

SSSA Entry Form 2018 :

NOMINATION DETAILS

Who is being nominated?

Team

Please provide the name of the team being nominated as it should be used on publicity, including any organisations or partners that should be mentioned:

MCFB's Safe Haven Project,

Team or project name:

Safe Haven

Organisation:

Multi-Cultural Family Base

AWARD DETAILS

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SSSA Entry Form 2018 :

Which category are you entering?

Category 10: Excellence in Children's Services

Please confirm that the work carried out relates to the last two years (up to January 2018):

Yes

Q1. Overview: (max 200 words)

MCFB is at the forefront of work that engages hard to reach individuals and families from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups in Edinburgh. 2018 sees the organisation celebrate 20 year's of service to newly arrived and settled migrants and asylum seekers. Through a diverse range of supports services for those aged pre-birth to 25 (+) the agency seeks to support, empower and most of all eradicate barriers to children and families engagement in Scottish society in all its diversity and complexity. The war in Syria and the ensuing devastation for children and families caught up in it took the world by surprise. MCFB responded by engaging with partner agencies to offer services to those arriving in Scotland from that region. Safe Haven hit the ground running, from a standing start in 2016. The first service users began to receive support before the funding strategy was dry on the page and the work has continued to address the needs of children , women and men from that group. Safe Haven recognises that arrival is the start of a journey in itself and the workers are working alongside families as they navigate the process of loss, hope and resettlement.

Q2. What did you do? (max 500 words)

We met with families, organised interpreters and listened to their concerns and aspirations for their children. We also met with our partners in social work services (Refugee and Migrants), education , Head Teachers were already well versed in the welcoming of newly arrived migrants but were quickly alerting us to the needs and concerns for pupils, some of whom had not experienced formal, settled education before. We listened to children when they said they wanted to mix with others with common language as well as their new friends from school. We took up offers from Partner agencies such as Bridge 8 Hub who offered fun and adventure sessions, canoeing, biking and barbeques. We invited families to events to meet others such as ceilidhs and family days and we liaised with our wide range of partners to offer family support services via our project workers and social work students.

Q3. What did you achieve? (max 500 words)

We offered children access to our therapeutic Groupwork Programme and observed and listened to them. We used this information to formulate the direction and remit of Safe Haven and included the children and adults in their lives in planning the service.

We reached out to a number of collaborators known to us and new to us. and we sought funding to support the work we planned to do. We were successful in seeking funding from Henry Smith Foundation, Garfield Weston, Lloyds TSB and other smaller funds keen to contribute to the projects success. We employed staff with relevant language and experience to engage with families and direct services to meet their needs. We continued to work with and in schools and referrals continue to come to us. We have adapted our approaches based on feedback from families and we are further developing services to respond to emerging needs. We are addressing trauma across the age ranges. We are developing work that aims to address the needs of adults and the themes focus on PTSD, employment, mental health and Domestic Abuse. We are also engaging families to help them understand aspects of Scottish society that may be problematic for them in relation to child discipline or simply city life, safety and unfortunately racism and exclusion issues.

Q4. Why should you receive an award? (max 100 words)

We have used what we have learned in 20 years of service and applied it in a responsive and direct way. Our links with statutory social work, health and education services have allowed us to offer timely and bespoke services to Syrian refugee families across the city. As a small and fairly unique organisation, we know our strengths lie in our ability to be nimble . We know how to partner with others and this has been key here. We have trusted partners who have been generous with their time and human resources. We are proud of our collective achievement.