



# **Freedom to Be (F2B) 2011 Evaluation Report**

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## Introducing “Freedom To Be”

In August 2010, the Children’s HIV Association (“CHIVA”) ran the pilot Summer Camp “Freedom to Be” (“F2B”) for HIV-positive young people aged 13 - 17. When this camp’s beneficial impact on the majority of attendees became apparent (Sigma Research, 2011), funding was secured through a generous donation from the Monument Trust, and a donation from the Peter Moore Foundation. This ran between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of August at a Youth Hostel Association (YHA) activity centre in Derbyshire. The camp was attended by 97 young people, of whom 60 female and 37 male.

The key aims of the camp can be summed up as follows:

- i) To facilitate the development of peer friendships and networks in order to address the high level of social isolation experienced by this group;
- ii) To supplement the participants’ knowledge and understanding on how to live well with HIV;
- iii) To enhance the participants’ confidence and self-esteem through outward-bound activities, decreased isolation and added knowledge; and
- iv) To facilitate the participants’ access to a broader community of people living with HIV so as to provide them with knowledge, support, guidance and inspiration.

Places were allocated on the basis of criteria such as whether the applicant had attended the earlier camp and/or had access to support services. Table I below provides an overview of the ages of the participants at the time of attendance:

**Table I – Ages of Participants**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>
13 years old	17
14 years old	17
15 years old	27
16 years old	17
17 years old	19

In addition to participants personally applying for attendance, referrals were received from a number of healthcare providers. Table II provides an overview of the regional distribution of camp attendees.

**Table II – Regional distribution of Camp Attendees**

Region	Number
Central (England)	11
East (England)	3
Ireland	2
London and District (England)	25
Midlands (England)	10
North East (England)	6
North West (England)	16
Scotland	2
South East (England)	12
South West (England)	9
Wales	1

The team running camp consisted of 6 CHIVA staff, 20 key workers (volunteers) and 10 Camp Leaders (volunteers aged 18-24). All Camp Leaders were HIV positive, as were 50% (n=10) of the key workers. Some of the camp leaders had attended F2B 2010 as participants (n=3) and some of the key workers (n=5) had been Camp Leaders the previous year.

In order to achieve the camp's aims, various HIV-focused workshops were held on the following topics: Stigma, Disclosure, Medication, and General HIV Awareness. These workshops were supplemented by a range of outward-bound activities as provided by the YHA centre, e.g.: climbing, canoeing, abseiling, rope walking, and caving. An additional "creative day" allowed the young people to take part in a wide

range of creative activities such as: rap, singing, dance, yoga, relaxation therapy, archery, film-making, arts and crafts, sculpture making, and drama.

### **Evaluation Methods**

Short evaluation forms were distributed after the camp's four HIV-related workshops on Disclosure, Stigma, Medication, and General HIV Awareness. Each workshop had addressed one distinct aspect of living with HIV and was repeated six times for different groups of young people. The evaluation forms were distributed after at least three of the sessions on each topic and were designed to assess:

- i) clarity and accessibility;
- ii) increases in knowledge;
- iii) recommendations for improvements; and
- iv) overall satisfaction.

Additionally, at the end of camp, a survey was completed by 88 of the 97 young people attending. Key workers and volunteers helped ensure that the young people were given adequate time and a confidential environment in order to complete the survey. This survey, which contained both qualitative and quantitative elements, was designed to identify and assess participants':

- i) overall experience and assessment of the camp;
- ii) increase of knowledge in regards to HIV and/or related issues;
- iii) development of peer friendships and networks; and
- iv) (for re-attendees) F2B 2010 comparisons. Some of the survey's questions were either copied from last year's end-of-camp questionnaire or phrased so as to facilitate comparisons.

Six weeks after F2B 2011, both key workers and camp leaders were asked to complete an online survey designed to assess their views and opinions in regards to:

- i) venue;
- ii) activities;
- iii) workshops;
- iv) support received; and

- v) changes introduced this year following last year's feedback. Of the 29 individuals who had received the survey, 13 key workers and two camp leaders (15) responded.

## **Chapter I - Workshops**

After attending HIV-related workshops on the topics of "Stigma", "Medicine", "Disclosure" and "General HIV Awareness", participants were asked to complete feedback forms. Per topic, the following amount of replies were received: Stigma (56); Medicine (61); Disclosure (82); General HIV Awareness (76).

### ***Clarity and Accessibility***

The overwhelming majority of participants were able to accurately identify the specific intent of each of the Workshops, i.e., its overarching topic and/or one or more of the sub-topics or themes. Some participants additionally identified deeper meanings and messages in the Disclosure and Stigma Workshops, e.g., the participant who noted that the Stigma Workshop addressed, "*you don't need to be alone*", and another participant's finding in the Disclosure Workshop:

*"Learning to be confident in telling people about HIV. And learning that rejection may happen but that's a part of life"(F2B, Young Person)*

Only one participant of the Disclosure, Stigma and Medicine workshops was not able to accurately determine their particular intent. The above results however suggest that the workshops were sufficiently clear to facilitate a base-line understanding for the majority of the participants and, for some participants, a fairly in-depth understanding.

### ***Increase in Knowledge***

The following number of participants professed to have learned one or more new things during the course of the workshops: Medicine = 45 (74%); Disclosure = 62 (82%); Stigma = 49 (88%); and General HIV Awareness 74 (87%), thereby indicating that the majority of participants gained some HIV-related knowledge during the workshops. Additionally, in spite of the fact that a percentage of the respondents did not answer this particular question, it cannot be automatically assumed that these participants did not learn anything during the workshops. In fact, only a very small number of participants stated to not have learned anything: Medicine (1); Disclosure (5); Stigma (3); and General HIV Awareness (2). Some of the respondents explained this in the following manner, i.e., on the subject of medication:

*“My doctor goes through everything with me” (F2B, Young Person).*

However, this particular example did not apply to many of the other camp attendees. In regards to medication, the majority of respondents claimed to have learned something about the importance of medication and adherence. Others felt they had learned more about some very basic rules on adherence, such as:

*“When you vomit, you should take meds straight after” (F2B, Young Person)*

*“To take your medicine at the same time every day” (F2B, Young Person)*

The above quotes illustrate that, prior to the workshops, some participants did in fact lack knowledge in regards to some very basic aspects of adherence. A similar conclusion can be drawn from the results of the General HIV Awareness workshop, where respondents stated to have gained knowledge on topics such as *“to use a condom”*. Participants noted that this particular workshop helped them to better understand subjects such as what HIV exactly is, the manner in which it is spread, and the use of terminology (such as CD4). Other respondents said that they had learned how to better live and deal with their HIV-positive status:

*“That there are positive things about HIV ” (F2B, Young Person)*

*“That there are so many ways to help yourself” (F2B, Young Person)*

In regards to the Disclosure workshop, thematic analysis revealed that participants had gained knowledge on: i) how to disclose; ii) HIV in general; and iii) deeper meanings. The latter of these suggest that this particular workshop may have helped some participants to gain confidence in *“how to deal with HIV”*, how not to be afraid, and how to be themselves.

In the Stigma workshop, participants identified the following themes: i) trust; ii) disclosure issues; and iii) deeper meanings. Responses indicate that some participants learned to be cautious in regards to disclosure in view of potentially mixed reactions, while others learned that not everyone will treat them badly following disclosure. The fact that this particular aspect of disclosure was clarified for participants, indicates that this workshop was of value in addressing the high level of anticipated stigma feared by this group. The following quote illustrates one of the deeper and more personal lessons which some participants claimed to have gained from the workshops:

*“I learned that even though you are positive, you are still special” (F2B, Young Person)*

This quote also serves to illustrate how these workshops – by imparting knowledge and understanding of HIV – can be instrumental in enhancing this particular group’s self-esteem. The feedback in regards to gains in HIV-related knowledge suggest that these workshops have not only helped increase knowledge and

understanding of HIV for a significant proportion of the participants, but that they have also helped them learn to deal with related issues such as rejection and stigma.

### ***Overall Satisfaction***

Prior to the commencement of the workshops participants were asked whether they wanted to attend. After the workshops they were queried as to whether they were glad that they had done so. Their responses are outlined in Table III below.

**Table III - Responses to the questions: “Did you want to come to this Workshop?” and “Are you glad you came?”**

	Before				After			
	Yes	Not sure	No	Total	Yes	Not sure	No	Total
<b>Stigma</b>	38 % (21)	55 % (31)	7 % (4)	100%(56)	91 % (51)	9 % (5)	0 % (0)	100% (56)
<b>Medicine</b>	43 % (26)	49 % (30)	8 % (5)	100%(61)	84 % (51)	13 % (8)	3 % (2)	100% (61)
<b>Disclosure</b>	34 % (28)	50 % (41)	16% (13)	100%(82)	78 % (64)	13 % (11)	13 % (7)	100% (82)
<b>General HIV Awareness</b>	50 % (20)	43 % (17)	8 % (3)	100%(40)	84 % (32)	13% (5)	3 % (1)	100% (38)

Prior to the workshops, approximately half of the attendees had been unsure whether they actually wanted to attend or not. However, after having attended, the majority stated for each of the workshops to be glad to have done so. The Stigma workshop in particular stands out with a 100% affirmation in regards to participants being glad to have attended, and after the Medicine and General HIV Awareness workshops a mere few indicated that they rather would not have attended (two and one respectively). For the Disclosure session, a total of seven participants claimed to regret attendance. As an additional means of assessing overall satisfaction, participants were then asked to indicate their feelings about the various workshops by checking their reaction as either “happy”, “neutral” or “sad”. The responses are outlined in Table IV below.

**Table IV - Reactions to various Workshops**

	Happy	Neutral	Sad	Total
<b>Stigma</b>	90% (47)	10% (5)	0% (0)	100% (52)
<b>Medicine</b>	82% (46)	16% (9)	2% (1)	100% (56)

<b>Disclosure</b>	68% (52)	27%(21)	5% (4)	100% (77)
<b>General HIV Awareness</b>	73% (55)	22% (17)	4% (3)	100% (76)

Table IV indicates that more than two-thirds of the attendees regarded the workshops as a positive experience. The Stigma workshop received the highest satisfaction percentage, with 90% of the attendees expressing happiness about the workshop, with no negative replies whatsoever. The Medicine and General HIV Awareness workshops were generally also enthusiastically received, with the Disclosure workshop receiving the least number of positive replies: 68% of attendees were afterwards happy that they had attended; 27% of participants took a neutral position, and 5% claimed to actually be unhappy.

Although the above figures indicate that the majority of respondents did indeed feel positive about attendance, some inconsistencies became apparent in regards to specific workshops. These inconsistencies could possibly be explained in the light of some responses in regards to certain aspects of the workshops which could be improved. It could also reflect the different levels of difficulty of the issues covered in different workshops. The Stigma workshop aimed to give participants an understanding of stigma so they can manage it as and when they face it, Medication and General HIV are self explanatory. The Disclosure workshop looked at the more challenging topic of the realities of telling someone you have HIV and how they may react.

### ***Room for Improvement***

For each of the workshops, participants were asked to specify a particular thing they disliked or would liked to see changed in the future. In regards to the Medicine and Disclosure workshops, a recurring theme was that some participants had felt bored and disengaged and had resented having to sit still for long periods of time. Several participants suggested that future workshops could possibly incorporate more games and activities in order to make them more “upbeat”. Fewer suggestions were received in regards to the General HIV Awareness workshop, but some replies addressed “*too much sitting*” and “*there should be less talking*”.

On the Stigma workshop, participants suggested more props for the drama, more time to rehearse, and more focus on the activity elements. It must be noted that these comments, rather than suggesting a different approach altogether, emphasised a need to extend and increase certain elements which were in fact already incorporated into the workshops. These particular comments demonstrate that an active and drama-based

approach for these workshops greatly affects the enjoyment and response of these young people, which in turn leads to the conclusion that future workshops would do well to emphasise and incorporate additional drama-based and inter-active approaches.

## **Chapter II - Camp General**

The following Section provides an outline of the results of the survey as distributed at the end of the F2B 2011, which was subsequently completed by 88 of the attendees. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the 2010 F2B Evaluation commissioned by SIGMA.

### ***Overall Experience and Assessment***

The feedback of the young people in regards to overall experience was overwhelmingly positive. The majority of participants described their experience as either “excellent” (74%) or “good” (24%), with only two individuals indicating “fair” (2%). None of the participants classified their experience as “poor”. The particular layout of the questionnaire made it possible for the participants to comment further on this question as well as provide additional overall feedback, whereupon a total of 39 and 44 responses respectively were received.

Thematic analysis demonstrated that the majority of participants had experienced the camp either as fun and exciting (12), or as an amazing experience (18) with one participant stating that “words can’t explain”. In these comments many of the participants expressed their gratitude (8), and stated a desire to re-attend (16). Several requests were received from older participants asking to attend the following year as a camp leader. Other participants emphasised the importance of being around people who share similar experiences (11):

*“I never thought it would be filled with people who understand and care” (F2B, Young Person)*

Some participants provided more in-depth commentaries of their views of F2B, as illustrated by the quote below:

*“F2B is an inspiration which helps people discover their abilities and capabilities. I never thought I would climb a mountain, but thanks to all the support I made it to the top and I intend to stay there” (F2B, Young Person)*

This quote additionally brings out that the outward-bound activities of the 2011 F2B camp were particularly successful in helping many of the young people gain more self-confidence, as well as in teaching them more about themselves. Evidence of this can be found in the replies to the survey question in regards to the three things which the participants liked best about the camp. Thematic coding of these replies showed that these outward-bound activities were mentioned 69 times, which made them the most popular aspect of the camp. This particular figure was closely followed by numerous references to meeting people and/or making friends (68). Further popular aspects of the camp were identified as the planning/logistics (24); the camp atmosphere (22); and the party (21).

In regards to planning and logistics, several young people commented on their enjoyment of the amount of available free time, with additional positive comments made in regards to the location, the rules, and the age divisions. In light of the fact that the 2010 F2B camp had received some criticism in regards to a perceived lack of free time, efforts had been made this year to incorporate additional free time into the camp schedule, which appears to have been successful and appreciated by attendees.

On the subject of camp atmosphere, the majority of participants emphasised how they valued the experience of being in an environment where *“the freedom was amazing”* and *“you [could] talk to anyone about HIV”*. These comments show how vital it is to support these young people by bringing them in contact with a wider community of people living with HIV and an environment where HIV can be openly discussed.

Participants were additionally asked to list three things which they liked least about the camp. Thematic coding revealed the food (provided at the YHA) to be the most unpopular element (51), with the lunches being specifically mentioned by several participants. Complaints about the accommodation followed next (41) with references to the stairs, the lack of mobile phone reception, and the showers. There was also some complaint of the rules (22), this particularly in regards to bed times and the length of the camp. There was also mention of a measure of conflict and disagreement between some of the young people (13).

Participants were also asked to provide suggestions on how F2B could be improved, which rendered 74 responses (84%). The comments mainly addressed the suitability of the accommodation (21) and the quality of the food (21). Additionally, as was also the case last year, and in spite of the fact that this year’s F2B had been extended by one day, some of the participants still felt that the camp should have a longer duration (11) (which could of course also be seen as indicative of these

participants' positive experiences). Finally, some suggestions were made in regards to improving the organisation of activities and workshops (9), where respondents suggested that groups should be further sub-divided on the basis of age and ability.

In spite of these particular comments, feedback suggests that the young people's experience of 2011 F2B was overwhelmingly positive, with all respondents expressing a desire to attend subsequent camps.

### ***Increase of Knowledge of HIV or Surrounding Issues***

*"You can still have a baby and live a happy and healthy life" (33)*

Each of the respondents were asked to identify any newly gained knowledge in regards to HIV following the camp. A total of 72 responses (82%) were received, 69 of which featuring a description of one or more things learned while attending. Thematic analysis revealed the following overarching categories: HIV General Awareness (33), Medication (13), Disclosure (9), Family and Relationships (7), and simply that they "learned a lot" (10). The first four topics relate directly to the subjects which were covered in the workshops, thereby providing additional evidence of their vital role in providing HIV-related knowledge bases. Other comments point towards more specific knowledge gained such as:

*"You can get HIV in your spine" (F2B, Young Person)*

However, the responses suggest that participants particularly increased in knowledge in regards to very basic HIV-related subjects such as:

*"How it's transmitted from person to person" (F2B, Young Person); or*

*"HIV is a virus" (F2B, Young Person)*

These findings correlate with those of the Workshop Evaluation Forms, indicating that: (a) the baseline knowledge of many participants was exceptionally poor prior to the camp, and (b) significant improvements had been made in this regard during the camp. These factors were also reflected in the comments of some respondents on having learned "a lot" – the camp thus potentially impacting their overall outlook on life in a significant way. This is illustrated by the following quote:

*"A lot of information. I'm not alone. Feel very grateful to live and to know I will live"  
(F2B, Young Person)*

As stated above, the provision of information could be conceptualised for some attendees as having an impact on their general outlook and expectations of life, e.g.,

knowing that HIV does not equate to a death sentence. In addition to HIV-specific knowledge, participants were asked to identify one other thing which they learned about themselves at the camp. This particular question received 61 responses (70%), with 13 participants asserting to have gained greater self-acceptance - which for these young people can signify a vital step towards the challenging the internalised stigma which many of them experience. This is illustrated in the following comments:

*“I learned that even though I’ve got HIV, I’m still a regular person” (F2B, Young Person)*

*“I am who I am. I am not a virus” (F2B, Young Person)*

Another topic identified in the response form, was the subject of being confident (15). Many young people claimed to have become more confident as a result of the camp, which in turn would allow them to better deal with HIV-related stigma:

*“That I can be brave if people make jokes about HIV” (F2B, Young Person)*

Others felt they had learned more about their own capabilities, which had raised their level of self-esteem:

*“That I am stronger than I ever thought” (F2B, Young Person)*

Many of the respondents additionally stated that they had gained valuable interpersonal skills (16), with participants coming to see themselves as a “*people person*” or someone who “*can make friends easily*”. These findings further underline the importance of F2B addressing the social isolation of this group. Finally, some of the young people felt that they had matured and learned how to better live with HIV (5):

*“I’ve grown more mature towards the attitude at others and I deal with things in a better way” (F2B, Young Person)*

### ***Development of Peer Friendships and Networks***

A wide body of research has demonstrated the importance of support networks in dealing with the psychological and physical challenges which are associated with HIV. One of the main aims of F2B is to address the high levels of social isolation faced by this group through facilitating the development of peer friendships and networks which can be maintained after a camp. Participants were asked whether they planned to keep in touch with people they had met at F2B, which resulted in 95% (81) affirmative responses, with 5% (4) stating to be unsure. However, none of the young people said they would absolutely refrain from future contact with young people met at the camp.

These particular findings further underline the fact that participants to the Camp were shown to particularly value the opportunity to meet people and make friends. Within that certain framework, various young people were able to become more aware of their particular skills in getting along with other people.

As mentioned above, F2B aimed to address the social isolation of this group by helping them meet and interact with other young people living with HIV. In the survey, participants were asked to comment on the importance they attach to being around other young people with HIV:

**Table V – Importance of being around other Young People with HIV**

(missing = 1)	Number	Percent
<b>Very important</b>	73	83%
<b>Sort of important</b>	14	16%
<b>Not sure</b>	0	0%
<b>Not really important</b>	0	0%
<b>Not important</b>	0	0%

As can be seen above, 100% of the respondents confirmed the importance they attach to being around other young people living with HIV, which represents a 7% increase from 2010 F2B. These particular figures appear to underline this camp's success in targeting some of the most socially isolated individuals.

In order to determine the participants' responses to operating within a larger community of people living with HIV, they were asked about the importance they adhere to being around key workers as well as camp leaders living with HIV. The results are outlined in Table VI and VII below:

**Table VI – Importance of being around Key Workers with HIV**

(Missing = 2)	Number	Percent
<b>Very important</b>	54	63%
<b>Sort of important</b>	28	33%
<b>Not sure</b>	3	4%
<b>Not really important</b>	0	0%
<b>Not important</b>	1	1%

**Table VII – Importance of being around Camp Leaders with HIV**

(Missing = 1)	Number	Percent
<b>Very important</b>	56	64%
<b>Sort of important</b>	27	31%
<b>Not sure</b>	3	3%
<b>Not really important</b>	1	1%
<b>Not important</b>	0	0%

The results indicate that the majority of respondents felt it to be important to be around both key workers (96%) as well as camp leaders (95%) with HIV.

### ***Comparisons with F2B 2010 for re-attendees.***

Participants were asked to indicate in the survey whether they had attended 2010 F2B and if so what, if anything, they liked better about 2011 F2B. 41 of the participants who completed the survey indicated to have attended in 2010, with 36 respondees referring to one or more things they liked better during 2011 F2B. Their comments specifically addressed having more free time than before (8); having the opportunity to meet new people and get closer to those met at 2010 F2B (7); and the outdoor activities (5).

It can be concluded from these particular comments that 2011 F2B appears to have successfully implemented some of the changes which were recommended by last year's feedback.

## **Chapter III - Volunteer Feedback**

Six weeks after F2B 2011, the camp's volunteers were asked to complete an online survey, of which 15 responses were received. The volunteers were asked to rate certain aspects of F2B 2011 on a scale from "very poor" to "excellent": i) venue; ii) activities; iii) workshops; iv) support received; and v) reactions to changes after F2B 2010. Volunteers were additionally queried in regards to personal comments and/or feedback. The survey provided the following information:

### ***Venue***

Respondents were asked for their ratings of four aspects of the venue, as outlined in Table VIII below:

**Table VIII – Rating of the venue**

	<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Suitability of accommodation</b>	0% (0)	7% (1)	33% (5)	40% (6)	20% (3)

<b>Suitability of facilities</b>	0% (0)	0% (0)	7% (1)	33% (5)	60% (9)
<b>Involvement/interaction with centre staff</b>	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13% (2)	87% (13)
<b>Food and refreshments</b>	0% (0)	7% (1)	27% (4)	60% (9)	7% (1)

The involvement and interaction with centre staff was shown to be this camp’s most valued venue-related aspect with 87% of the respondents rating it as “excellent” and 13% as “good”. The majority of the volunteers rated the suitability of the facilities as either “good” or “excellent”. Respondents also felt that the outdoor space and adventure activities greatly contributed to the young people’s personal development.

However, criticism was levied against the quality of the food (particularly in regards to the cold lunches) with 40% of the respondents rating it as only “satisfactory” or even “poor”. Comments were also received in regards to the rather limited sizes of the rooms and associated ratio of adults to children, with one respondent commenting that these factors had brought about some measure of confusion at night in regards to who was in charge.

***Activities***

The volunteers rated the outward-bound activities as provided by the YHA as either “excellent” (87%) or “good” (13%). YHA activities were seen as having helped boost self-confidence and self-esteem among the young people. One volunteer commented:

*“It was SUCH a great addition to the camp this year to have all of the outward bound activities. It boosted confidence, and I wasn’t on any activity where everyone didn’t join in and feel braver and stronger by the end of it.” (F2B 2011, Volunteer)*

These findings support earlier conclusions from the young people’s surveys, which had indicated these activities to have been a valuable addition to this year’s camp.

When queried about the activities of the Wednesday Creativity Day, 100% of the respondents rated the singing, rap, film and yoga activities as either “good” or “excellent” and at least 90% of the respondents rated the drama, dance and sculpture activities as “good” or “excellent” (with only one respondent rating these as

“satisfactory”), stipulating an overall high level of satisfaction in regards to these activities.

The survey’s comments section produced some suggestions on possible improvements in regards to the activities. Although the initiative and enthusiasm of the camp leaders was highly commended by the key workers, some comments were received in regards to the need for additional training in session planning and preparation, stipulating in particular that greater flexibility in the management of these activities could possibly ensure greater participation on the side of the young people. One respondent suggested that further improvements could be achieved by making better use of the skills and experiences of the volunteers.

### ***Workshops***

All volunteers rated the Stigma, Disclosure, Basic HIV Awareness and Art workshops as either “good” or “excellent”, with all other workshops receiving a “good” or “excellent” rating from over 70% of the respondents. The Making a Poster and Relaxation workshops however received only one rating each of “satisfactory”, with the General HIV Awareness and Medication workshops being rated as “poor” and “very poor” respectively.

Respondents to the survey provided various suggestions on how these workshops could be improved. Comments were made which questioned the un-engaging design of certain sessions as well as the inability of some of the facilitators to provide adequate information and feedback to the participants. It was suggested that key workers should be given additional support and clarity on the nature and extent to which they are expected to share personal experiences during the sessions. Another volunteer pointed out that care should be taken that these particular voices do not overpower those of the young people. Additional recommendations addressed the inclusion of a workshop on sex and relationships and the need for additional breaks between sessions. However, respondents generally greatly valued the workshops, as evidenced by the following comment:

*“I thought the workshops were really good and most of the young people I encountered were engaged and stimulated. Some of the YP clearly found some experiences moving and challenging in a positive way”. (F2B 2011, Volunteer)*

### ***Support and Information***

In the survey, the volunteers were asked to rate the support they had received both before and during the camp, the results of which are listed in Table IX below:

**Table IX – Ratings of the support they received**

	<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Before camp</b>	0% (0)	0% (0)	20% (3)	27% (4)	53% (8)
<b>During camp</b>	0% (0)	0% (0)	7% (1)	27% (4)	67% (10)

The above ratings indicate that volunteers had generally received high levels of support. One respondent in particular favourably commented on the newly incorporated time for key worker groups.

The feedback indicates that since F2B 2010, planning and organisational aspects of the camp have been improved. Some “*small tweaks*” were presented to facilitate future communications, particularly in regards to communication and information on daily events and clothing required for certain activities. One respondent mentioned that communication between key workers themselves could be improved, especially in regards to dealing with challenging situations, listing some examples which indeed underlined the need of for additional support in these type of situations.

### ***Changes since last year***

Participants were asked to rate the changes introduced at F2B 2011 following last year’s feedback, whereby the introduction of a medical lead was particularly favourably commented on, with all respondents (14) having experienced increased support in regards to medication management. All respondents additionally agreed that the young people had been given ample opportunities for social and free time.

The organisational and logistical arrangements of F2B 2011 were rated as either “good” or “excellent” by 93% (13) of the respondents, with one respondent rating them as “satisfactory”. Some suggestions were made on better room divisions based on key workers’ individual levels of experience. It was also suggested that a handout of the daily schedule would be made available to both the young people and volunteers. When queried on whether volunteers to this year’s camp had from the onset received

adequate information, 86% (12) answered affirmatively, with 14% (2) stating this to be “somewhat the case”.

The introduction of a new house leader role brought about varied responses. While 50% (7) of the respondents stated this to be “helpful”, the remaining 50% considered it to be “somewhat” (5) or “not really” (2) helpful. Some respondees felt that certain house leaders lacked adequate experience and/or training for their particular role, rendering them ill-equipped to deal with challenging behaviour. When queried on the sign-up processes, 71% (10) of the respondents considered them to be clear and straightforward, 21% (3) felt this to be only “somewhat the case”, and 7% (1) perceived them as unclear.

### ***Additional Comments***

In the survey respondents were given the opportunity to suggest possible improvements to the volunteering experience. Nine replies were received.

The organisational aspect of the activities was seen as particularly having improved since F2B 2010. It was however suggested that communications in regards to when and where volunteers were needed could be refined, and that the existing talents, skills and experiences of the volunteers could be made better use of within the camp structure. The need for greater sensitivity in regards to both the discussion and handling of sex and relationships at the camp and ensuring that events (such as the Party) would be appropriate for young people of varying ages and maturity, was also pointed out.

Favourable comments were received on both the introduction of scheduled free time to unwind and the total number of volunteers which had been invited. The introduction of outward-bound activities was greatly appreciated. Suggestions were made in regards to activities not being repeated in an identical fashion since some young people do in fact re-attend the camp.

In spite of these various suggestions in regards to possible improvements, the camp was generally felt to be a success for new attendees as well as for those who had attended F2B 2010:

*“It was so great to see many of last years YP having grown in confidence and self esteem and own their status. It was lovely to see these guys support and help the younger newbies. What you have started here with these camps is nothing short of miraculous and I sincerely hope we can offer this for many years to come.”*

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This evaluation confirms that F2B 2011 has been successful in increasing HIV-related knowledge for the majority of attendees. Many participants to the camp gained additional knowledge and understanding in regards to the basic facts of living healthily with HIV, while others learned to better deal with HIV-related issues such as rejection and stigma. The evidence also suggests that the camp helped many of the young people to learn more about themselves and to grow in self-acceptance and confidence. However, in order to maximize the learning potential of these workshops, certain evidence needs to be taken into account indicating that future camps would benefit from the introduction of a greater amount of engaging and stimulating approaches.

**Recommendation 1:**

In regards to the workshops, introducing, wherever possible, additional drama-based and inter-active approaches.

The evidence confirms F2B 2011 to have been an overwhelmingly positive experience for the attendees. The data gained from the surveys which were submitted by both volunteers as well as the young people, suggest that the outward-bound activities were seen as a particularly enjoyable aspect of the camp which helped build self-esteem and confidence, and would therefore be well worth continuing. However, the significant criticism received from both the young people and the volunteers in regards to the standard of the food at the venue, should be taken into consideration, along with other factors which were commented upon, such as the rather small rooms and showers at the venue.

**Recommendation 2:**

Giving due consideration to the quality of food and accommodation as provided by the venue.

Within the feedback of the volunteers some concerns were expressed as to whether volunteers possessed adequate experience and/or training for their particular roles, such as to lead certain workshops or function as house leader.

**Recommendation 3:**

Ensuring that volunteers are assigned roles corresponding to their level of experience and training.

In spite of the fact that certain aspects of F2B 2011 could benefit from further improvements, evaluations have shown the camp to have been an overwhelmingly positive experience, which has helped the young people learn more about both themselves and HIV, has boosted their confidence and self-esteem, and has assisted them in making friends and forming peer relationships, which could potentially assist and support them for many years to come.