

UNSPOKEN:

A social experiment
in changing attitudes
to stammering
through the medium
of theatre



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UNSPOKEN: Need for change

- ▶ Social model of disability
- ▶ Clinical implications

UNSPOKEN: Changing public attitudes

- ▶ 1. Widen the experience of disability by providing positive role models and dispel incorrect or inaccurate beliefs pervasive in a culture.
 - ▶ 2. Increase the numbers of individuals with disability seen and increase their visibility in society.
- (Reeve 2004)

UNSPOKEN: Anti-stigma strategies

- ▶ 1. Protest: directly challenges, condemns and rebukes stereotypes and acts of public discrimination.
 - ▶ 2. Education: makes people more knowledgeable by presenting myths about stammering and contrasting them with data from scientific research.
 - ▶ 3. Contact: through direct contact with a PWS the public hear a personal narrative of individual struggles and difficulties.
- (Boyle, Dioguardi & Pate 2016)

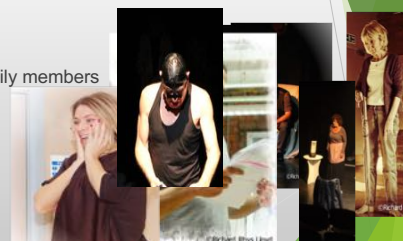
UNSPOKEN: The development of an authentic play depicting stammering.

- ▶ Informing the play writer: knowledge & experience
- ▶ Themes: difference
 - vulnerability
 - choice
 - compromise
 - burden of memory
- ▶ Context



UNSPOKEN: The development of an authentic play depicting stammering.

- Characters
- ▶ Alex
 - ▶ Parents & family members
 - ▶ Peers
 - ▶ Girlfriend
 - ▶ Wrestler



UNSPOKEN: Involvement of the stammering community

- ▶ Writing: BSA conference
local self help group



UNSPOKEN: Involvement of the stammering community

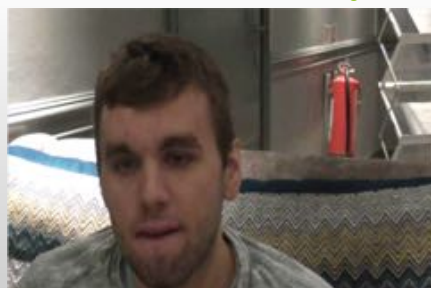


UNSPOKEN: Involvement of the stammering community

- ▶ Rehearsals
- ▶ Coaching



UNSPOKEN: Involvement of the stammering community



UNSPOKEN: Outcomes; the cast members

- ▶ Felt they had produced an authentic and valid representation of stammering
- ▶ Felt their performances had been validated by the stammering community
- ▶ Had a better understanding of the physical aspects and covert issues associated with stammering
- ▶ Had increased their own tolerance of hearing a person who stammered
- ▶ Had a better understanding of how to respond to a person who was stammering
- ▶ Felt a sense of responsibility about representing stammering within their performances
- ▶ Intended to act as advocates for the stammering community in the future.

UNSPOKEN: Outcomes; the audience

- ▶ Aspects of performance: acting, coaching actors, production
- ▶ The play: writing, portrayal of stammering, use of humour
- ▶ Emotional responses: difficult emotions, generalisation to other situations

UNSPOKEN: Outcomes; the audience

Understanding stammering

- ▶ 1. Authenticity
- ▶ 2. The wrestler
- ▶ 3. Evidence of increased understanding



UNSPOKEN: Outcomes; the audience

Changing attitudes

- ▶ Negativity
- ▶ Psychological impact
- ▶ Daily impact
- ▶ Lack of change
- ▶ How to respond when a person is stammering
- ▶ Generalisation to other situations/disabilities



UNSPOKEN: In conclusion

- ▶ Process
- ▶ Performance
- ▶ Outcomes

