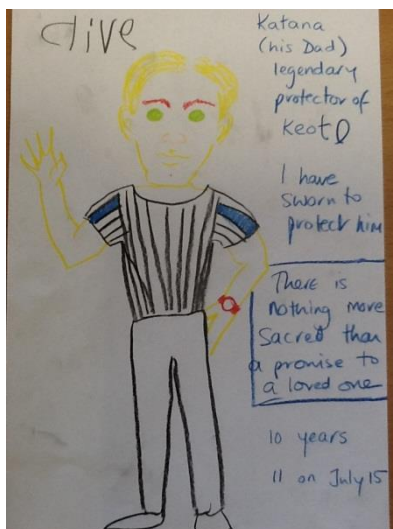


# 'It's my Move!' By Julie McNamara and Face Front Inclusive Theatre

## Update on Face Front's new production about transition for young people with Learning Difficulties/Disabilities

Face Front wants to create a more inclusive world through multi-sensory theatre and uses the transformational power of theatre in order to redress inequality and improve emotional well-being. We have been working in special and mainstream schools, colleges and day services for over ten years providing multi-accessible theatre programmes working closely with our partners in health and education to enable young people to make informed, healthy and positive life choices.

A new piece of theatre is being developed on the theme of change, choice, control and new beginnings with the aim of reducing anxiety around transition for LDD young people and parents/carers ensuring that they have real control over their move from school to the adult world. *'He wants to be in charge of his own destiny'* LDD young person



Face Front, in collaboration with King's College London, has been working on this new research and development project collecting over 50 stories about transition from young LDD people, (14 – 25 years) their parents, teachers and support workers. The stories have been filled with joy and tears, it is a very difficult and emotional time for many young people and their parents. There have been some amazing stories with one autistic young man creating Clive an invisible boy to protect him through the changes (see left) to the parents that have wept on our first meeting with the lack of support they have received for their child to move into the frightening and sometimes hostile adult world. *'The element of surprise was the best for me so many unexpected stories and passions expressed'* Julie McNamara writer of *'It's my move'*

We have also spent some time experimenting with our talented creative team of emerging artists with LDD and their mid-career arts mentors from national music company 'Heart n Soul', visual arts group 'ActionSpace', Dance group 'Blink' and Writer Julie McNamara from 'Vital Exposure'. We have worked with layering dance, sign language, music, poetry/rap, drama and site specific art in order to be able to communicate on many different levels and our artists have really risen to the challenge. *'I learnt about how theatre is made'* LDD Artist.



The new interactive play is based on the journeys of 4 LDD characters who have different transition experiences. They move from scene to scene on a bus with a catchy tune that the audience soon learn. The stories explore how to make and express choices around transition in order for young LDD people to have some control over their own lives. The characters' parents/carers who either supportive, over-protective, dominating or too busy. The young people learn how to communicate what they want to parents/carers and also to teacher's social workers and other transition professionals. *'I have learnt how important it is for parents to listen and not assume'* Parent

The audience (aimed at young LDD people from 14 – 25 years and their parents/carers) help them all the

characters through their journey's offering advice and changing places with them to role-play how they could have expressed themselves in order to get what they want.  
'The message is personal choice and taking control of your life' LDD young person.



We have presented our 'work in progress' to LDD young people, their parents/carers, teachers, social workers, support workers and arts practitioners at two special schools, an FE college and day service and collected the views of our audiences on each occasion. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive with some very useful comments for developing the programme.

*'Brilliant – I need to look in the mirror, I need to think about how I treat my boy – my young man'* Parent

*'The energy of the performers and engagement of the audience was fantastic'* Teacher

**We will be developing the piece with the aim of taking the production to special schools, FE colleges and day services early 2016. If you would be interested in Face Front visiting your young people and parents or you would like to find out more about the project please contact:**

Email: [annie@facefront.org](mailto:annie@facefront.org) Phone: 020 8350 3461 or 07765 714384

**We are also working with the CDC and TIN providing a training called 'It's my life' for transition professionals focusing on decisions, capacity and EHC plans. Please call Caroline Bennett at the CDC on 020 7843 6061 or email [CBennett@ncb.org.uk](mailto:CBennett@ncb.org.uk) for more details of the national training events.**



