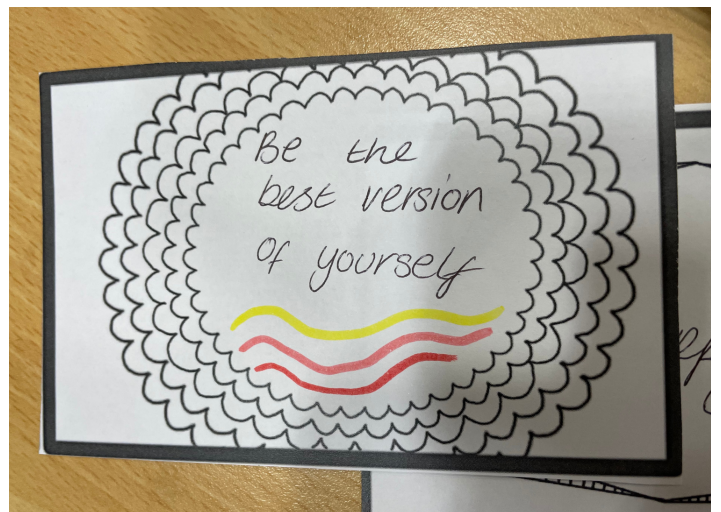


BOBS Skills Pilot Summary Report



Background and Aims



Background

Since 2019, Culture Shift has developed the **Being Our Best Selves (BOBS)** programme, with a focus on improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing of learning disabled adults, for whom there is overwhelming evidence of health inequalities, social isolation and limited opportunities for personal development.

In January 2022, Culture Shift delivered a series of **BOBS Skills** pilot sessions, extending the existing BOBS model into Further Education settings addressing the criteria of the Catch Up Fund. To be eligible learners must be aged 16-18 and have achieved up to a grade 4 in GCSE English and/or Maths or aged 19-24 with an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

The sessions took place at Crawley, Chichester and Worthing Colleges over a period of 7 days.

The Aims

The BOBS Skills programme tackles real and significant challenges which are faced by growing numbers of young people, particularly in the light of pandemic experiences, including:

- Lost/disrupted learning
- Low self esteem and confidence
- Poor social skills
- Lack of resilience
- Mental and physical health pressures
- Concerns for the future as a consequence of both the pandemic and climate change
- Lack of vocational and practical skills and meaningful encounters with employers

The sessions aimed to enable young people to develop the skills, confidence, positive language and attitude needed to build resilience and access support, social and work opportunities.

Crucially, the sessions were interactive and engaging, celebrating individuality and nurturing a strong sense of self and awareness of what we can all do to bring out the best in ourselves and others.



I thought I would just stay for the first hour to be honest but I have stayed all day so what does that tell you?

[Student, Chichester College]

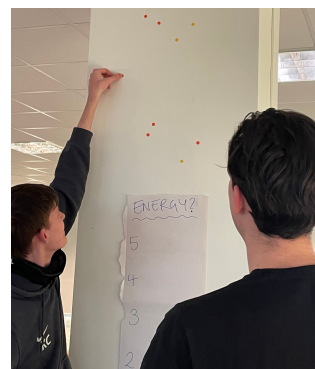
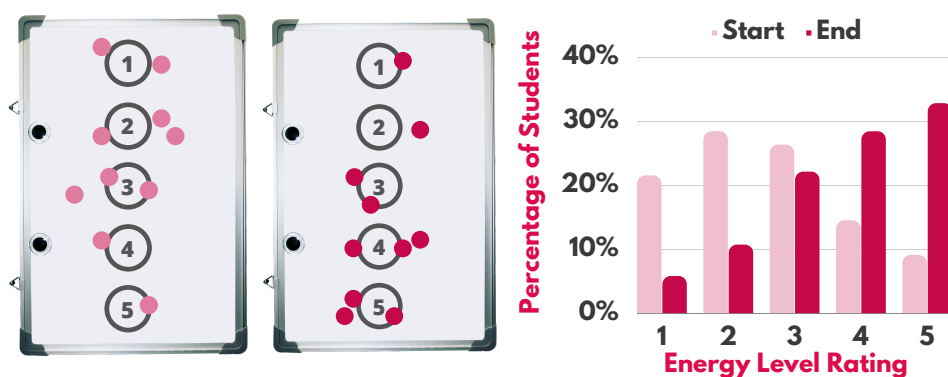
The Activity



Checking In

301 students took part over the course of 16 sessions. The smallest group size was 7 and the largest was 34. Sessions were 2.5-3 hours long. One group did 2 sessions in one day. Every session was bookended with a request for students to rate their own energy levels on a scale of 1-5.

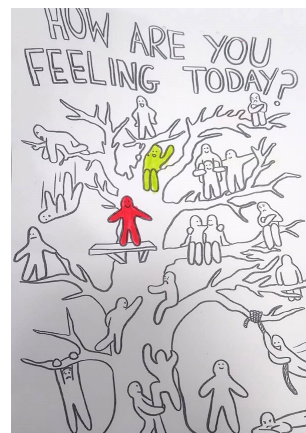
Energy Levels: Start of Session vs End of Session (1 = low and 5 = high)



49.9% of students rated their energy levels as 2 or below at the beginning of the session as opposed to only 16.5% reporting a score of 2 or below at the end. In contrast only 23.6% of students reported a score of 4 or below at the beginning of the session increasing to 61.2% at the end.

Blob Tree

Students were also asked to 'check-in and check-out' with themselves and reflect on how they were feeling, using the visual aid of the 'Blob Tree'. They were encouraged to adopt these as simple self-reflection tools in their daily lives.



Is this meant to make us feel good about ourselves?
Because that's what it doing. I don't often feel good about myself.

[Student, Crawley College]

Group Task One

Every session began with a group task to create a temporary gallery of pictures and words. Each student was asked to select a picture which appealed to them for any reason from a varied selection offered.

They were then asked quick-fire questions and added their responses to the gallery:

What time of day are you at the best?

What are you doing when you are your best self?

Where are you? Who are you with?

This activity engaged students with self reflection in a light, accessible way.

Where are you?

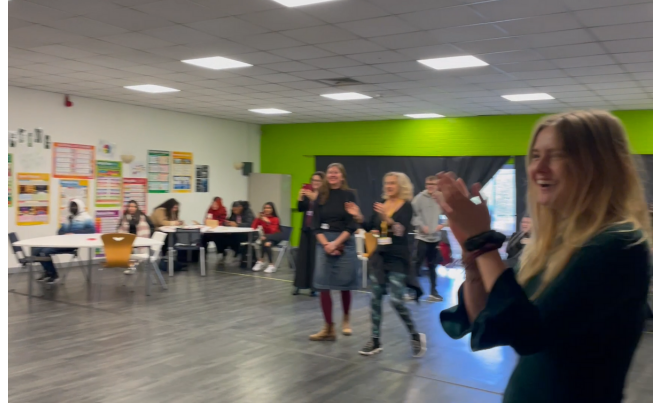


What are you doing when you are your best self?



Physical Warm Up

This was adapted to the needs of each group but essentially consisted of controlled breathing, some gentle stretching and moving.



Group Task Two

This included a team bucket challenge and a tower building challenge. Both were popular and inspired a great deal of good humour, creativity and collaboration.



Social Interaction and Discussion

This was structured and facilitated in the form of a mind setting activity and 'BOBS Bingo'.

The 'Mind-Setting' activity was based on the following prompts:

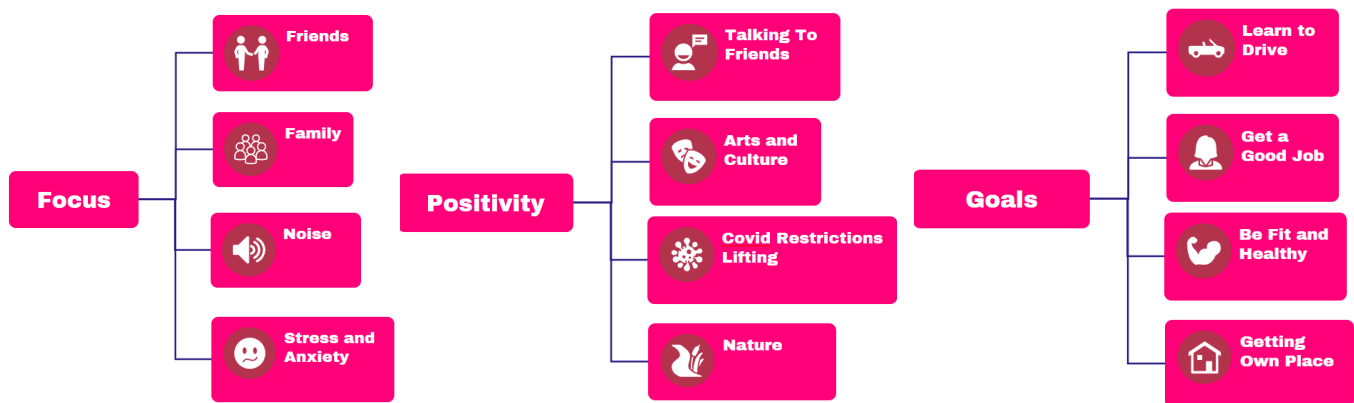
FOCUS - What things distract us?

POSITIVITY - What is there to feel positive about in the world?

GOALS - What do we aim for in life?

Each of these prompts were explored through small group conversation and then followed up with individual reflection through journaling techniques.

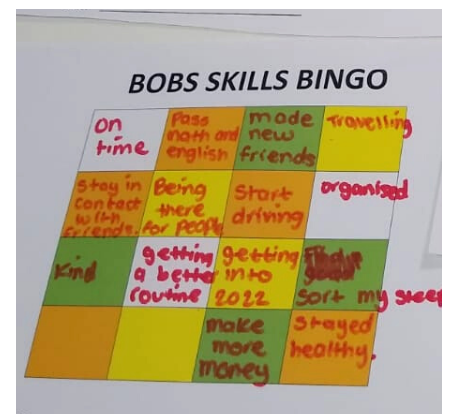
Participants were asked to name 3 things that help you focus, 3 things that you feel positive about in your life and 3 goals for your own life for the next 3 year.



BOBS Bingo

This game consisted of a series of prompts for individual consideration, such as:

- **One** thing you have achieved **TODAY**
- **Two** things you have achieved in your life so far (they might be big or small)
- **One** thing you have achieved in the last year
- **Two** things you want to achieve in the future
- **Three** things you are good at/skills you have
- **Two** things you would like to get better at/try
- **One** thing that makes you worry
- **Two** people you admire (one you know and one from afar)
- **One** person who has helped you
- **One** person you have helped

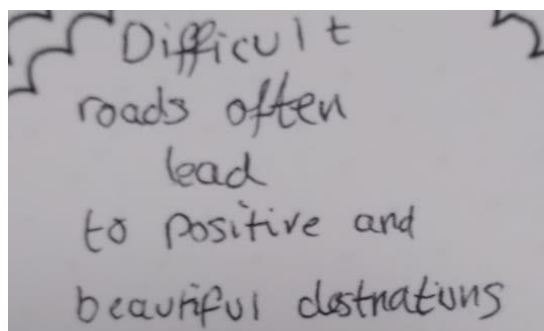
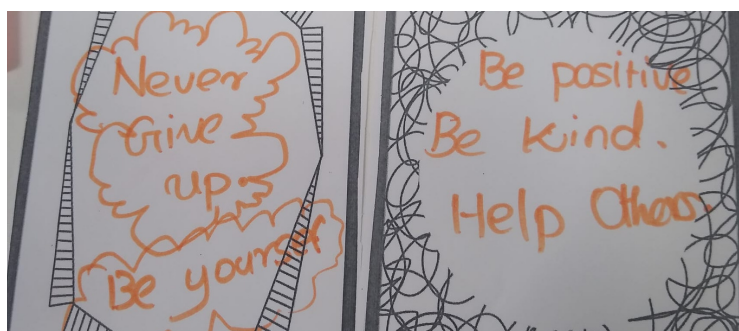
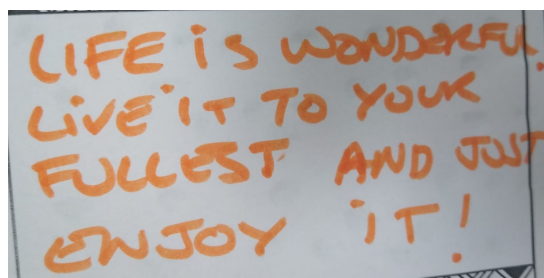
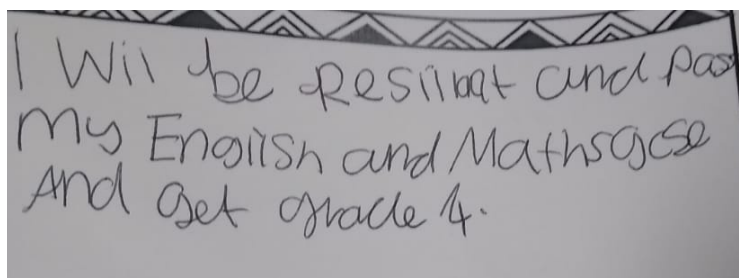


These sessions have been brilliant for the students and have given me so many ideas that I can adapt and use in the classroom!

[Teacher, Crawley College]

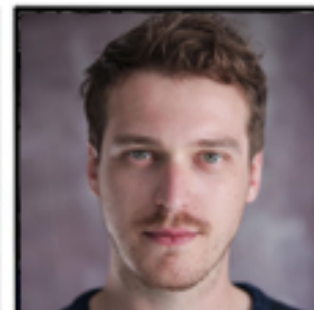
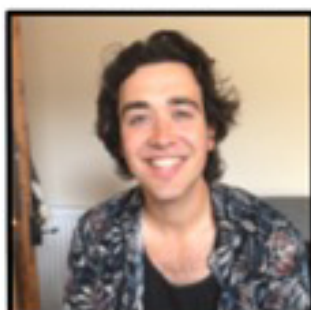
Creative Activity

This was an integral part of every session, taking the form of colouring, making motivational cards and creative journaling techniques.



Meet The Team

Each session was led by a team of 4 trained BOBS Coaches, bringing a variety of personalities and skills, working hard to employ a range of strategies to engage students, who were sometimes initially reluctant and sceptical.



6 out of 18 students in a group at Crawley College said they would like to train to be BOBS coaches

Learning and Future Development



From these pilot sessions, we have observed the following:

Music contributes greatly to the impact of these sessions. It provides background atmosphere and motivation. A high number of students identified music as something which aids their ability to focus.

Visual aids are highly effective engagement tools. Using pictures rather than words was an accessible and successful starting point for group activity.

Variety of pace is key to success with some activities undertaken at high speed, some with more time to discuss/consider.

Movement is beneficial. The sessions are always active and interactive, punctuated with movement around the room, responding to instructions and undertaking tasks.

The recommended format. Participants are encouraged to develop and extend BOBS activities independently and embed the skills and approaches they are introduced to into their everyday lives. In order for this to be possible, we suggest at least a week between an introductory session and a follow-up is beneficial.

We are currently delivering longer term, flexible programs of activity, building on the success of these one-off sessions.

For more information and to discuss your specific requirements, please contact us at info@cultureshift.org.uk

With many thanks to the staff and students of Chichester College, Worthing College and Crawley College.

www.cultureshift.org.uk



My mental health already feels so much better because I can get everything out and I don't normally get to do that. Can we do this every week? I need it ... I feel like I have a voice for once

[Student, Worthing College]