



Local Focus

The Chatterboxes

The Chatterboxes is a magazine project which is run by the Bournemouth YMCA and is created and designed by young people who have a disability.

The aim of the magazine is to showcase what activities are available in the local area for young people with disabilities and their family. The magazine is created quarterly and sent to every family with a child with a disability within the Bournemouth area. It is also sent to all schools that have young people with disabilities as well as to youth centres and other places that young people hang out.



The Chatterbox group design the layout, colour and content of the magazine. The group meets on a Tuesday evening at The Fusion Youth Centre in Bournemouth fortnightly from 6pm - 8pm.

The Chatterboxes recently won the Media Trust's Inspiring Voices Award 2012. This prestigious award aims to celebrate inspiring stories from across the UK of how community media, citizen journalism and community reporting have contributed to positive change in local communities.

“The main highlight of this project is watching the young people involved grow in confidence and skills as well as building strong friendships with each other”

*Poppy Sargeant,
Disability Youth Advisor, Bournemouth YMCA*

For more information about The Chatterboxes please call Poppy Sargeant on 07827 848479 or alternatively you can reach her by email at poppy.sargeant@bournemouthymca.org.uk

In this issue we spoke to three young people who are part of The Chatterbox group



Michelle Dunning (20) has a passion for drawing and specialises in Manga style illustrations. The illustrations are a regular feature in the Chatterbox magazine. She is hoping to get into the Arts Institute to widen her knowledge of art and hopes to create a graphic novel of her own one day and become independent.



Poppy and Max are Manga style characters drawn by Michelle and feature in the magazine.



Keanu Ross (19) volunteers 4 days a week at the British Heart Foundation charity shop in Christchurch and at Crumbs Café in Boscombe. Being a volunteer has made a very positive impact on Keanu's life. It has helped him build his confidence and he hopes that volunteering will progress to a paid job in the future.



Kirsty Seager (22) is actively involved in raising autism awareness and campaigning for improved services. She has been selected to work with the Department for Education on a Special Educational Needs green paper. She has written an autobiography which talks about her experiences with autism in the education system, college and volunteering which will soon be published.