Graeme Atherton and Jo Wiggans, Aimhigher WECAN and Aimhigher Greater Manchester

Aimhigher is about choice

- Choosing whether to go to uni - believing that you can
- Choosing where to go to uni – the lifestyle choice
- Choosing what to study at uni – the career/job choice
- Balancing the costs of different choices

Beyond information

- Awareness of opportunities delivered via:
  - Experiences – e.g. campus visits, masterclasses, summer schools
  - Conversations with current students – Aimhigher Associates, student ambassadors
  - Changing school culture and teacher awareness – staff development and engagement in Aimhigher activities

Beyond information

- Collated information from local HEIs – compare and consider without value judgements
- Different experiences at different HEIs
- Early thinking about directions and options
- Special info for parents and families
- Special services for apprentices and Looked After Children

The big question is:

- Will I fit in?
- Do people like me go there?
- Will my family/friends be okay about it?
- Will I get a better job?
- Can I succeed?

We can only say YES to the last. For the rest, they need the courage to persist.

Aimhigher case studies

- www.uni4me.com
- www.aimhigher.ac.uk/practitioner
- Individual partnership website
- Aimhigher publications

For example:

My so-called student life: video diaries from 4 Aimhigher students in their first year at uni

Tracking, monitoring, research

- Statistical and quantitative evaluations
- National and local evidence
- Qualitative studies of learner attitudes and change
- Research into cultural change in schools

Miroslav

Left school at 16. Completed a Business Administration apprenticeship, then a Team leader apprenticeship. Joined the Aimhigher apprenticeship cohort and the Step-In to HE course group. Now 26, Miroslav is in the third and final year of a FD in Management.

"You don't have to be a full-time student…"

The perspectives of teachers

"Before it was all about the Gifted and Talented kids. Now staff are beginning to encourage students with th epotential of Cs and Ds to start considering university"

"Aimhigher is one of the vehicles by which schools are able to raise attainment…"

The Aimhigher legacy

- Legacy toolkits
- Guidance to schools for use of the pupil premium
- Encouragement to HEIs to work collaboratively – in their access agreements
- Learner-centred information about HE options and issues
- Staff and institutional awareness of the needs of WP learners