Animation Workshops Social Impact Report
October 2023 to May 2024

A Partnership project between Film Crew 4U CIC and Motiv8, with support from Owl XL CIC.

> **Film Crew 4u** is a Community Interest Company (CIC) providing full service video productions based in Portsmouth. We plan, shoot, and edit films for events and businesses, as well as running filmmaking workshops and creating content for marginalised and disadvantaged groups within our community.
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> **Motiv8** is a charity who provide safe spaces with trusted adults to help young people and families develop skills, tools and the resilience to overcome challenges.

Funding was granted from Arts Council England to enable us, Film Crew 4U, and Motiv8 to work in partnership, providing animation workshops for disaffected young people from Portsmouth. By collaborating we were able to reach the young people who were in the greatest need. The benefits of art and creativity on the mental health of young people has been clearly documented, and in the post-covid, post-lockdown, cost-of-living-crisis society that we are living in currently, extra help for the wellbeing of young people has never been more necessary.

The workshops we offer function as a safe space, a creative outlet and provide upskilling for future education/careers. They were held in an easily accessible safe space, with wellbeing support also provided through Motiv8. We wanted to provide the young people with a more extensive animation education than they would receive in school, particularly as many of the students are on reduced hours at school, putting a strong focus on learning through creativity and critical thinking through story development.

Objectives:

- The young people to have full creative control over their projects, allowing them to choose their medium, their story and how they want it to look aesthetically.
- The young people empowered to explore different animation techniques, to draw a storyboard, create their animated characters out of different materials (either digitally, with clay, with card, with themselves, or through found objects), animate the characters, and edit together the animation.
- Supervision and assistance from Film Crew 4U to support them with reaching their goal, showing them new skills and techniques along the way.
- 3 x 6 week workshops offered in order to maximise the amount of young people that can reached.
- At the end of the workshops to put on a showcase that will be opened up to wider members of the community to see the talents of local young people.
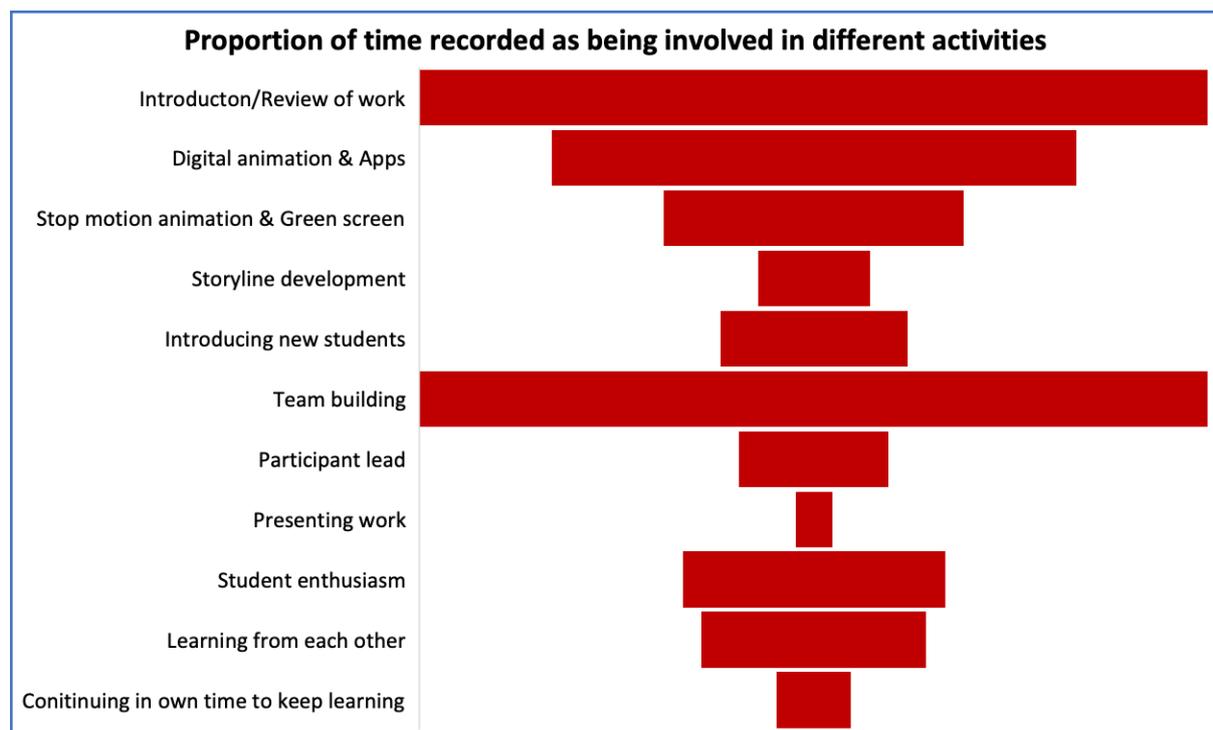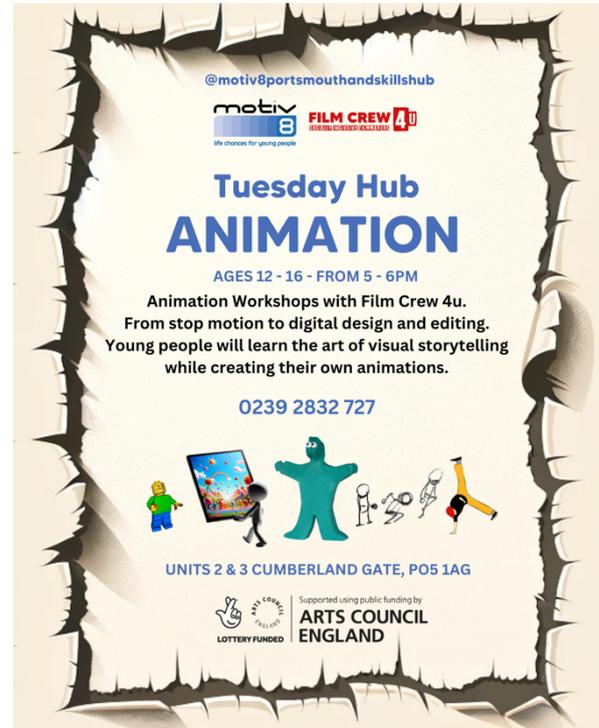
Overview

Our animation workshops began at the end of October 2023 and ran once a week until May 2024, a total of 23 sessions. During this time we engaged with 16 young people from Portsmouth aged 12-16, introducing them to various forms of animation, including 2D, 3D, motion graphics and stop-motion animation.

The workshops began with traditional stop-motion animation and progressed to advanced digital animation techniques, storytelling, and collaborative projects using tools such as Flipaclip and Procreate Dreams.

Session Plans

A planning and monitoring system was used during the sessions that allowed for the plans to develop depending on the outcomes of previous sessions and to capture the social outcomes.

Within such an active environment there are a lot of skills being used all the time. The monitoring forms aide capture of the developments and highlights. The young people who attended the workshops were recorded as being involved in and developing the following skills and assets:

Proportion of time recorded as being involved in different activities

- Introducton/Review of work
- Digital animation & Apps
- Stop motion animation & Green screen
- Storyline development
- Introducing new students
- Team building
- Participant lead
- Presenting work
- Student enthusiasm
- Learning from each other
- Conitinuing in own time to keep learning

Project Development

At the beginning of each session all the students were greeted, there was chat about their week and general wellbeing, then a review of the previous week's work and their plans for the session. Different animation techniques were introduced over a number of sessions, allowing students to explore their own interests and experiment with storylines.

1. **Traditional Stop-Motion Animation**:

   In the initial sessions, students were introduced to the fundamentals of traditional stop-motion animation, creating characters using wireframes, crepe paper, and tin foil. This foundation helped them understand the basic principles of animation, including frame-by-frame creation and movement sequencing.

2. **Digital Animation**:

   As the workshops progressed, students transitioned to digital animation using iPads and apps like Procreate Dreams and Flipaclip. They mastered advanced tools such as frame-by-frame animation, onion skinning, and motion paths, producing polished and detailed animation clips.
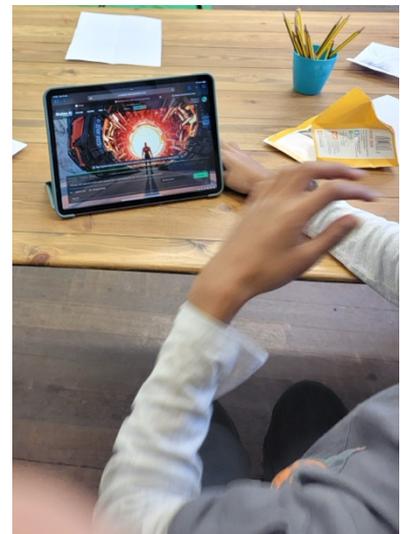
3. **Editing and Special Effects**:

   Students enhanced their editing skills within the animation apps, learning to fine-tune animations with precise timing adjustments, add soundtracks, and incorporate visual effects. They also demonstrated the ability to compile multiple animation sequences into cohesive projects, adding titles and credits.

There were mixed abilities in the student group, some with previous experience of animating and others with none. Those with experience were keen to share their knowledge with the group, who valued this extra input. The whole group were excited about the storylines that were developed, all their own ideas, and as one of the facilitators wrote in the monitoring sheets, it got to the point where 'the group runs itself'. At session 21 it was recorded "The group is working well together, creating impressive animations and learning from each other."

For a more detailed list of all the practical skills explored and developed, please see Appendix !.

Levels of Involvement

The greatest focus of work with young people is to empower them and John Huskins' Youth Involvement Model provides a constructive way to measure their progress. Many young people will attend activities and only get to level 4. To be able to evidence progress from level 5 upwards demonstrates the quality of the empowerment opportunity provided.

From the beginning each student was keenly taking part at Level 4 and comfortable in the group and wanting to be involved at Level 5 from their second session. Those who were not able to attend each week tended to remain at this level. The student who achieved Level 6 took an early lead in the work, but, as new members joined, tended to take more of a back seat. Six students were empowered to take organising and leadership roles. The student at Level 4 only came to the final session and is keen to be involved if funding is found to run more workshops.

Level 7: Lead
Young people take full responsibility and control their actions

Level 6: Organise
Young people begin to demand a share in the process and take responsibility

Level 5: Involvement
Young people begin to assist in taking action and responsibility

Level 4: Take part
Programme developed to meet expressed and identified needs

Level 3: Socialise
Young people begin to express opinions, test ideas and seek responses

Level 2: Meet again
Youth workers and young people make contact, engage with each other. Trust and sharing begins

Level 1: Contact
Young people have access to information and opportunity, relationship level is low
Young people dependent

Summary of general progression:

1. **Leadership Roles**:
   Several students, notably student A, emerged as leaders, instructing their peers on using the digital animation tools effectively and facilitating the sharing and feedback process during the sessions.

2. **Organisational Skills**:
   Students, like G and M, took on organisational roles, managing materials, coordinating group discussions, and ensuring everyone's input was integrated into the projects.

Final Level of Involvement

Level 4: 1
Level 5: 8
Level 6: 1
Level 7: 6

3. **Collaborative Efforts**:
   Throughout the workshops, students supported each other's ideas, helped solve technical problems, and worked both independently and as part of a team. This collaborative environment fostered mutual respect and encouraged creativity.

For a more detailed list of the involvement and development of each student, please see Appendix 2.
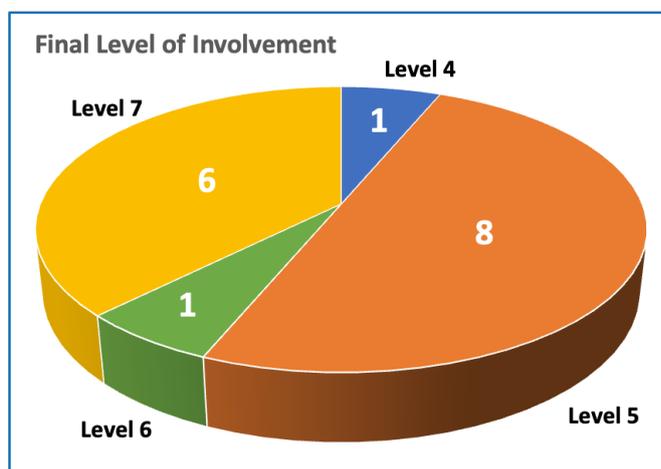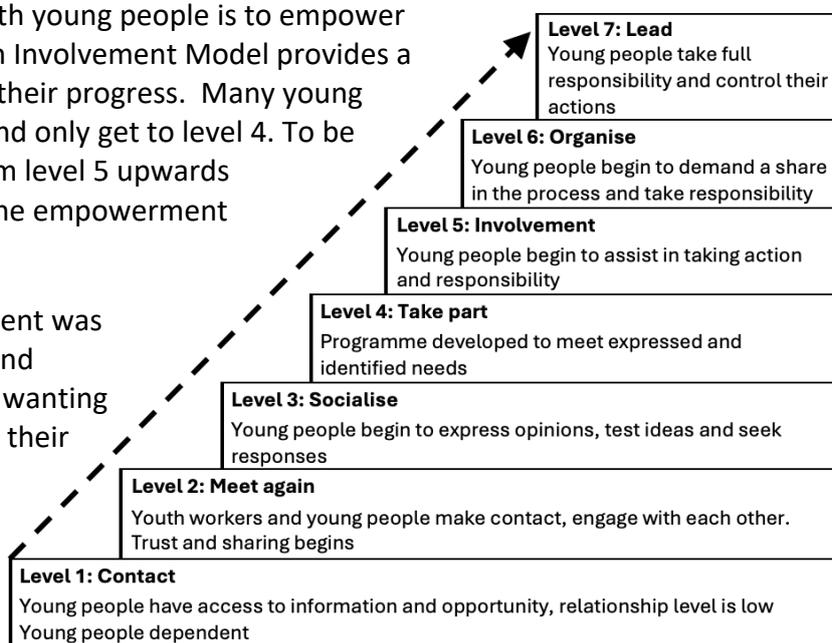
Personal & Social Skills Development

Within the monitoring system used there is an holistic range of personal skills to help focus capturing evidence of the progression the young people make.

Self Awareness & Confidence	The workshops significantly boosted students' confidence and self-awareness. They took pride in their progress and the animations they created, expressing excitement and satisfaction with their work.
Communication & Interpersonal Skills	Students developed strong communication skills, discussing activities, sharing ideas, and providing constructive feedback to each other. They made new friends, bonded over shared interests, and learned to work together harmoniously.
Values development & Problem solving	The workshops instilled important values such as respect, responsibility, and persistence. Students demonstrated the ability to define problems and find effective solutions, showing creativity and determination in overcoming technical challenges.

Future Aspirations and Feedback

1. **Continued Learning**:
   All students expressed a strong desire to continue learning animation and hoped the sessions would continue. They stated that the workshops taught them a lot and reflected positively on their progress.

2. **Career Interests**:
   The workshops helped some students identify potential career paths in animation, film, editing, voice acting, character design, scriptwriting, and directing. Student B, for instance, plans to continue developing a YouTube channel, while others like student G and J are interested in pursuing careers in the film industry.

Conclusion

The Motiv8 Animation Workshops have been highly successful in fostering the growth and development of young animators. Students progressed from basic traditional animation to advanced digital techniques, took on various roles, supported each other, and formed lasting friendships. They are eager to continue their animation journey and have expressed strong interest in further sessions. This positive impact underscores the value of the workshops and the importance of continued support from funders to help these talented students achieve their full potential.

Visit these two links to see the group having fun and creating animation together:
https://www.youtube.com/shorts/iReCcbgO5cs
https://youtu.be/jiMIAaIL7wE

Appendix 1: Details of Practical Skills learnt

Computer editing	• Learning pixelation and how to animate using ipads. • Using the ipads to storyboard and edit. • Explored the features of Procreate Dreams, learning how to create smooth animations with various tools. They experimented with layering, timing, and transitions to enhance their animations. Each pair of students produced a short animation clip, showcasing their understanding of the app and its capabilities. • Delved deeper into the features of Procreate Dreams, mastering advanced tools such as frame-by-frame animation, onion skinning, and motion paths. They produced more polished and detailed animation clips, showcasing their growing proficiency and creativity. • Used Flipaclip on the laptop, demonstrating strong animation skills and producing clever animations. • Produced more polished and detailed animation clips with Flipaclip, showcasing their growing proficiency and creativity. • Showcasing their work created using Flipaclip and Procreate Dreams, demonstrating their mastery of the tools and techniques they learned throughout the workshops. They discussed the processes and challenges they overcame.
Filming	• Stop motion animation using moveable action figures. • The creation of claymation characters. • Pixelation and green screen. • Creating animated characters out of wire frames, crepe paper and tin foil. • Creating animated characters out of paper cut-outs and exploring storytelling through this medium.
Special effects	• How green screen pixelation can be edited. • Editing in apps. • Green screen editing using Davinci Resolve, including special effects. • Basic editing techniques within Procreate Dreams, such as adjusting the frame rate, adding sound effects, and incorporating background music. • Experimented with Procreate Dreams special effect features to add flair to their animations. • Using the laptop editing clips together to compile multiple scenes into a cohesive story, as well as how to compile multiple animation sequences into a cohesive project, adding titles and credits to their work. • Enhanced editing skills within Procreate Dreams and Flipaclip, learning to fine-tune their animations with precise timing adjustments, add soundtracks, and incorporate visual effects.
Storylines	• Continued to come up with small stories that they would like to animate. • Contributed ideas to the creation of a longer more in-depth animation story. • B created his own advert story with the help of the rest of the group. • The group created intricate storylines for their animations, with B leading the storyboard creation and others contributing ideas and character developments.

Appendix 2: Progression and involvement of each young person

	Key progression evidence	Leadership skills evidenced and developed
A	First attended session 15, initially disruptive, but soon settled down and produced clever animations using Flipaclip. Took an active role, enthusiastically creating digital animations, using the laptop to create animations. By session 17 taken lead in the group, effectively instructing others on the use of Flipaclip. Very supportive and encouraging, helping others to learn and improve their animation skills. In final session led the presentations, helping to facilitate the sharing and feedback process, and continued to encourage and support peers.	Coordinator, coach, encourager.
B	Actively involved throughout the project, taking an early leadership role, helping to organise others in the group. Keen on making films at home. Quickly learned how pixelation worked, loves drawing using ipads. Has experience using Flipaclip and happy to help instruct the other young people. Interested in story lines, helping to organise the animation figures into a story. Picked up editing very quickly and was able to really take off during session 6. During session 9 directed and wrote the script, taking the lead on an idea for an advert, made a creative decision about the editing of the advert. In session 12 spearheaded the storyboard creation for the group's collective animation project, showcasing leadership and organisational skills. From then on guided the storyboarding process, helping the group organise their ideas and plan their animations effectively. Took part in the presentations, engaging enthusiastically with the feedback process.	Planner, facilitator, coach, coordinator, evaluator.
C	First attended session 12, actively involved in cutting out paper figures, animating them, and contributing to the story development. Remained actively involved throughout in creating digital animations and contributing to the story line. Actively involved in presenting their work and giving feedback to others.	Coordinator, coach, encourager.
G	Actively involved throughout the project, taking an early leadership role, helping to organise others in the group. Keen on making films at home and loves drawing using ipads. Very talented at making figures out of clay and was able to take the lead from session 5, with clear ideas about how they wanted the animations to look. Full of creative ideas and enjoyed organising and directing potential stories. From session 12 managed the materials and setup, ensuring that everyone had what they needed and assisting in coordinating the animation sequences. From session 15 assisted with organisational tasks. Managed the setup for the presentations, ensuring everyone had what they needed and assisted in coordinating the schedule.	Resource management, creative facilitator, organiser, coordinator.

	Key progression evidence	Leadership skills evidenced and developed
D, E, H, F & L	H first attend session 7, D and E session 8, L session 13, F session 20. All actively involved throughout engaging enthusiastically with the animation apps and in creating digital animations and contributing to the story line. Actively involved in presenting their work and giving feedback to others.	Active, enthusiastic involvement
I	First attended session 15, initially disruptive, but soon settled down. Use of laptop helped manage disruptive behaviour by giving focus and was actively involved, engaging enthusiastically with the animation apps and in creating digital animations and contributing to the story line. Actively involved in presenting their work and giving feedback to others.	Active, enthusiastic involvement
J	Actively involved throughout the project. Keen on making films at home. In session 7 was excited for the day's workshop and naturally took the lead. In session 10, whilst others developed a new story line, took charge of the editing of the animations from the previous week. Very much enjoys sculpting, taking the lead in designing complex paper characters and instructing others on how to animate them smoothly. Led the group in exploring the new features of Procreate Dreams, demonstrating various animation techniques, leading the group in exploring advanced features, demonstrating sophisticated animation techniques, encouraging others to experiment and improve their animations. Took part in the presentations, engaging enthusiastically with the feedback process.	Enthusiastic leader of complex ideas, encouraging exploration and learning. Taking responsibility for completing work.
K	Actively involved throughout engaging enthusiastically with the animation apps and in creating digital animations and contributing to the story line. Has a talent for creative writing and began organising the ideas early on in the project. Actively involved in presenting their work and giving feedback to others.	Active, enthusiastic involvement. Creative writer.
M	First attended session 5, actively involved throughout engaging enthusiastically with the animation apps and in creating digital animations and contributing to the story line. From session 12 facilitating the group discussions, ensuring that everyone's voices and ideas were heard and incorporated into the project, and that collaborative decisions were made smoothly. Actively involved in presenting their work and giving feedback to others.	Facilitator, inclusion, group communication