



GET TO KNOW: MEET KATIE

In this instalment in our Get To Know series, we're talking to Katie Burchett, one of our project coordinators for In It Together, a programme which was created out of lockdown to continue our drive to provide access to the arts, even in the most testing times.

The sessions have been designed to encourage young people to explore different art forms, and help them to process the ongoing impact of COVID-19. In this article, Katie is going to let us know how things have been going - complete with impromptu dog appearances!

I have had the honour of seeing the impact of Total Insight Theatre's work from both the perspective of a performer and as a project coordinator, having originally joined in 2018 to tour in the now award-winning verbatim theatre production, *When I Was 14*.

I'd heard of Total Insight before I saw their casting call. Their drive to make the arts accessible for everyone and to reach the most disadvantaged sectors was an ethos I very much share, and I was thrilled to be part of their movement.

During the first UK lockdown, I saw their callout for a Project Coordinator for a new virtual support scheme for young people, In It Together. When I'm not acting, I work extensively as a youth theatre leader, drama teacher and workshop facilitator, so when I saw this listing I knew it was the perfect project to get involved with.

The aim of In It Together is to give young people opportunities to explore the creative arts in order to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, creative opportunities have dwindled or stopped completely, which is what makes In It Together so important. Run via Zoom, the program gives young people a safe, virtual place once a week, where they can learn a new skill, meet others, get creative and chat, free of restrictions.


The pandemic has meant that for the best part of ten months I've worked from home. Teaching online has its hurdles, but I've found a rhythm and quickly realised that it's just about getting really creative and thinking outside the box - something which we encourage our young people to do during these sessions.

During the first lockdown, my dog had five puppies and it soon became apparent that there's no better motivation to think outside of the box than having a three-week-old border collie making unexpected - and repeated - guest appearances on Zoom!

As we near the launch date of our three new In It Together schemes, I'm excited to see how the participants respond to the various workshops we have in store for them. We've got a huge range of skills for them to dip their toes into, and it's always special to watch young people realise a passion or a talent for something they may never have experienced before.

Working remotely in this way has taught me that we can absolutely continue the work Total Insight have championed since they began - we just have to make some adjustments.

Your support is crucial for us to continue our digital initiatives to ensure that children and young people continue to have access to creative programmes, helping them develop lifelong skills. For more information on how you can support, visit: www.totalinsighttheatre.com/support-us

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