



A 12 Hour, Generic, Preventative, Supportive, Resilient and Fun Space For ANYONE In Years 6-8

Aim - Have a **S**afe, **U**seful, **R**esilient, **F**ree, **S**pace in which to have fun, make friends, develop social skills and explore personal understanding of resilience, together with acquiring a toolkit of techniques with which to promote and sustain resilience and mental health.

Outcomes

- Gain an awareness of resilience and mental health from a holistic and humanist perspective.
- Have a safe, fun, neutral, freeing, and empathic space in which to explore what affects the world of young people.
- Creatively identify the possible causes and effects of stress and anxiety and impacts on health.
- Practice coping techniques to deal with stress and anxiety, including 'tapping' and Biofeedback
- Know how to 'do resilience', learn effectively and develop independence, using creative inner resources, problem solving and self awareness.
- Make new friends, develop effective and symbiotic (mutually beneficial) social, communication and environmental care skills and gain purpose through SURFS Fund Raising Activities e.g. litter picks, beach cleans, cake sales, sponsored activities etc.
- Learn how to ask for help safely and how to find help in emergencies.
- Understand how to be a supportive friend and how to practice self-care within that.

Context

Resilience levels are a key factor in the maintenance of general mental wellbeing and the ability to cope with the ups and downs of life. Research from National Mental Health Organisations e.g. MIND, Young Minds, Samaritans, together with formal and informal consultation with individuals and groups and evaluation from the delivery of our DRIFTS resilience and social skills programmes and other young people's workshops, reveal that low resilience levels contribute significantly to the development of a range of mental health difficulties e.g. eating difficulties, anger, self-harm, anxiety and low mood, as well as impacting on effective learning, communication and social skills and behaviour.

SURFS has been created as a GENERIC, non-targeted, inclusive training programme that can be accessed easily by **ANY** young person in the age range, to address the underlying causes of mental health difficulties in a safe, protected, supported, enjoyable and practical way. The approach used is a creative blend of the base principles of person-centred counselling and outcome-led facilitative training practice, delivered in an 'orbital manner' that is unique to Summerhouse Services, with the emphasis on supported participation to own comfort level, small and large group work, creative and fun-based activities and positive social interaction. Worker to group member ratio = 1 worker to every 3 or 4 participants.

SURFS is not therapy, counselling, or a youth group, but an autonomous, personal resilience, mental health promotion and social skills development programme. All workers are comprehensively trained and supervised and the nature of the content and the neutral, empathic, fun and free environment offered by the SURFS Team naturally promotes change and healing in different degrees. Evidence now shows this may avert the need for some to engage with clinical mental health services or provide a supportive interim space for a person that may be on a waiting list for other services. **SURFS IS therapeutic and also preventative in nature and at the same time IS NOT counselling or therapy.** Therefore young people can engage and enjoy the experience of SURFS at the same time as receiving therapy as an enhancing offer and without the risk of 'splitting' or being further labelled or 'pathologized' by multiple targeted interventions.

