**PRESS RELEASE – Immediate Release**

**Children In Need Award for Level Two Youth Project, Felixstowe**

**Level Two Youth Project is delighted to announce an award from Children in Need. This award will support & enhance our Mentoring & Counselling provision.**

Children in Need supports voluntary, community & social enterprise organisations to deliver, expand & create high quality services for children & young people under the age of 18yrs, across England.

Level Two Youth Project “Promotes the welfare of children & young people ranging from age 7 to 25yrs; through supportive relationships & positive experiences designed to enhance their personal & social development.”

Level Two Youth Project has been awarded a grant of £91,500 over 3 years to provide.one to one counselling and mentoring for children and young people with mental health needs. These interventions will result in young people being better resourced to manage emotions, increase their confidence & improve relationships.

Shez Hopkins, Project Manager says *“We are absolutely thrilled to have been awarded this grant & are excited about the difference we will be able to make in the lives of the children & young people who access our services. I can’t emphasise enough, the importance of ensuring children & young people are as well-resourced as possible to manage their own mental health challenges. The services we provide are more important than ever; with the mental health of children and young people having taken a real hammering as a result of the pandemic & the ripples out on families are huge.”*

Nationally, the mental health of young people is facing an epidemic of its own – with one in six (16.0pc) of children aged 5yrs to 16yrs identified as having a probable mental disorder, according to government data published in October 2020. With NHS services overburdened, community organisations & local charities are confronting the problem at a grassroots level.

The psychosocial effects of Covid-19 has disproportionately affected young people, as routines, structures and relationships are interrupted at a critical moment of self-development, while access to therapeutic services is limited.

Level Two’s primary services are mentoring and counselling, though the project offers support in a number of ways, providing supportive relationships & positive experiences designed to enhance the personal and social development of young people in Felixstowe.

Level Two Mentoring & Counselling provision offers a young person a 1-1 time with a Mentor or Counsellor, over 12wks, where the young person can share their worries & concerns, while exploring any issues they are currently facing. This is an excellent support service across all levels – from someone not feeling very good about themselves to serious mental health conditions.

Level Two Youth Project, now in its 20th year, has developed from being a small youth club into a comprehensive youth service. Research shows a close link between poverty & poor health & wellbeing. In parts of Felixstowe 1 in 4 children are living in income poverty. Some areas in Felixstowe are in the bottom 20% of deprivation in the country. Promoting healthy lifestyles and self-care is a key priority within Suffolk County Council plans for Children & Young People.

In addition to Mentoring & Counselling; our Project provides a wide range of services for all young people. Provision is responsive to locally identified needs & feedback from young people.

Level Two is also the only sexual health service provider in Felixstowe. Working with Terrence Higgins Trust to provide free condoms, chlamydia screenings and information, advice & guidance on sex and relationships.

The project has developed positive working relationships with schools & has dedicated youth workers in all eight schools in Felixstowe. Level Two also has a bespoke youth bus which you will see out & about at different locations.

For further information contact us on 01394 272521 or visit our website [www.leveltwo.org](http://www.leveltwo.org). Also follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/leveltwoyouthproject/](http://www.facebook.com/leveltwoyouthproject/) & Instagram level\_two\_youth\_project