her Nail Transphobia, some games out on tables, snacks on tables, although some of this was also provided by other visiting youth groups.*

*In terms of difficulties: our location changed, which meant we didn’t see it beforehand, and that made our risk assessment hard to do and meant it was difficult directing people to the space. We also had some food issues as it was last minute provision but we were keen to provide free food. Costs are hard with this, though, and need thinking through. The toilets and water were also an issue, as our space was an outdoors one; people needed to go to nearby venues for the toilet. There were no young people designated toilets so young people were venturing into the main Pride events and/or pubs. We had security. This was mostly possible because we were separate from the main parade.*

*Liverpool Pride worked well with us. They reached out, chatted with our staff, met with me and then we worked via email correspondence. Ideally, they would have someone assigned to youth provision but, even without this, they were really amenable and available, and very keen on young people’s input and providing young people with spaces.*

In the Pride organiser’s words: Graham Rimmer, co-organiser of Salford Pride; planned youth provision as part of Salford Pride 2019

*Generally speaking, Pride events tend to be very targeted towards adults, 18+, because there are bars and all that kind of thing. We have a fairground and we encourage people of all ages to come along.*

*Salford Pride is the umbrella organisation but we call it the Pink Picnic and it’s hosted in the park, which is a helpful start for attracting young people. I’ve always known that a quite high proportion of attendees will be young people. [Bigger city Prides are often] more adult-oriented [even when] they have separate youth areas, which can be quite segregating, whereas we’re a big picnic; we bring everybody together.*

*The lesson this last year was from having a Youth Zone for the first time. We had decided to do something to meet demand because the previous year young people gave a lot of feedback that they wanted to meet like-minded and LGBT+ young people. Before that, we had a family zone. Of course, the whole Pride event is family-friendly, but […] at the time, that was all we had.*

*Prides need to refocus from being Pride parties to being more widely inclusive LGBT+ events. [So we reached out to LGBT+ youth work providers to organise for us.]*

*It was a bit hit and miss what different LGBT+ organisations suggested […] and the younger people couldn’t all join in [with our provision last year] because they were either too young or they were 18+. So we wanted to cover the age range of 12-24 because obviously not all over-18s want to just do drinking and dancing things, and we know the age of coming out is getting younger and younger.*

*We are moving away from us [Salford Pride] organising it towards experts [youth workers, etc] organising it. [Youth workers] already work with... young people [and] can capture the voices of young people. As an adult volunteer led organisation, we’re not necessarily that well attuned with what young people want. And obviously lots of them want different things so we thought we should leave it to… the experts, [who] know how to work with them.*

In the Pride organiser’s words: Sabah Choudrey, co-founder of Trans Pride Brighton and Queer Picnic; LGBT+ and Trans Youth Worker; trainee psychotherapist

*Marches/parades at Pride are good because everyone can and does join – meaning it’s not just for LGBTQ people, so, by joining the march, attendees will be less visible as an LGBTQ person. We say to young people who are coming to the march ‘you aren’t likely to be outed.’ Also some young people dress up, wear masks (during our pride preparation theme youth groups, we designed masks to wear in the march for those who wanted to attend but keep anonymous). Saying that… absolutely everyone does join in. Marches lose their essence and core, and become a kind of corporate pride, sponsor showing off, and it’s really hard for young people to connect to that. When you’re just coming out, you’re not really concerned with how much rainbow branding banks can plaster on their buildings. You just want to see community and the march doesn’t always look like community.*

*Still, this can build hope and possibility for those looking to the future. Representation matters. And yet, of course, visibility often compromises safety. There are pride protest groups, often centred around religion, which can be really difficult to see. For the last couple of years we’ve had to read out safety announcements about terrorist threats in London. It’s a sad reality that does put off young people from participating, especially those who are going to be most affected by things like this (religious young people, young people of colour). We have open conversations about this and support young people to participate in different ways, but it is a lot to ask for new young people.*

*Young people who haven’t been able to attend parade have been able to join our prep sessions, and design placards, badges, banners, etc with their own messages so, although they can’t be there, their voice and message is, which can be really powerful to see.*

*The main issue is getting there. We give travel bursaries to young people, as we don’t want money to be a barrier. However, it can be scary even travelling by yourself to your first Pride event so we have workers meet early at a meeting point near a station so we have time together as a group to bond, go through the day, and discuss worries before we get to the park. This is really positive.*

*But it’s difficult then finding a space for a youth group to sit that is away from the noise of a main stage, away from the bars/alcohol and adults being intoxicated. It’s hard to keep young people safe in that aspect, whilst keeping an eye on the attendants around us. I remind young people that this [drinking and party culture] is not Pride and encourage young people to go to the community stalls and ask questions, play games (like, who can get the most stickers), or hand out our youth group flyers to… people (for those who want to meet people and engage with others).*

*There aren’t many clear services or Pride events that say they are for YP or only 18+, which can be tricky when young people are approached by party organiser for example. I think the focus on partying overrides our thinking that the community is young people as well.*

*Security at main events gets tighter every year, and every year prides are working closer with police. Not all security are briefed on gender/sexuality/race awareness and often young people have negative experiences with these kinds of people. They are the literal gatekeepers of pride events, and are meant to keep our security safe, however with racial profiling and trans-misogyny and general transphobia, not all of our community is safe. Youth workers have to work with young people and each other to discuss the police presence as part of our pride preparations. This puts off mostly young people of colour from attending.*

*I think it’s really important that Pride organisers reach out to youth groups and meet them. Young people are literally the ones who are going to be in this community the longest because of their fresh and youthful lives so invest in them and invest in youth organisations. Black Pride had a youth ambassador, which was awesome. They ensured there was a youth presence one year by having a youth tent. This would be great but giving it over to youth organisations to run and so youth have a space would be much better. And giving them free travel in the form of a minibus, pink limo or a train ticket would also work.*

*Also by having things more youth inclusive, you make pride more inclusive as a whole. Sober spaces/less emphasis on alcohol makes it safe fun and accessible for those who don’t drink due to health/sobriety/religious reasons. Having a creche or family space makes it accessible for families who can’t afford childcare and who want to attend. When we create spaces for people, we are also creating spaces for young people. When we have services for people, we are also serving young people. We have to include young people at every level.*