**Guide to “Building Better Connections”**

The “Building Better Connections” course has been designed by West Lancashire Council for Voluntary Service to support individuals and help towards community building. We originally designed it in 2017 as part of a “Level Crossing” project to increase uptake of self-care in West Lancashire, and as part of Well Skelmerdale (one of 10 Well North pathfinders).

**Who is the course designed for?**

West Lancashire CVS takes an asset-based approach to all of its work which includes supporting volunteers and partnerships with the local health economy. Any community building starts with the individual – but some community members may have never been asked what they can *contribute* and what they can *achieve*. What motivates someone to act? And how do relationships build a community?

(ABCD Institute <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>).

The course is designed to support individuals who may be seeking to volunteer for the first time, who are undergoing big changes in their lives such as unemployment, or who may have a life-changing diagnosed health condition. The key outcome is that participants recognise the resources they already have to hand on completion of the session.

**Delivery**

The course is designed in the spirit of the ABCD community: free at the point of delivery with any trainer(s) as a co-participant. We allow 3.5 hours for a session. The PowerPoint slides serve as a visual aid (content delivery to be adapted to the needs of the group). The course works best with a small number of around 4-8 people. The story embedded in the slides has been selected as an example for participants to talk about as a group, without having to disclose details of their own lives in an open discussion.

**Learner material – the ‘asset tree’**

We recommend that the ‘asset tree’ be printed out for each learner to use. The aim is that participants interact as much as they feel comfortable, and that on completion of the course, they keep their own ‘asset tree’ as a record of their learning.

**Trainer/facilitator**

We recommend that anyone facilitating this course be familiar with the ABCD perspective and the resources of the ABCD Institute (link above) and Nurture Development (<http://www.nurturedevelopment.org/>). West Lancashire CVS has an open ABCD resources page (<http://www.wlcvs.org/asset-based-community-development/>)

For further information or to commission this course please contact:

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