



anything is possible
when you put your mind to it



Every child has a right to feel happy and safe in school. Every human being has the right to feel valued for who they are and to have what makes them unique celebrated.

We live in a society where having a positive and inspirational role model is important. Ben Smith is available for school visits, which is an exciting opportunity for Ben to talk to children of all ages about his amazing challenge of running **401 marathons in 401 days** all over the UK. This equates to 10,506.2 miles which is the distance from London to Sydney.

The challenge raised more than **£300,000** for two anti-bullying charities, Stonewall and Kidscape. It gained national and global coverage successfully driving an increased awareness of the issues around bullying in our modern society and the harmful effects it can cause. Ben and The 401 Challenge team have received awards for the project, including:

- Braveheart Hero at the North Somerset Hero Awards 2015
- Public Choice Award at the North Somerset Hero Awards 2015
- The National Pride of Britain Fundraiser of the Year Award 2016
- The Power of Light Award 2016 from the Cabinet Office and PM Theresa May
- Gold Star Charity Champion at the Bristol Post Gold Star Awards 2016
- First's Gold Star Hero at the Bristol Post Gold Star Awards 2016

Over the course of the project Ben spoke to over **12,000** children and young adults in over 100 schools all over the UK. Ben has a passion for speaking with and inspiring children of all ages about his incredible adventure. He has inspired many pupils to see the limitations they personally place on themselves and how these can be overcome with a little bit of faith and belief to reach their full potential.

Ben is an experienced speaker and covers several different age groups ranging from:

- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Colleges
- Universities

The aim of Ben's talk is to show children and young adults that anything is possible when you put your mind to it. Ben's talk is always tailored to the school he attends and the topics of focus can be altered depending on the view of each individual school and appropriate age range.



Winner of the
ITV FUNDRAISER



Awarded by
HM Government



Ben's Background

Ben's history is unfortunately similar to many other children in the UK. Ben was badly bullied at school for being gay for 8 years of his life. Throughout his childhood Ben never spoke about this through fear of making things worse, he tried at both the ages of 18 and 21 years to take his own life - he felt this was the only way out. His experience of being bullied led Ben to become underconfident in his abilities and suffered from low self-esteem throughout his teens and into his twenties. Ben suffered from mental health issues, particularly depression and an inability to trust anyone or have any visions, objectives or wants of his own.

Being bullied affected his whole life until he turned 29 when he suffered from a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack), otherwise known as an incomplete stroke. This led Ben to sit up and make a change, he needed to start thinking for himself and find out what made him happy in life. This came in the form of running.

From his first attendance at running club, Ben has excelled himself, from being unable to run for a bus in 2013 to completing 401 marathons in 401 days in 2016. This journey has been fraught with highs and lows but has provided opportunities to build his confidence through a passion he fortunately found. He has inspired others to achieve things they never

thought were possible, he has overcome adversity and a lack of belief in his own ability as well as dealing with injuries such as an impinging nerve in his back and an umbilical hernia.

For Ben, running has given him the opportunity to find his true self, it has provided endless amounts of confidence, self acceptance and opportunities he would have previously never had. Finding what makes him happy has brought peace to his life, enabled him to be congruent with himself and find a passion to help others that have or are going through what he has gone through. Taking this opportunity to have Ben talk at your school will no doubt inspire, excite and deliver an exciting experience for your pupils to be inspired which will have a lasting effect long after Ben has left.



Testimonials

Do not just take our word for it, here are a few testimonials from educational establishments throughout the UK which Ben has visited, showing the impact his talks have on children and young adults.



RICHARD RIORDAN (HEADMASTER AT PORTISHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL)



"Ben Smith is a fantastic anti-Bullying champion. His visit and inspirational story resonated with the children at a very deep level leaving us with a profound legacy. Ben is full of charisma and is a great story teller which enables him to make an instant connection with children across the primary age range. He was brilliant at taking questions and coping with the randomness of children - we now know he does not like mushrooms! If you are looking for a visitor to encourage health, fitness, anti bullying and promote equality I strongly recommend Ben Smith (Pride of Britain). The best visitor we have had in my 5 years at Portishead Primary School."

SARAH FLYNN (HEAD OF SPORTS AT WINTERBOURNE ACADEMY)



"Ben's visit to Winterbourne was genuinely such a fantastic opportunity for the students he spoke to. His story highlights many of the values that we wish young people would demonstrate in their lives, such as resilience and purpose whilst delivering a powerful message against bullying."

SIMON FAULKNER (HEAD OF YEAR AT GORDANO SCHOOL)



"The word 'inspirational' gets used all too frequently, however in the case of Ben Smith of the 401 Challenge it is used without any exaggeration. Ben arrived at Gordano School and spoke to 300 students. He talked about the physical side of running for so many consecutive days and the strain it had placed on his body. But most notably, he shared with great honesty the reasons why he started the challenge. In all my years of teaching I have never seen a group of children so engaged whilst listening to a speaker. One student said, 'This is the first time that I have ever listened all the way through an assembly. He made me smile and cry at the same time.' At the end of the assembly after answering many questions and being in numerous selfies, he went off to start marathon 382. We are looking to get Ben back in to Gordano to speak to the students who weren't lucky enough to be part of his assembly."

LOUISE HOULT (FACULTY HEAD OF SCIENTIFIC STUDIES AT INVERNESS HIGH SCHOOL)



"Pupils were captivated by Ben during his visit. The very direct, open and personal way Ben addressed the difficult issues of bullying, sexuality, self-esteem and dealing with not being able to feel accepted for who you are, drew our pupils in. He gave a very inspiring talk that demonstrated resilience and a true growth mind-set that we are trying to foster in our pupils, and they were motivated to follow Ben's progress throughout the rest of the challenge. In their words 'Ben is inspirational'."

Important information

Pricing:

School Assembly 30 minutes with Q&A	£200
Prize Giving with Talk and Q&A 1 hour	£350
University Lecture with Q&A 1 hour	£500

All prices are excluding expenses, these are additional and added to the invoice after the event, which includes travel costs, overnight accommodation and food only (VAT is not charged).

Please note we aim to book a maximum of 4-5 visits a day within the same area to ensure the cost of the additional expenses i.e. travel, overnight accommodation and food for Ben can be spread equally amongst the schools visited that day. Occasionally an additional person will be present but this information will be provided in advance.

(max 250 students or pupils)

Terms of Payment:

An invoice will be raised by The 401 Challenge shortly after the school visit and payment will be required within 30 days of the invoice date either via BACS or cheque, details will be included on the invoice.

Cancellation Policy:

If you wish to cancel, please give us notice of cancellation no less than 5 working days prior to the visit via email, this means we can fill your assembly slot with another school in the area. We will not charge you for a cancelled visit if it is before the 5 working day period. If it is within the 5 working day period, we charge 50% of the school assembly and expenses if we cannot fill this assembly slot.

Booking a School Visit:

If you would like to book a school visit with Ben, please email The 401 Team at the401challenge@gmail.com with the following information:

School Name
School Contact Name
School Contact Email
School Contact Telephone Number (Please provide direct number including extension)
School Address including County

The 401 team will respond to you with a selection of dates that are available in your area and times you can choose from. The bookings are first come first served, but don't worry if you miss out, we will be back in your area again soon.

On final confirmation of the booking, you agree to all terms and conditions set out in this brochure which will be sent you by The 401 Challenge Team prior to the event.

Official 401 Challenge School Merchandise:

If you would like to purchase any 'Official 401 Challenge Wristbands' please state the quantity and these will be sent directly to you. All costs will be added to your invoice.



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