

Sex

1. Tomorrow today project

Summary:

Adults who think learning is not for them are often inspired by hearing about the success of others with similar life-stories to themselves. The Tomorrow Today project - a partnership between Tomorrow's Women Wirral and Wirral Metropolitan College – will break down the barriers many women, who are at risk of offending, or on probation, face when progressing into education and employment.

A key element of this project will be the appointment of an apprentice Learning Champion - someone who has been through the criminal justice system and whose own learning journey is inspirational.

Celebration Event 20th June:

Feedback from Merseyside Community Rehabilitation Company - Cath Aubrey

As CRC Probation Manager for TWW staff, I attended the Tomorrow Today Awards on Friday 20th June. I was moved and inspired by this unique event and the response from the women who use the centre when their achievements were marked by certificates and words of encouragement and aspiration. I admire the commitment from the College and the partnerships within Tomorrow Women Wirral to make the difference to the lives of women who often arrive from the Criminal Justice process in a distressed and emotionally numb state. The community of spirit and friendship at TWW embraces these women and helps them to positively turn their lives around. The stigma of conviction prevents many women who have offended from accessing a range of services available to the majority of us. Employment^{definition}, training and education is a key pathway out of offending and yet for women the door is often closed to them. Their offending coupled with their societal role as primary carer and other complex issues in their lives create barriers, often reducing self esteem, motivation and financial and emotional independence, all of which can be achieved through education, employment and training. TWW provides a safe and inspirational environment within which partners can network and develop bespoke women-centred services, encouraging engagement and success. Women on statutory supervision flourish in this environment and their compliance has vastly improved since we began to deliver services at TWW. I hope that the College and other partnership relationships continue to develop and grow as the most effective means of reducing the potential for women to re-enter the CJS^{definition} and enabling them to access key services to turn their lives around.

2. Apprenticeships are not just for boys

Summary

Research from the trade body, Engineering UK Only, found that only 8.7% of professional engineers in the UK are women. The dearth of female engineers is a challenge right around the world, but UK figures are the lowest in Europe. With a skills shortage looming, Worcester Group Training Association is hoping to get more women into the sector through an Apprenticeship newsletter designed to promote engineering/manufacturing and Engineering Apprenticeships for women across Worcestershire.

The project developed workshops for schools - see [flyer](#) and these [local female case studies](#) that are being used to address gender stereotyping in Apprenticeships and to raise the image of engineering to females.

What did we do?

13 schools participating in STEM workshops attended by 319 female students, over 3000 students engaged through school assemblies and 2 STEM Apprenticeship events firmly put engineering on the map for Worcestershire schools and young people. Our aim was to raise awareness of engineering, particularly for females, to address some of the key barriers:

A lack of role models

- Lack of knowledge of the sector
- Girls perception that engineering Apprenticeships are only for boys
- Fear of being only female at recruitment events
- Parents' lack of knowledge of the sector

Raising awareness of engineering within schools has been a real eye opener. Feedback from the 319 student evaluations showed that 90% of them knew hardly anything about engineering at the start of the workshop, at the end of the workshop 75% said they would now consider engineering as a career option with a 50/50 split on achieving this either through an Apprenticeships or A level/Degree route.

The workshops were promoted to schools via a flyer that had a set agenda and the 'Cargo Drop' activity was mapped to the school curriculum which schools particularly liked

Workshop Content

- What is Engineering?
- Types of a Jobs and Career Opportunities
- Practical 'hands on activity' – Cargo Drop
- What do you need to be an Engineer?
- Apprenticeships and Engineering
- Females in Engineering
- What next ????

By making the workshops hands-on, students were engaged immediately and had a lot of fun in finding out about engineering

All resources and handouts were used from the **Tomorrow's engineers website** at: <http://www.tomorrowsengineers.org.uk/>

This website offers some excellent resources, handouts and video presentations, in particular:

- an animated video 'what is engineering' <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bipTWWHya8A>
- an interactive questionnaire called 'Whose Crew are you' <http://www.tomorrowsengineers.org.uk/whosecrewareyou/> which helped the students to identify what type of engineer would suit them and loads of other information for students, adults, parents, teachers, employers and STEM ambassadors.

As part of the workshops we invited along local employers and female apprentices. The students particularly liked hearing the female apprentice's stories. 7 female engineer case studies were completed with current female apprentices and these were circulated to promote the workshops. The girls were real ambassadors for engineering and all had really powerful stories to tell (see separate case studies)

The most important lesson we learned

One thing that became clear was that **although we were targeting Year 11-13 students (age 15-18 years), schools really wanted to have the workshops targeting year 8 students (age 12-13 years) as they felt that young people needed to be more informed before they chose their options to ensure they selected the right courses and were also made aware of the requirements from their GCSEs if they wanted to be an engineer. With Maths and Science being key subjects for engineers, along with IT, it became apparent that students had no idea of this.**

Teachers Comments and feedback have been excellent and there has been a huge demand for more workshops within schools

'This workshop provided an ideal opportunity to identify and support a group of excellent young women who aspire to a future in engineering. It was great to have an environment in which these students could focus on solving a problem and receive valuable information.'

King Charles School

'Do you have any vacancies for teachers to become Engineers?'

Nunnery Wood School

'Wow I thought Engineering was all about cars'

Bishop Perowne High School

'Many thanks for yesterday's workshop. It was very helpful to the group, many of whom had a great discussion about their careers after you left'

Droitwich School

"Thank you all for the time you gave and more importantly the impact you clearly had upon our students. The engineering workshop demonstrated how students can be totally enthralled by a challenge. The students were transfixed and it's a privilege as a teacher to stand back and see how the students apply STEM subjects in a creative environment. I am most grateful to you for providing such a dynamic time for our students."

Pershore High School

It is always hard to engage with schools but we felt that using a training provider association (TPA) to deliver the workshops on behalf of the training provider and FE^{definition} college network, we would have more success as TPAs are impartial and represent everyone and schools feel more comfortable allowing an organisation such as this into their school to speak directly to their students.

What difference did we make?

The progress of the project was continually fed back to the LEP Employment^{definition} and Skills Board (ESB), as a key priority for them was to increase engineering Apprenticeships in Worcestershire and recruit more females into engineering.

The workshops are now included in the LEP Strategic Development Plan (Apprenticeship Growth Plan) and will be funded to continue each year within schools

A STEM Group has been established which will now focus on growing engineering in Worcestershire and many other priorities have been included in their Development Plan with a high priority recognised as school engagement and advice and guidance to young people, especially around STEM Apprenticeships.

The STEM Group (employers, colleges, training providers all involved in delivering engineering) are now a sub group of the ESB so there is a strong focus on the LEP priorities and all priorities are coordinated and communicated efficiently with everyone working together. This has been a real achievement for Worcestershire and a strength for apprenticeship growth in STEM to include females into engineering and higher level skills for the sector.

Although it is too early to measure the impact of the project, there were 50+ STEM Apprenticeship vacancies across Worcestershire with very few applicants at the start of the project, there are now (May 2014) 90+ STEM vacancies with many more applicants and a noticeable increase in 16-19 year applications.

It is anticipated that there will be growth in engineering Apprenticeships and females in STEM Apprenticeships when the next statistical data is released for Worcestershire.

The Female case studies we developed will be used in marketing campaigns and will be shared with the National Apprenticeship Service. The females will also be invited to attend future school events with their employers

3. Challenging Occupational Stereotyping through Careers Guidance (COGS)

Original project proposal

The Health/Care, STEM/Engineering, Digital/ICT^{definition} and Admin/Law sectors are all lacking the skilled professionals they need. One reason for this is that these industries are all too subject to gender stereotyping. The Challenging Occupational Gender^{definition} Stereotyping through Careers Guidance will research, design and produce accessible, inspiring resources for careers professionals to use with men and women to give them the right information, advice and guidance of non-traditional occupational alternatives in these 4 skills-demand sectors. The resources will stimulate adults to re-examine their options and provide exposure to information about non-traditional work they may already have ruled out as potential careers due to gender-based stereotypes.

Our finished iPad App

We're delighted to announce the App for iPad is now available to download from the Apple store:

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/challenging-occupational-gender/id900080658?mt=8>
(Opens in new window) (or search the Apple Store using COGS as your keyword).

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