

3c5

Day Centre

Do

Run a day centre, drop-in, clubhouse, sheltered workshop or day hospital to help develop skills and confidence to join in community activities at a later date.

Story

We found it hard to local an example of how attendance at a day centre had really helped a person to become part of their community.

Hints & Hazards

Attendance can equip people to go out into the community later in the week or in the future. It can offer a safe place for participants to acknowledge their disability, talk through the emotional and practical consequences of the loss of their 'healthy selves', face stigma, swap coping strategies, set realistic goals and redefine their experience as a political rather than merely a personal struggle (Hendrix 1981, Szivos and Griffiths 1990, Chappell 1992). People can try out new activities and develop skills with a familiar group. If the day service arranges activities in community buildings, then they can be designed to include opportunities

to introduce people to new activities, role and relationships in the wider community (strictly, these are benefits of a day service, not a day centre). The manner of such introductions needs to emphasise equality.

The day centre can become the only place a person meets others outside the family. The approach called Individual Placement and Support is more effective in getting people into employment than 'train and place' schemes (*Crowther 2000*). The Mencap (1999) study found that 30% of people reported being bullied in the day centre.