



**Evaluation of the Vodafone Foundation
World of Difference projects**

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Pai tu, pai hinga, na wai, na oti
(One may work properly, another may act,
yet the sum total is the completion of the work)

Executive Summary

There are a small but growing number of youth initiatives in Aotearoa where Positive Youth Development is the basis for programmes, activities and outcomes, indicating a slow rollout of the YDSA policy framework. There is, however, little documented evaluation.

The Whāriki Research Group, Massey University, Auckland was contracted (December 2008-August 2009) by Vodafone New Zealand Foundation to carry out an evaluation of three projects funded by their World of Difference Programme: DZIAH, a hiphop academy based in Otara, Auckland, the Naenae Boxing Academy based in Naenae, Lower Hutt and Streets Ahead 237 a community youth initiative based in Porirua.

This evaluation gathered mainly qualitative data, including Most Significant Change stories, in order to describe the processes, outcomes, successes and challenges that these innovative projects have achieved. This report also provides a brief background on the use of Positive Youth Development approaches in Aotearoa.

The projects are prime examples of efforts to deliver on youth development approaches and are consistent with the World of Difference Programme goals.

Underlying all of the projects is a holistic, wrap around approach with a focus on both systemic change and personal development. All the projects provide supportive, positive and nurturing family orientated environments, underpinned by strong pro-social values, are oriented toward building capabilities of young people and firmly located in the neighbourhoods and communities in which they were serve.

The findings show the projects are youth-centred and demonstrate the value of engaging with young people to build capability and networks, strengthen the social cohesion of the communities within which young people live and grow, and use innovative foci that hook young people into learning.

Thematic analyses of each of the projects present a complex of environmental, social and personal change (grouped under social cohesion, capability building and health and wellbeing) and demonstrate the power of these projects to make a difference in people's lives.

DZIAH Dance Academy is increasing youth opportunities and creating new capabilities in Otara:

- DZIAH has shown hiphop is an effective way to reach and inspire diverse groups of young people in South Auckland and beyond
- Dance is a medium that encourages a broad range of skills that have the potential to enhance young people's career horizons
- The wrap around approach, values base and mentoring has enhanced social and physical infrastructures of youth opportunity with positive impacts on families and the community, including contributing to South Side Pride and providing positive role models.
- DZIAH has created an environment that grows leadership, improves fitness, confidence and health and wellbeing and inspires young people to achieve their aspirations
- The energy and reputation of Billie Paea, his staff and others who engage with the project are key success factors in the momentum and effectiveness of the project

Naenae Boxing Academy produces positive outcomes for young men and their families in Lower Hutt

- Naenae Boxing Academy is a safe space where young males are guided by a team of male mentors and role models
- Boxing is a vehicle that provides opportunities for young males to learn important life skills, pro-social values and develop strong friendships
- The project has shown improvements in behaviour, school engagement, fitness, discipline and sense of identity
- The change stories show positive impacts in terms of achievement, camaraderie and community for the young participants and their families
- The resourcefulness, persistence, strategies and community contacts of Billy Graham and his team are critical to these outcomes

Streets Ahead 237 has produced a range of community and personal change outcomes in Porirua

- The project engaged families and communities to provide young people with a support network and opportunities that helped them to realise their aspirations, including further education

- Community events provided opportunities for young people to break down barriers and communicate in healthy and productive ways
- The evaluation highlights the opening up a world of positive alternatives for young people and a realisation of the *Brothers not colours* concept
- The project demonstrates successes that have rippled through the Porirua community, including fostering positive relationships with the police, fewer reported gang recruits and less graffiti
- The outcomes show the unwavering commitment of the Streets Ahead team to improve the lives of young people and the wider community and to support them to fulfil legacy of their ancestors

In all sites, project leadership and youth engagement are key success factors driving the positive outcomes.

The ability to share and spread this knowledge reflects the value that evaluation adds to understanding, improving and disseminating learnings from quality social development projects.

Introduction

Whatever happened to the ‘little engine that could’? Through the robust but underfunded theoretical and policy framework, the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, has emerged as a powerful new set of conceptions of youth development that could revolutionise our understandings, relationships and contributions of young people to society. But there seems to be a crisis of confidence or an inherent flaw in our delivery systems that means that few decision-makers have the courage, trust or impetus to give this ‘little engine’ a fair shot at addressing society’s issues around the development and acknowledgement of young people.

The report covers an evaluation of three community-based Positive Youth Development initiatives supported by the Vodafone Foundation World of Difference (WoD) programme, which pays the salary and expenses of six participants each year, to build capacity in a youth focused project/charity. Further, the programme offers ongoing support to the World of Difference community through hui where collaboration and peer support is a focus. DZIAH Dance Academy is an Otara-based dance project for young people. The Naenae Boxing Academy is a boxing, fitness and wellness centre for young men in Upper Hutt. Streets Ahead 237 is a community initiative that works with youth involved or at risk of becoming involved in gangs in Porirua.

The Foundation also funded Whāriki Research Group Massey University, Auckland to carry out an evaluation of the three projects. This involved gathering largely qualitative data, including Most Significant Change Stories, in order to produce descriptive accounts of the practices and impacts of each of the three WoD projects.

The following section provides a brief literature review of the tenets of Positive Youth Development with examples of such projects in Aotearoa New Zealand. We then describe the evaluation methods and present the evaluation of DZIAH Dance Academy, NBA and Streets Ahead 237. Each project is contextualised before the findings are presented and discussed. We close with general conclusions about the projects and their approaches in relation to the goals of Youth Development and of the Vodafone Foundation World of Difference programme.

Literature Review

The aim of this review is provide a brief background on the use of Positive Youth Development (PYD) approaches in Aotearoa, to consider any available evidence on their effectiveness and thereby to provide a context for the evaluation of three Positive Youth Development projects funded by the Vodafone Foundation's World of Difference programme. On-line search engines including the Massey University Library database along with *Google Scholar* were used to locate the items for this review but we found only one account of a formal project evaluation. We found a range of project reports within the domains searched and present information on some of these to provide a flavour for the kinds of interventions and outcomes and to illustrate the kinds of benefits that can arise from Positive Youth Development approaches.

Youth development in Aotearoa

Social institutions such as the government, the education system and the media, have long viewed the transition between childhood and adulthood as a period of angst and turmoil. As well as facing the challenges posed by adolescence, youth of Aotearoa are surrounded by forces that position them as a burden and a risk to society as well as themselves. The international literature recognises that such negative perceptions are exacerbated by media coverage, political rhetoric and commonplace discourses that underscore crisis statistics and negative events involving young people (Lerner and Castellino 2002, Resnick 2000). It is argued that the political and bureaucratic focus on youth as a problem leads to the disempowerment, exclusion and marginalisation of young people (Blum 1998, Lerner and Thompson 2002). Until recently, youth policy programmes and research have remained entrenched in the problem paradigm aimed at solving youth difficulties rather than identifying the strengths, talents and energy within young people and their communities as an impetus for positive change (Damon 2004, Roth and Brooks-Gunn 2000, Pittman et al. 2002). The importance of such critical thinking becomes clear when it is acknowledged that, contrary to widespread perception, the vast majority of young people in this country do not fall into problem categories; for example the Youth 2000 and Youth 2007 studies (Adolescent Health Research Group 2003, 2008), show in excess of 80% of young people living in stable, supportive households.

For some providers working in the sphere of youth development, physical activity-based programmes are seen as seminal in building youth competencies. A recent trend in boot camp style programmes for at risk youth has taken centre stage as a youth development technique (New Zealand Herald 2009). One of the fundamental flaws of such approaches however, is that it begins from a deficit platform, where youth are seen as needing military style discipline. Other, more encouraging methods that draw on physical activity offer the same desired outcome of well-adjusted young people through a more strengths-based response to youth needs and behaviours (Zarrett et al. 2008). The intention of these approaches to youth development is to educate and encourage the healthy social advancement of young people through physical activity in a range of forms such as outdoor pursuits, sports and recreational activities.

Positive Youth Development (Pittman et al. 2001) has emerged as an innovative alternative to youth deficit models and, in this country, has been the basis of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA), which was adopted by the Ministry of Youth Affairs (now Ministry of Youth Development) in 2002.

The six key principles of youth development set out in the strategy are:

1. Understanding the 'big picture' for young people
2. Ensuring young people feel connected and have positive links with others in society
3. Taking a consistent, strengths-based approach which builds young people's resilience to risks and challenges
4. Supporting and equipping people and organisations to have successful, quality relationships with young people
5. Giving young people opportunities to have greater control over what happens to them, by seeking their advice, participation and involvement
6. Ensuring we have effective research, evaluation, and information gathering and sharing about young people (Ministry of Youth Development 2008:22).

Although reviews show indications of the success of such approaches in the international setting (Bond et al. 2004, Catalano et al. 2002, Patton et al. 2003), the majority of programmes are not evaluated (Catalano et al. 2004, Lerner et al. 2005). This is particularly so in this country, where despite the YDSA, the Ministry of Youth Development has struggled to create momentum for innovations and interventions that follow the tenets of Positive Youth Development – strengths-based, youth participatory, community oriented, recognise youth as a resource and target systemic change (Ministry of Youth Development 2003). Since 2005, some Positive Youth Development programmes have been funded by government via the MYD Youth Development Partnership Fund (Ministry of Youth Development 2009) on a budget of \$1million per annum. Others exist either within research frameworks or under the aegis of diverse NGOs.

Participation of young people in research, policy and action processes has been identified as valuable to the positive development of young people (Douglas 2006, Wilson et al. 2007, Denney 2004, McLaren 2002). In the formative stages of youth programme and policy development, youth involvement encourages a sense of empowerment, ownership and engagement that strengthens and grounds innovations (Pittman et al. 2002).

Aotearoa examples

Located at the Blue Mountain Adventure Centre in Tongariro National Park, the Salvation Army Youth Programme offers an Adventure-based Learning environment that encourages the development of the mental *and* physical dimensions in young people (Salvation Army 2009). The basic premise of the programme is to nurture positive character development and resiliency in young people through exposure to outdoor challenges such as kayaking, rafting and caving in the remote setting. Under the guidance of expert outdoor instructors youth participate in the programme as part of a group, sharing cabin style accommodation

and encouraging social competencies through a shared sense of cohesion. Being confronted with 'outdoor pursuits' challenges aims to expose young people to character changing situations where barriers are overcome and boundaries are re-explored. The logic of exposing young people to the greater extent of their abilities is tied to empowering them with a new outlook on life. One participant who attended the programme recalled, "It's the ultimate challenge, the ultimate journey, ultimate fun and ultimate life changing experience!"

Centred on a strong interaction with the natural environment, the Otago Conservation Corps training course is a free training programme for youth aged 16-20 who have an interest or passion for working outdoors. The programme promotes healthy youth development twice a year with its 20 week courses where young people undertake personal development opportunities within the course curriculum. Development opportunities include; "outdoor first aid, te reo Māori (including a marae stay), public speaking, leadership, problem solving and CV compilation. Field skills include using radio and GPS equipment, chainsaw and ATV training, marine mammal rescue, management and organisational skills, ecological and conservation skills" (Department of Conservation 2009: paragraph 4). Environmental conservation forms the basis for the development of wider moral competencies in young people by engaging them as potentially capable learners with the capacity for growth. The expected outcomes for participants having attended the course is that they will have undertaken a range of recreation activities, undergone skills and self development training and will have gained work experience in the field of environmental conservation. These are the building blocks the programme aims to provide for young people to help increase their social and cultural competencies as a stimulant for positive participation in society.

Based in the Bay of Islands, Waka Taia-Mai Tours is culturally centred tourism business that is underpinned by a strong sense of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) for both the natural environment and society (Waka Taia-Mai 2009). The Waka Taia-Mai website describes crisis and preventative services that run alongside the business. The youth development aspects aim to engage and encourage young people to develop and fulfil their potential as a key contribution to building healthy relationships and strengthening society. Using traditional concepts and practices such as kaitiakitanga and a waka-based programme, youth are empowered with the tools of cultural identity and belonging, as vehicles for supporting positive engagement. Viewing young people as future kaitiaki the organisation advocates an integrated community approach to developing youth careers within and beyond Waka Taia-Mai. Within this frame, capacities such as leadership, responsibility, social cohesion and social awareness are encouraged as a forerunner to working within the organisation. Although no evaluation component is described, the outcomes of Waka Taia-Mai centre on enhancing future employment opportunities for 'at risk' young people in the Bay of Islands area, and increasing the level of positive engagement of youth in their communities.

As a collaborative project with the North Shore City Council, the Youth Destinations Project is targeting positive youth development for 9 to 15 year olds through the medium of sporting activity. The project draws on the framework of the Summer Fun, a programme for eight year olds and under and winner of the New Zealand Recreation Association Award (SPARC 2009). The Youth Destinations project aims to increase youth cohesion,

responsibility and ownership through the encouragement of youth participation in casual leisure sports and activities. From a strengths based perspective, young people were engaged in the initial needs assessment to help determine the scope of the project. The culmination of this will be the creation of Youth Zones; safe environments with site-specific programmes for the uptake of activities including skateboarding, 3-on-3 basketball and half-court netball (SPARC 2009). Encouraging this momentum, the associated In2itIn2it youth programme provides workshops and activities for young people from 10-15 years. Recent events include; Circus Arts Workshops, Beginner hiphop workshops, and the FIBA Under 19 World Street Ball championships held in Takapuna. The reported outcome of this energy has been an increase in the level of physical-based activities for young people on the North Shore.

The Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) sponsored the Artmakers Community Artists Trust, to run the Creative Youth Programme (Artmakers 2009), an arts based initiative that nurtures artistic creation and expression in young people aged 16-20. The programme focuses on developing the confidence, competence and practical experience of youth interested in a career in the arts and performance industries, through exposure to a range of artistic media such as painting, carving, drawing, 2-D and 3-D design. Learning covers general art education, cultural awareness, community projects, recreation and work experience. A broad range of skills and abilities such as interpersonal communication, leadership, cultural empathy and personal health are focused into a formal qualification, which participants gain as part of the programme outcomes. From here it is intended that, through the process of nurturing creative youth potentials, participants will be increasingly skilled and confident to channel their creative energies into positive pursuits and employment opportunities. Information about this project was found on the Trust website; there does not appear to be any formal evaluation of the initiative.

As part of a youth community development project in the south Auckland suburbs of Clendon and Mangere, Māori research group Te Rōpū Whāriki (Jensen et al. 2006) engaged youth in the research process to gain a deeper insight into their experiences of living in these urban environments. The methodological tool used in this project, known as photovoice, is a participatory research method that combines photographs and critical dialogue to illustrate the assets and issues present in communities, as defined by the youth who live there. With a focus on "...capability-building with young people and their communities" (Jensen et al. 2006:5), the project provides a needs assessment platform of being young in a built up urban environment. The resulting PowerPoint presentations have been used by the young people involved to share their insights about life in what are characteristically regarded as tough south Auckland locations at multiple gatherings. These include the MYD research day in 2006, at the national youth conference Involve, at the 2007 MSD Social Policy, Research and Evaluation conference, in multiple meetings with local body representatives, at schools and other venues. Researchers' assessment of the outcomes (Jensen et al., in preparation) was that both young people and their communities benefited from the articulation of youth voices, the skills transfers to the young people (who have subsequently modified the presentations for new specific audiences), the broadening of youth experience and the emergence of youth leaders. As one of the participants reported:

I represented the Mangere Youth Working Party at four of the five presentations, and enjoyed them immensely. Being one of the main youths working on this project, it was pleasing to hear the positive feedback and support we got from our local leaders and influential people in Mangere.

Summary

There are a small but growing number of youth initiatives in Aotearoa where PYD is a basis for programmes, activities and outcomes, indicating a slow roll-out of the YDSA policy framework. Compared to expenditure in youth justice, health, education/training programmes and related policy, YDSA (and PYD) remains a marginal influence in national thinking around the development, wellbeing and futures of our young people and its potential is far from realised. A further issue is that there is almost no rigorous evaluation of the projects that are in place. The current three projects funded by The Vodafone Foundation are prime examples of efforts to deliver on such potentials and the evaluation that follows is designed to report on the processes, outcomes, successes and challenges that these groundbreaking efforts have achieved.

Methods

This evaluation was primarily focussed on processes and impacts of the three WoD projects referred to above in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each. A programme logic was developed to guide and ground the evaluations and WoD project delivery teams were given an opportunity to ask questions and provide critical feedback on the evaluation design and methodology.

Development of Programme Logic

Programme logic describes the way that the project components – goals, aims, objectives, strategies, activities and outputs – link together and how the project is expected to work.

The principles underlying the model were used in discussions with service providers to develop the evaluation team's understanding of the kinds of data to collect and the approaches to analyses.

Ethics

As the project would gather potentially sensitive data from young people and community members as well as key informants, ethical considerations were attended to. A full application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee at Albany was submitted and approved prior to data collection. Participants were provided with information sheet, a verbal explanation and signed consent forms before being interviewed.

Data Collection and Analysis

The evaluation used primarily qualitative data from multiple sources including project documents, recorded data (individual interviews, focus groups) and observation to report on the projects.

Document review: Information sources included project records, reports, funding applications, media coverage, written and recorded publicity materials and website information. Data were read, analysed and integrated into the contextual information provided on the nature and character of each project. Where appropriate, insights from these sources were also included into the thematic analyses of project processes and impacts reported below, to ground the reporting of strengths and weaknesses in the realities of each project.

Recorded data: Audiotapes of a total of 26 key informant (one participant provided information for two projects) and 6 focus group interviews that gathered the views and experiences of 54 individuals were recorded. Recruitment was by recommendation and snowballing from the project leaders and staff. The evaluators sought to record interviews using an open-ended format in which participants shared their experiences of the projects. As well as project staff and young people within the projects these data also include

interviews with parents, police officers, youth leaders, a school principal and members of local and national government.

Table 1 Sources of recorded data for the Vodafone Foundation World of Difference evaluation

	Recorded Data
DZIAH Dance Academy	5 x interviews (Project manager, youth leader, school principal, 2 project staff) 2x focus groups (5 youth; 2 parents). Total: Seven interviews, 12 participants.
Naenae Boxing Academy	4 x interviews (Project manager, 2 project staff, 1 parent, 1 judge). 2 x focus groups (8 youth; 10 parents). Total: Six interviews, 23 participants.
Streets Ahead	12 x interviews (Project manager, 4 project staff, 3 police, 2 national government, 1 local government, 1 judge). 2 x focus groups (5 youth; 3 staff/parents). Total: 14 interviews, 20 participants.

The data were analysed thematically (Braun and Clarke 2006) in audio form, to describe and assess a series of change domains and the emergence of pro-social behaviours among young people within the projects. Selective transcription of key statements and comments from the interviews is used to illustrate and elaborate the thematic analyses and we have opted to maintain authenticity and accessibility by retaining the language of participants as much as possible.

The change domains emerged iteratively from the initial readings of the interviews and were progressively refined and focussed as accounts of change and development in three areas – Social Cohesion, Capability-Building and Health and Wellbeing. We have also used the themes of Challenges and Future Developments to encapsulate participants’ perceptions of the issues surrounding each project.

Most Significant Change: MSC was originally developed to support organisational learning. In evaluation it is able to focus on what is valued within a project by a range of stakeholders (Dart and Davies 2003). It does not stand alone, but contributes to the overall evaluation by providing narratives in participants’ voices that illustrate change. A ranking and discussion process enables the evaluation to describe what is important to the selectors, what the stories demonstrate and what meanings they hold.

Stories of change were drawn from the individual and focus group interviews described earlier. The researcher who carried out the interviews went through the transcripts to extract stories; stories were omitted where there was insufficient information or where the same story was told, one was clearly more in-depth. Stories that had not previously appeared in project reports or testimonials were also prioritised. The speaker's voice was preserved and editing was carried out only to clarify the narrative or to provide a cohesive flow.

Initially the research team of four, two Māori males, one Māori female and one Pākehā male looked over sections of the transcripts to check the selection process. The stories were then read out (DZIAH 7 stories; SA 7 stories; NBA 5 stories) with each researcher making notes and participating in discussion on each story.

The stories were sent to the project providers for comment and ranking and sent to the WoD funder team, who were asked to read and rank them. The research team then facilitated a similar ranking and discussion process with the WoD funding team. Notes from each discussion and the rankings were collated by the research team, who then selected the stories and reported them in their approximate rank order.

Participants in the selection and discussion process noted that all the stories were important and valuable. One comment was that the process highlighted the stories that stood out. The stories that the young people contributed were seen as particularly important because they foregrounded this rarely heard voice. Another reflection was that because the stories were in the language of the people who tell them, this might impact on the way they are received and understood. This meant that some stories might receive a higher ranking because the language was more familiar to the reader.

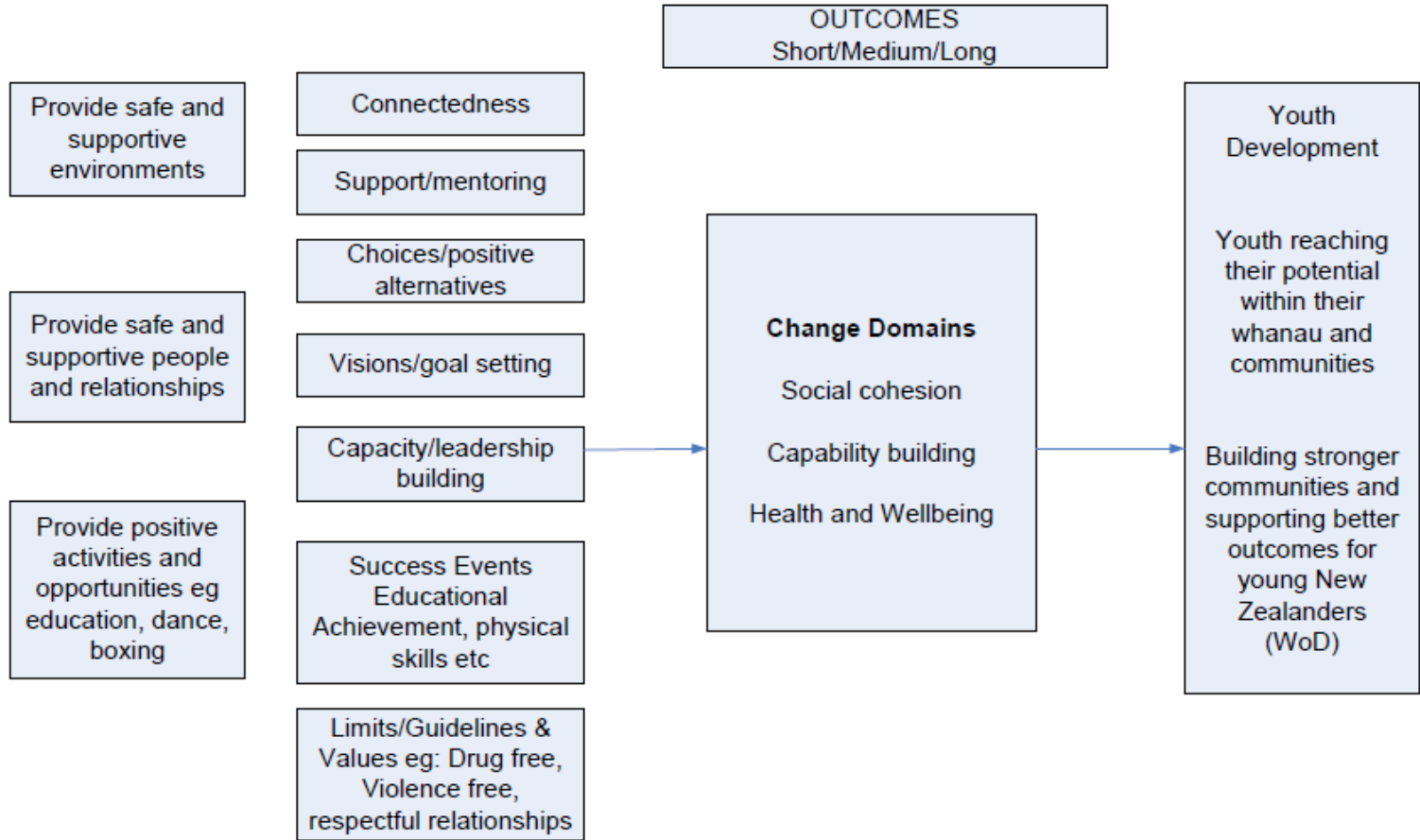
It was decided that four stories would be selected for each project; this seemed manageable and covered the key change domains. In addition there was considerable agreement on the ranking so that all the stories that were highly ranked by at least one of the groups could be included. The remaining stories have all contributed valuable information for the change domain analysis.

Observational data: These data included participation in site visits, a project camp, events, presentations, fundraisers, practices and rehearsals. Insights from these experiences are integrated into the analyses presented below for each project.

Programme logic

The following programme logic (see over page) was developed to reflect the way in which the projects work. It demonstrates a clear fit between their activities, outcomes and the goals of both Positive Youth Development and The World of Difference Programme. On the left what the projects provide and the areas in which they work are depicted. These lead to the outcomes that we here conceptualise as three domains of change: social cohesion, capability building and health and wellbeing.

Vodafone World of Difference Programme Logic



Findings

Findings are presented for each of the WoD projects in the following sections firstly describing the project context and approach followed by the data analysis grouped under Change Domains, Challenges and Future Developments followed by the Most Significant Change Stories.

DZIAH Dance Academy

What:	A dance academy providing young people with instruction in performing arts and hiphop dance
Why:	To inspire, promote and develop New Zealand's up and coming talent through the unique elements of hiphop
How:	Utilises various hiphop forms (dance, performing arts, graphics etc) as a way to connect to, and reach, young people
Who:	Young people
Where:	Otara, Auckland

Project Description

DZIAH is a dance academy run out of a dance studio in Otara, Auckland. The project is supported by Crosspower Ministries Trust, which has been in operation for 15 years in the Otara community providing a variety of children, youth and community projects/initiatives. The association means that if appropriate, DZIAH is able to access and utilise these resources for the benefit of its dancers/students.

The project is coordinated and managed by Billie Paea along with a dedicated team of support staff, helpers, family, whānau, friends, parents and volunteers.

I have a passion for dance, community and young people. Building youth in the local community, and driving social change through inspiring people to achieve their full potential. (Billie Paea)

The project aims to develop confidence, strength of character and discipline, by providing clear limits, new experiences and wider opportunities that build self-belief and demonstrate that dreams can come true. DZIAH is seen as a way of connecting with youth and, if a different path is needed, they are able to refer them to another avenue for support. The project also demonstrates that it is "okay for guys to dance".

Background

Established in 2004, DZIAH (eventually to become known as the DZIAH Dance Academy) was the brainchild of Billie Paea and a group of friends who wanted to take New Zealand hiphop dance to the world:

We started with three guys... my mates. We just, you know, started dancing for fun in the backyard and all that at home... we gradually added on like one dancer. Then we started growing from there..... (Billie Paea)

From these simple beginnings DZIAH grew in stature and experience

We started winning competitions with just three of us and from there we thought "we must have some talent... if they've got eight people in their crew and we've only got three. So we must be something different". And we had beaten some real good teams ... Being the oldest, I became the leader. (Billie Paea)

DZIAH was placed 8th in the world hiphop championship finals in 2005, ranked 2nd in 2006 and has also won a number of major NZ hiphop dance competitions. Based on this record, the name DZIAH has gained both national and international recognition appearing in various television programmes and working with local radio stations. DZIAH's fame has also attracted a number of well-known choreographers and dancers including Richard Whitebear (better known as Swoop) who was involved in The Swoop Dance Workshops and has danced with the likes of MC Hammer and performed and taught around the world.

In 2007, with the support of Crosspower Ministries Trust and the Vodafone Foundation, through their World of Difference programme, Billie was able to further develop his dance based programme, establish the current dance studio facilities and add school and after-school programmes.

During Billie's World of Difference year, DZIAH ran and participated in a number of events and competitions including Desire to Dream. This was a 10 week programme that had over 200 people audition for 60 spots and was aimed at bringing together some of Auckland's best dancers to teach dance, health, fitness, character, as well as getting dancers used to working in a team environment. Other events included The Hydraulix Dance workshop, which was a free school holiday programme for youth in the local community; a krumping programme that worked with and mentored a group of about 30 youth at serious risk; the Mini-Surge Dance Competition; and the National Championship Groove Competition in which crews from DZIAH competed.

DZIAH currently includes some of New Zealand's top dance crews and is involved with the hiphop body Street Dance New Zealand (SDNZ).

Approach

DZIAH Dance Academy is a performance based dance company that uses the creative and communicative potential of dance to up skill and equip young people with not only tools they can use in the arts but also life skills to help them set up future goals.

Dance has now become a universal language for young and old alike, connecting people throughout the world. With no cultural boundaries we can communicate through our expression of dance (Billie Paea)

DZIAH's current vision is to "To inspire, promote and develop New Zealand's up and coming talent through unique mediums of hip-hop". This vision is underpinned by the following objectives provided in...:

- Inspire
 - Provide top international role models and crews for NZ performers
 - Provide national and community role models for young people
 - Provide mentors to work with youth, using their energy in positive ways
- Promote
 - Promote the positive dance form of street dance
 - Run national events to bring exposure to hiphop dance and performers
 - Promote health and wellbeing using performance and dance.
- Develop
 - Provide innovative dance programmes to lift dancers to advanced and/or international level
 - Develop DZIAH performers to an international standard
 - Develop future leaders and mentors

The Academy trains choreographers, dancers and dance crews, conducts dance workshops through schools and other interested organisations (e.g. community organisations; churches) and is involved in organising and participating in a number of local and international hiphop dance events.

Being arts based, young people's confidence, self-esteem and ability to perform and speak in front of crowds are a fundamental aspect of DZIAH's dance training and development. Youth are also able to gain practical industry related skills through hands on experience in event management, promotion, business (e.g. contract negotiations; money management), teaching dance (usually at schools) graphics and design (e.g. Photoshop; designing posters for DZIAH events). A number of Billie's students are doing a graphics and design course at Natcol.

Billie cites 100-200 youth coming through his dance programmes each week, with a regular, solid core of 80. Through conferences and youth groups Billie believes the Academy has impacted on an additional 500 to 1000 people and possible more; at events he may talk to crowds of over 1000 people.

Change Domains

Social Cohesion

DZIAH Dance Academy has had impacts within the local and national community well beyond its elected focus on dance. In a range of ways it has changed the infrastructure available to young people particularly within South Auckland.

Increased mentoring and support for young people

DZIAH Dance Academy provides young people with mentoring and support that helps to build relationships, improve their confidence and dance skills

When the kids first step on to the scene Billy made sure that they had the mentors in place like they had the sisters, the older girls, they had the older girls from DZIAH who were either their sister or their mum and the boys with their Dads... the [mentors] weren't allowed to move without the little one by their side. (Parent, female)

... but Billy would say that's ok because you are strong, you are one of our strongest ones in doing certain things, he always seems to be able to find what there niche is and pull it out and once you have the confidence to go whoa I can actually you know keep up with everybody else it helped her a lot occasionally Billy would pull the bigger older kids to work aside to work with her to get her up and she would work with them until they got her up to where she needed to. (Parent, female)

DZIAH has also produced a number of youth leaders, mentors and role models who are influencing other young people's lives in positive ways:

the thing is you know we are producing champs and um when you look at not only producing champs but it's influencing lives... they are mentors, they are leaders their lives have changed completely so yeah I'm still kind of our support is still not so much because they are based out west but they have pretty much gone and done their own thing and every now and again I will check up and see how they are doing (Project support staff, male)

DZIAH Dance Academy has also supported and mentored other dance crews in Auckland, helped them reach success on the world stage and supported them as leaders, mentors and role models for other young people:

I said to Angela... we need to come alongside and support them [the dance crew] because you know the history of anything here is that there's no support... so I came

alongside and I bought them under our covering and supported them um all with my journey with them to go to Australia to Wellington for competitions because that's how they build their credibility up and um they took what we gave them and ran with it all the way to world stage. I helped take them to Las Vegas last year and um and yeah they have done well and now. (Project support staff, male)

Supporting young people in this way is seen as important to the future sustainability of hiphop dance in New Zealand:

I just think Billy is about growing people in the community... there is this talented core out there who is helping our kids at the moment, it is about growing people and hopefully the spinoff for us is one day our kids will be involved in a team that is going to grow a bit and be at the world championship and they become tutors and then that sort of circle of helping each other, if that makes sense? (Community stakeholder, male)

Increased project reach

Hiphop was seen as a successful medium for the DZIAH Dance Academy to reach young people:

I drove them out to Pukekohe to a youth um gig and um they yeah they freaked everybody out so they want them back again and today you know young people, changing young people it works way better, way faster and hiphop dance particularly is one of the most powerful tools that I have found you know in all the years that I have worked with youth... dance has that ability to grab hold of the audience very quickly... Billie's got some kids from the opposite ends of the scale to the bottom end of the scale so it's a language that appeals and reach[es] to every culture... [One well known dance crew] they were kids that grew up in a gangster neighbourhood but through the dance their lives have changed dramatically... (Project support staff, male)

If you talk to people out there and you know they ask you where you are from the first thing they say is 'oh they had that really good hiphop group' you know it is something I think we have always missed that gave a real positive spin... (Community stakeholder, male)

Increased sense of camaraderie, fellowship and belonging

DZIAH Dance Academy provides a safe, family orientated environment where young people have formed close bonds and friendships and are able to express themselves:

It's the friendships, it's the it's everybody who is around her it's just she just loves the environment you know she can come in here and she can be herself if she's in a bad mood or whatever somebody will be bound to come up and give her a cuddle and pull her out of it you know... (Parent, female)

The camaraderie and friendships that develop also foster a deep sense of passion and drive, respect, loyalty and group responsibility:

Simon: He's a different Edward

Elizabeth: But um yeah he's he is a good kid and he really respects his crew he is really loyal to them and you know he's quite his crew is his family so he puts them first

Simon: ... you know he is a completely different guy now he's got that he wants to be a part of the team... when he [Edward] strained his ankle and he couldn't dance... He was gutted he was absolutely gutted... I think just being around just being a part of the camaraderie the friendship and the umm the things they do together as friends... (Project support staff)

DZIAH Dance Academy also provides a close environment that young people and their families may not get in other facets of their lives:

... going from a jazz sort of environment it's totally different you know like so accepting you know... she is just accepted for who she is and this is her family and she has said to me a couple of times I can open up more to them than to my own family sometimes which is to me is like that's her safeguard (Parent, female)

Increased access to support for young people

The fact that the programme has arisen within the Otara community means that it is truly accessible for young participant:

One of the things that I think that has worked well is he is based in the area as well. So it is our local kids – my school for example – local kids that are coming to a local place to do a programme that is designed for them (Community stakeholder, male)

Capability Building

The investments that DZIAH Dance Academy makes also operate at the level of people and networks, enhancing their participation, growth and development.

Improved dance skills

DZIAH Dance Academy helps young people to improve their dance skills:

When she first started like she was always like I mean she could always sort of naturally dance but she had trouble like picking up choreography she is always slower than everyone else... it has taken her a couple of years to learn that, but Billie always said she would pick it up (Parent, female)

Increased responsibility, accountability and character building

DZIAH Dance Academy provides opportunities for young people to develop life skills, particularly around responsibility, accountability and character building:

... we have a house Crosspower's have a house that they live in as well so it's all a part and parcel so they learn how to live so it's not just dance, dance is umm a part

of a bigger cake, it's working it's teaching them responsibility, accountability umm all that skill, character building (Project support staff, male)

Increased networks and opportunities for young people

DZIAH Dance Academy has provided a number of young people with international travel to meet their dance idols and represent New Zealand on the world hip hop stage:

... when we came back from Atlanta their whole lives, their character has changed, their way of thinking um because they had met up with the people that they had seen in Bebo and YouTube as the gods of dance and they look up to and rub shoulders with [them] and not only that um after they performed those guys were blown away at how our guys had done so well and they came in and commented on it so when you hear that coming from people that you respect you know (Project support staff, male)

DZIAH Dance Academy also provides participants with both national and international networks and connections that can open up a number of future career opportunities:

... I think that she has really formed... really close bonds and it's special and yeah it's really important. You know they just you know the networks that the kids have built up and the friendships in amongst other careers and things like that you know especially when we went to Vegas... (Parent, female)

... we have a very strong international connection, they are known internationally (Project support staff, male)

Enhanced positive values

The values of DZIAH Dance Academy help to strengthen and develop pro-social values in young people:

Another thing I like about this particular programme the underlying concept is Christian based and a lot of our kids come from quite religious backgrounds. I think that is important as well I think that is where the values come in that it is not your hip hop on the street sort of stuff it is a hip hop in a controlled environment where everybody comes from a...the basis of what they are all about is about respect and looking after others and growing others and all those key things (Community stakeholder, male)

Health and Wellbeing

While dance may be the focus, its dependence on the physical and mental characteristics of those involved means that health and wellbeing are both a target and an outcome of the project.

Improved confidence

DZIAH Dance academy helps improve young people's confidence by giving them strong support and encouragement:

... she didn't have the confidence you know to get up there and they instilled in her that if she needs the help she has just got to say 'I can get that' whereas before she would just sit back and go 'mm I can't' you know she just wouldn't try it or she would go 'I can't do it' and sort of step back a little bit and not and now no... (Parent, female)

The confidence that each young person gains through performing has also been realised in various ways off the stage:

With the world hip-hop champs the kids who have come over to compete at the world hip-hop champs or any other international showcases, you see a different level of confidence come out. Like it's different, you know, the confidence that you see on stage is a different confidence to, you know, when you're off stage and some of these kids when they come on stage you see a different person. But now, the confidence is coming off the stage and into their normal lives and giving them confidence in everyday things. Like thinking 'yeah man, I can be a graphics designer, you know, web designer'... wanting to do other things that they never thought of before... (Billie Paea)

More young people in employment

DZIAH Dance Academy provides young people with jobs:

... three of the boys I employ here they were 18 years old, well they were younger when they came no burdens no nothing, no guidance, no hope it was just like it was just a group of young boys one was well two of them were pretty much told to move on in their homes so but dance is what they live for and so when they came here I said Billy we need to establish a foundation where they can come in and fit in with what we are doing it's all in part and parcel in the package of what we do developing leaders... so yeah that's what way I can employ them and if they want to go and do their gigs they can be able to leave and so there's flexibility and so they and that's a reason why there is a very strong family base whānau base (Project support staff, male)

Increased discipline, passion and drive

DZIAH Dance Academy inspires young people to want to strive and achieve:

And that is what it is the way that it is taught as well that is what we liked about the programme...I mean it was hard work, the kids had to work hard and the sacrifices I think they had to make to be involved but the minute they were here they loved it, it was something that drove them (Community stakeholder, male)

I don't even know why he ended up auditioning for the team at school and um why I picked him to be in the team was because he worked hard he didn't have a clue how to dance but he worked hard and after that experience he enjoyed dancing... he really loved dancing and I think that gave him a passion for dance... Not only that it's

not just being in a team it's being in the DZIAH team um and that really gave him the incentive (Project support staff, male)

Challenges

Finding and maintaining sustainable funding for the DZIAH Dance Academy remains a key issue for the project:

Billie and I have had lots of discussions around funding and things like that and because – I think it has gotten better in the public eye that people are seeing hip hop as something we are really good at but they say that but they don't follow it up with supporting it... (Community stakeholder, male)

Lack of sustainable funding also has impacts on the ability of the project to grow, to provide a salary for key staff and employ people to do specific tasks. Consequently, other important aspects of the project don't receive the time that they need:

[We would like to pay] people to run it because right now it is run voluntarily and um it's just like if people are getting paid to do the job they will do the job... because you need people to do it. Most of what Billie does is [choreography] and mixing and all that stuff... not enough time to put applications together [and] to work on the administration... and that's what we are working on now is to put together a team um to manage... all the things that are needed right now to take this further is already there just need the resource, the salaries to pay people, to pay Billie and pay others to do what Billie is doing now and also (Project support staff, male)

Part of the difficulty of finding funding for the project is the current misconceptions about hip hop:

... the stigma around hip hop is a lot of my colleagues wouldn't dare go down that track which is a real shame because when you look at what they produce and the outcomes of these kids you just think 'wow why don't they get involved?' (Community stakeholder, male)

However, continuing to build awareness of the work of the project is seen as a good way to break down these negative perceptions about hip hop culture:

... hip hop just seems to be growing but still the side to it is the funding is just not there and I don't know how we do that but I think the more work Billie does with his tutors training his dancers and his dancers training other dancers I think that is probably the only way of doing it is really getting out there and showing our kids are really good at doing this stuff (Community stakeholder, male)

Future Developments

One future plan for the DZIAH Dance Academy is the establishment of an NZQA accredited course in performing arts:

Eventually I want to have an NZQA course on the DZIAH Dance Academy so that the people who come through the academy will get NZQA accredited certificate in performing arts and that they will be able to get jobs, you know, teaching jobs, and you know, work overseas... (Billie Paea)

... to set up the training establishment and um to put the paperwork together for NZQA because there hasn't been anything in the level where Billie is there are courses that are teaching dance but mainly in the bottom in the first um level 1 but there's nothing in the professional level... (Project support staff, male)

Developing leaders and mentors is seen as important to the sustainability of the project:

... with the proper mentoring they will become his leaders they will become a part of his team and the team that you can send out anywhere in the country what they build now, they can put together a package and a model that you can use it everywhere, anywhere um in the country as well as overseas (Project support staff, male)

Building up DZIAH Dance Academy as a viable business is also a vision for the project:

The vision is ... to run as a sustainable business because you know it's got to, you can't rely on anything, so that's what he is trying to do at the moment part of it is he wants to develop a sustainable business so it will help to fund the other stuff... (Project support staff, male)

Within this frame lies the possibility of expanding the business to include music:

... that's what we are going to build on the music part of Crosspower is we want to establish the recording a studio specifically decked out for um performance, video clips, music, singing, the whole (Project support staff, male)

Recently, Billie has been in discussions with the Manukau Institute of Technology to develop a dance and music based performing arts course that will have qualifications attached.

DZIAH Dance Academy Change Stories

In this section the Most Significant Change method is used to reinforce and highlight the Change Domain themes.

Why we chose these stories

Three of the stories were clearly ranked highly (either first, second or third) by all selection groups. It was difficult to select the fourth story as the remaining stories were all ranked

differently. However, the evaluators used their discretion to choose the male dancer/role model story. It was not considered as dramatic a story of change as the first three but was included because it illustrated youth development principals. Although each story was considered valuable and rankings were mixed, they are presented in an approximation of higher to lower ranking.

During the selection process The Vodafone Foundation participants commented that:

The dance programme is core, but the impact on learning outcomes, the principal's story, the housing needs, the support needs – these other things represent a more integrated model. Going to the States is obviously a huge thing.

The stories challenged my perceptions that a small number of guys had this amazing experience (going to the international competition) versus the community aspects, but that (the trip) is the magic that people see; these guys can achieve something, the role modelling.

A bit like the All Black analogy; this is the dance version of this. Only a small number become All Blacks, but it inspires a nation.

South Auckland is famous for something wicked; it puts it on the map.

It reached a broad group of people; the stories reflect that; it was affirming. I guess I always wondered- do you really get the gangs, the mini gangsters in there. It made it seem rich when you get the stories.

Story one: A Principal's Story

I think around 2004 as a school ... because of the issues sort of in the area, we wanted to find something that would hook kids into learning. And one of the ways we knew that works well with our kids is through dance and obviously through hiphop. We had seen DZIAH dance back in the days and I thought "wouldn't it be great to have somebody like that come in and help our kids". We managed to get hold of Billie and Billie came in and he worked with a group of our kids.

When I talk about the 'hook into learning', what was happening was the kids that were involved in those particular hiphop groups were kids that weren't doing so well in the classes... the boys that pretty much didn't like school. All of those negative behaviours.

The spin off for us is our student achievement levels have risen because of kids concentration spans in class... I think being a bit confident in the routines... and people coming in and saying "oh wow you guys are amazing", that sort of boosted their confidence. Because they had all that positive feedback they were confident to be able to transfer what they were learning with Billie into the classroom... these kids came out with really good achievement results... obviously through work that Billie was doing, so that has been a spinoff for us. A lot of those kids to this day are still at school... their whole outlook on life is 'if you want to do well you

have to actually work hard' and that is something they probably learned from Billie. When you came to Billie it was all about working hard, [you] couldn't muck around.

One of the things that I think that has worked well is he is based in the area as well. So it is our local kids – my school for example – local kids that are coming to a local place to do a programme that is designed for them. I think it has gotten better in the public eye that people are seeing hip hop as something we are really good at. You have got all these talented kids that are out there – Willis who is out there now is a prime example. A kid who is great at what he does... he is going back to do his qualification yet it is not seen as other genres of dance would get more funding rather than this kind of dance. That's what Billie does with his tutors - training his dancers - and his dancers training other dancers... it is really getting out there and showing our kids are really good at doing this stuff.

A lot of it has the life skills, so they teach these programmes in schools and not only are they teaching hip hop, but it is about the life skills, about being organised, to do things like working/cooperating with others because with hip hop it is quite diverse; you have lots of diversity there. And so when you bring all those people in one place, and what they learn, I think is probably the success of the programme.

Billie is local, the kids are local so it is someone who is a really good role model who is helping our kids. Billie is about growing people in the community... it is about growing people and hopefully the spinoff for us is one day our kids will be involved in a team that is going to grow a bit, and be at the world championship, and they become tutors and then that sort of circle of helping each other.

Because our results in our school weren't really really good, we just thought maybe if we hook some of these kids that aren't successful at the learning side of things this might be something they are going to be really really good at... If you talk to people out there and you know they ask you where you are from the first thing they say is 'oh they had that really good hip hop group'

The way that it is taught as well. That is what we liked about the programme. I mean it was hard work, the kids had to work hard and the sacrifices I think they had to make to be involved. But the minute they were here they loved it. It was something that drove them. Until now three of those boys that were in that particular group are now dancing for other crews. It is good to know they have kept it up and part of being involved in the programme was that it allowed them to travel as well. So we went to other places in NZ to share their talent with other people but also to get them out of the community to say there is a bigger life outside of Otara as well. We grow them here but then we say to them "go out and see the world as well", there are lots of opportunities for them. I think it was just a good vehicle for our kids really to hook them into their learning... Because of the stigma around hip hop a lot of my colleagues wouldn't dare go down that track, which is a real shame because when you look at what they produce and the outcomes of these kids you just think "Wow. Why don't they get involved." I suppose they put their energies into something else... but it just seems he [Billie] is more in touch with what our young kids need... or what our kids like, or what our kids are all about.

Another thing I like about this particular programme is the underlying concept is Christian based and a lot of our kids come from quite religious backgrounds. I think that is important as well. I think that is where the values come in. That it is not your hiphop on the street sort of stuff. It is a hiphop in a controlled environment. The basis of what they are all about is about respect and looking after others and growing others and all those key things. We came back to something that we know works for our kids, so obviously we have sustained the relationship with the DZIAH programme to keep it going. This is probably after our conversation I had with Billie that we just keep it going because we know it works for our kids, we are seeing the outcomes.

Why this story?

- Wider impacts of DZIAH on young people in the community - The Principal is an outside stakeholder. The outcomes were particularly important to Billie because the young people he was working with weren't doing particularly well at school. He was able to inspire and motivate them through dance (Provider).
- Incredible; it's everything you can ask for as an organisation; someone who deals with these young people and supports the programme. It is a massive endorsement (Vodafone Foundation).
- I liked the bigger picture stuff. It showed changes in increasing achievement, young people's strengths and life skills, working cooperatively, tapping into their passions; values of respect and caring. It works; it was really, really powerful (Vodafone Foundation).
- If you are looking for seeing what works, this story tells us this. What is wrong with schools and how you change this; literally one person can do this by showing how they work with young people. I liked the context about the underlying Christian base; this was a way of it being ok; it was different but it was real for those young people; finding a way of working in that context (Vodafone Foundation).
- It is about the bigger picture from an outsider perspective. It parallels the cop story from Streets Ahead (Vodafone Foundation).
- Good 'cause shows transfer of skills, academic, education angle (Whāriki).
- It's not just the young people who are the 'stars', but shows the sort of influence DZIAH is having in a range of areas (Whāriki).

Comments

- School Principal was looking for a way of dealing with issues in the school.
- He contacted Billie because he thought that hiphop was potentially a way of hooking students into learning.

- He picked out a particular group that he saw as not liking school and got them involved in DZIAH Dance Academy.
- The Principal is extremely positive about the benefits of their involvement and details a range of changes that he sees as attributable to the initiative.
- He expresses disappointment that his colleagues don't always see the benefit of this approach; he believes that Billie is a local role model who has the knowledge and skills to meet the young people's needs.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

Pride, something they are good at in their school; school got mana out of young people doing well in hiphop.

Brings diverse skills together; teaching each other.

Capability building

They have improved their concentration, academic achievement and confidence; saw them take what they had learnt into other areas; students he would have expected to leave school, didn't; they stayed on longer;

DZIAH Dance Academy provided a vehicle for life skills.

The young people love DZIAH Dance Academy and now have vision, values, drive, travel opportunities, wider horizons, a hook into learning; respectful relationships and look after others.

Health and wellbeing

Channelled energies in positive ways; learnt that if you want something then work hard at it.

Improved dance skills and fitness.

Research shows the strongest influence on outcomes on young people is an extra year in school.

Story two: A Mother's Story

Some of us are quite close with the parents and our kids live in each other's houses just about. That's because you know, you know they are ok they are safe. Some of our kids have started to go to school together, so you know it's about leadership aye, you can only do this if you have got good leadership, good direction and I think Billie's vision and his leadership is

really derived from his parents and his up bringing you know. They are well known in the community here in Otara and they are really lovely people, and you know they open this place to anyone and everyone. That is where it stems from. It's that they are very welcoming people and you feel comfortable.

The academy has done quite a bit for us as a family, being able to give my kids the opportunity to travel overseas. We would probably have never had that if we were involved in anything else. As a single parent, you know, it's always difficult to be able to like, all you ever want is the best for your kids and you will do whatever you have to do to make it happen. So for us it was coming to the academy, coming into DZIAH dance crew and building our relationships here. Dance was our mechanism, it took us away from the hardships of home where we came to an environment that was warm, that was friendly, to where the kids love to be you know, and life sometimes can be pretty hard for us, you know. There's all those other issues around keeping a roof over your head and feeding the kids and getting them to school, but when you came to the academy, dance just took them away from that. It gave them the ability to meet people, do what they love best which is to dance, and to travel. That would probably be the biggest achievement that you ever want for your children. They got to represent our country, on the world stage in Las Vegas and Planet Hollywood, and as a parent, man, that was like the biggest dream that ever came true and that they were able to achieve stuff at a young age.

I've learnt quite a lot of things alongside Billie Paea. I think what have I learnt? If you get to have time with him you make the most of the opportunity. If I need to be with him I have a list of everything that I need and I will knock it out one by one, because he's got so many things on and he needs to switch between lots of things. I have had to be way more prepared.

One of the other things I've learnt with working here is that I feel youthful here. I feel young because the kids are here. It's the music, it's the environment because in my real job, you know the one that pays me, it can be a bit stressful. You come to this place and it's just like it all goes, you know. It's really exciting! I get excited about being here; doing things not just for us but for our kids. I have really enjoyed working with Billie.

I think of the networks that I have got with DZIAH Dance Academy. I had networks in the community through the work that I did, but my networks now are just extensive. I work for a youth provider. I think "man where can I add to, what do I need to engage with youth?" I can use all of my hiphop connections you know, and it's not just dance, all the dance crews that we have access to, there's singers, there's hiphop artists. Look at Jay Williams, he's from DZIAH you know, he's come right out of here. You have access to all of these people and networks and sound technicians and producers, lighting people. You might need that in your own kind of backyard.

I think the other thing about working with Billie is that he's always really clear about professionalism and that we all maintain that. We might not be happy about some of the things that, you know, that happen, but we always need to maintain our professionalism at all times. Billie, you never ever see him get upset. In front of the kids he's always professional, he's always happy, he is smiley. I know now when he's stressed. I can actually

read him now because I have worked alongside him long enough. But he always maintains his professionalism. Sometimes I think to myself "I need to do that. Take some of the skills that you learn here and implement into your own day to day lifestyle." I think my other big thing about being here is the friendships I have made with other families.

It's been a real privilege to work alongside Billie Paea. Like I said before, he's a visionary. When I look at him I think "Man! He's so young." The visions and the goals that he has in life, how can you do that at such a young age? It just shows that age isn't a barrier. What I love about it most is that it's not about him as an individual. It's about all of us, it's about the kids, it's about who he brings to the academy, it's about community and what he can see for the community. Billie hardly ever says no. That's what I have learnt. He will always try to find a way.

Why this story?

- Relationship building - The leadership and vision of Billie has been important in fostering a sense of whanaungatanga amongst participants and their whānau. This has been important in helping people to work together towards the Academy's vision for its young people. This has been important in helping the young people to achieve as well as providing them with opportunities such as travel that they may not have had in their previous situation. Working with Billy has also allowed this parent to develop skills that they have been able to transfer to other contexts/situations (Provider).
- The piece about where they come from and what they do is really strong; also what Billie gives to the young people and to the parents is really strong. Heaps jumped out at me; the changes in family, the community, the environment, taking away hardships of home, kids do what they love, they get to travel and have amazing experiences. It gives the big picture, networking, young people letting go of their stressors; it's about young people and communities; a rich story (Vodafone Foundation).
- I liked the bit about the professionalism of Billie; well controlled and managed; he is on to it (Vodafone Foundation).
- How he gets people to engage (Vodafone Foundation).
- Whole whānau impact; good story as it is from a mum's perspective (Whāriki).

Comments

Story is from the perspective of a single mother.

She speaks highly of Billie and his family and the respect that they have gained in the Otara community.

DZIAH Dance Academy has provided an opportunity for her family to learn, to meet people, to travel overseas and to be in an environment that is exciting and takes them away from the day to day stresses in their lives.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

She has gained networks; when she does her youth work she can tap into her DZIAH connections and networks.

There is a community vision talked about, with changes not just in individuals, but in their families and wider.

Capability building

Billie teaches professionalism (gave Jay Williams as a successful example); mother does youth work; she is now more prepared.

DZIAH Dance Academy excites and inspires youth and their families to engage and achieve.

Health and wellbeing

DZIAH Dance Academy provides a release from stressful lives and provides alternative dreams and opportunities to realise them.

Story three: A dancer's journey

It was one of those things that happened. I was living in Whangamatā, 2 or 3 years ago. I had been there for awhile and I sort of got into everything, like drugs and that sort of stuff, so I couldn't go so far with a music and dance career. But at one time I came home from school and I was watching TV, and I looked on the news and this guy [Billie] was at the Auckland airport with his team, and they had come second in the world hiphop champs. I was watching and I was wondering when I saw that little glimpse. It reminded me of You Got Served, the movie. It hit me straight away and then I saw New Zealand people could actually do good over there [in the USA].

Some stuff happened at home and then I ended up running away to Auckland, and I jumped off at Manukau. I didn't know what to do and then everything started falling into place. I walked into the mall, I hadn't been there for a while, and I saw one of my aunties. She asked me what I was doing and I said "I don't know." She told me my mum lived close. I talked to my mum, she just asked me what I wanted to do and I told her. She did some research and a couple of weeks later she came in and saw Billie and just enquired about classes and stuff. She came home and saw me. I was like buzzing out. It was mean. I was sort of scared at the

same time. I was sort of, it was intimidating coming but like when you are here and after you have been through all the trials and meet all the boys and all the girls and the people around, it starts rubbing off on you.

I see it like it's an opportunity so why not play it out? When I've played sports - because I used to be hard out into sports - you don't see half pai stuff. It's one of those things. They might not tell you to go hard at school, but they will tell you to go hard at sports, and it just got put into my head because I'm not really good with paper and stuff. I realised that it is quite similar to sports with the training and the mentality of dancing and stuff... So I adapted real fast. You just get that drive and you see something and there's a goal and you try to achieve and then you just give it your all.

I think I am more independent. Looking back now I was real lost... Lots of my brothers and sisters, they are lost as well, as in like the youth and that, yeah. But they are there, but they are sort of not there. I'm still learning and I'm going through the process but I'm learning like leadership and independence. Moving out of home and stuff, that was my choice. Billie gave me the opportunity to stay in a house, so I've learnt the lifestyle of living by myself and all the hard times, the starving times. The times we have got money, it just goes like that because you are so hungry! But you know I have learnt heaps of life skills and you know and all that stuff. I am only 18, but I have learnt all of this in I'd say a year. I look back but it hasn't taken its toll, just learning bit by bit and certain situations, some good and some bad, but it's sort of all good learning.

I have always had a dream to have a boys' crew. Once I saw these guys I was like, I want a boys' group. It's like an honour, all the training and all the times we learn, and all the hard times and all of it paid off, and we accomplished winning nationals.

When you can say that you represent your country, that's a victory in itself, not only winning the nationals but having the name and the opportunity to be at the forefront for varsity teams. To go into the worlds to represent NZ, that's one of my achievements. Some of the other boys, they realise how big it is to us, just winning nationals, but it would be even bigger to win worlds. That's what we are aiming for. We just felt like the All Blacks going to represent NZ, so it was really cool.

Why this story?

- Opportunities - DZIAH Dance Academy offers an environment where young people can live out their dreams. This participant was able to move out of home, gain their independence, learn the importance of being responsible, build character and gain employment (Provider).
- It's a movie in the making. A strong story... love that it's from the point of view of young people (Vodafone Foundation).

- To go from trouble to where he is, is tremendous. It is obvious something had happened to him, but you don't know how much trouble he was in (Vodafone Foundation).
- He literally journeyed from the East Coast to Auckland; story left you with the sense that it could have been very different; what would have happened if he hadn't made this journey? (Vodafone Foundation)
- Dramatic, difference is he is involved in DZIAH Dance Academy as a choreographer, a leader (Whāriki).
- Is another example of outreach, media profile is another thing beyond schools – he says his inspiration came from that first exposure when he ran away he clearly motivated his family member to make that connection – evidence of the pulling power of what DZIAH Dance Academy is doing (Whāriki).

Comments

- Was having some issues, in to drugs and saw DZIAH Dance Academy on the news; they had done well in world champs. He was inspired..
- Something went wrong at home and he ran away to another family member in Auckland who got in touch with DZIAH Dance Academy.
- He loved the training and discipline. He saw it as an opportunity and put his energies into it.
- He is a leader, a choreographer and dreams of winning the national and world championships.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

There is a sense of shared goals, dreams and visions among the crew.

He is stepping up in to leadership roles and, in turn, inspiring others to dream and make the most of opportunities and themselves.

Capability building

He has dreams and goals, is more independent and will soon be a rep in the world championships.

He has learnt life skills and made connections around working for something in order to achieve.

Health and wellbeing

He went from drugs and running away to tapping into his strengths;.

Housing, that is really important, that they have access to what they need and that this is often basic, everyday living needs; this is clear in this story.

Story four: Youth role model story

I kind of got pulled in to DZIAH through the 2.0 boys, so you know, being the brother connection with the boys. I kinda just got in to this – DZIAH - and um oh for me I come from a church background because like I used to dance with the church. For me - growing with the church dance crew - I kind of had the like the necessity to like reach out to the kids that are out there that were interested in dancing. And then actually bring them to the right way to learn how we do it, why we do it, reason to dance. Not just to dance for like self glory. So having actual meaning to it.

That's a good feeling to know that you have put some one on the [right] track. Going to a good family - like DZIAH - and having that support by everyone, and a lot of people that have had experience, and then people that will grow with you, so that's the mean thing about it, rather than like drugs and alcohol and gangs and so forth.

Like being in Otara out south. It's good to have like kids come up to you and want to be like you and that's what we kinda hope for. To have like a role model and then um that's the mean highlight aye. Just having people like young kids of today look up to you.

Why this story?

- Role models/mentors/leaders – Young people are seeing and sharing the Academy's vision with other young people (Provider).
- Liked the role model reference; that was probably the most powerful message in this one for me. It would make a fantastic documentary, I thought that when I read this story; would be great for a documentary to go to the world champs with them. It looked less like a significant changes because he already had a church background, it didn't seem like such a significant story of change (Vodafone Foundation).
- My favourite story because of when he talks about the young people running up to him; maybe because I (interviewer) was there and heard the sense of pride of these young people running up to him and saying "I want to be like you." How he says he feels like a leader, a role model and says he's mentoring now (Whāriki).

Comments

- The story is about a boy who comes from a church background.
- He sees dance as having a meaning to it over and above individual motivations and wants to share this with others.
- He likes the whānau sense DZIAH provides. He gets a huge boost out of being recognised widely and young people coming up to him, wanting to be like him; he is a role model.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

It shows how the programme impacts on people in the community who are not and may never be directly involved in the programme.

It's about what it means for the young people who say he is their role model for them, rather than a gangsta being a role model.

I think it shows how it contributes to South Auckland pride, having world champions practising out of their car park.

It shows how youth development is also about wider change, what happens when young people realise a much greater potential; it is then not just about the shifts in terms of their individual change, but about the roles they are able to take on in their communities to effect greater change.

Capability building

Is part of the succession, young people taking leadership in the programme.

It gave me a sense of what they (the participants) mean when they are pleased to be recognised and to be a role model – that sense of pride and responsibility.

Health and wellbeing

He sees DZIAH Dance Academy as providing an alternative to drugs, alcohol, gangs and behavioural problems.

Summary

Using the medium of hiphop and the DZIAH brand has been both innovative and an effective way for the DZIAH Dance Academy to reach and inspire diverse groups of young people in the Auckland area and beyond. The project's holistic, wrap around approach, strong Christian underpinnings and focus on supporting and mentoring young people creates an environment that inspires and drives them to actualise their dreams and aspirations. DZIAH Dance Academy also offers hands on training where young people acquire a broad range of skills that enhance their horizons of opportunity, whether that be in dance or other fields of their choosing.

The thematic analyses present a complex of environmental, social and personal change as reported through the eyes of the evaluation participants. It is clear that DZIAH Dance Academy has contributed strongly to an enhanced social and physical infrastructure of opportunity and acknowledgement for young people in South Auckland. Equally the analysis demonstrates the development and growth of individuals.

The change stories also demonstrate the wider impacts that the project has on families and the community and how the project contributes to South Side Pride and positive role models. Last, but certainly not least, the Academy's dance programme has supported and produced some of this countries best known hiphop dancers and choreographers as well as producing an ever growing number of world class hiphop crews.

Naenae Boxing Academy (NBA)

What:	A boxing, fitness and wellness centre for young males in Upper Hutt
Why:	To provide a safe and nurturing environment for young males to become good, upstanding, proud citizens who have the skills and courage to make the right choices in their lives
How:	Young males receive fitness instruction, discipline, values, life skills, positive male mentoring, friendship, positive recognition and reinforcement, assistance with employment, education and training, a safe healthy environment and learn about healthy nutrition
Who:	Young males in Lower Hutt
Where:	Naenae, Lower Hutt

Project Description

The Naenae Boxing Academy (NBA) is a fitness and wellness centre working with young males, some at serious risk, in the Wellington region. The project is coordinated and managed by Billy Graham and a dedicated team of support staff/helpers/family/whānau/friends/volunteers. Apart from Billy, no one involved is remunerated in any way. The NBA is supported by The Billy Graham Naenae Charitable Trust, to work towards a very simply expressed goal:

In essence, my plan is to get these kids fit, get these kids healthy, get their heads thinking good logic; make friends... [boxing] is a means to an end... (Billy Graham)

NBA seeks to get involved with young people and encourage families to be involved with the young people. The project is about having fun, setting limits and encouraging the young people to develop into leaders and teach the younger/newer participants.

Background

It was Billy Graham's life long dream to have a boxing academy. Before this time, Billy had spent 30 years as a physical education teacher, motivational speaker and fitness advisor.

When I was about 12 years of age I told my boxing coach that I was gonna have my own boxing gym. That's where it started from (Billy Graham)

In 2006, after friends, family and colleagues suggested that a boxing Academy would be of great benefit to the Naenae community, The Billy Graham Charitable Trust was established to help realise Billy's dream for young people and fund The Naenae Boxing Academy:

I have a genuine love of young people and I can relate to them because I've walked 10,000 miles in their shoes. I know the real pain they're going through and I know exactly how to help them turn their lives around (Billy Graham)

From 2006-07 Billy was sharing his time between public speaking work and running the Academy which was providing sessions of boxing training to boys. As a recipient of The World of Difference programme in 2008, Billy and his team were able to dedicate more of their time to the Academy, to further develop his fitness and wellbeing programme, and improve the facilities for the boys.

This included the relocation of the Billy's family to their current premises and an upgrade of the gym facilities; accepting more referrals from the Courts, Police, CYPS and other agencies; providing the boys with information, contacts and advice on employment, education and training opportunities; attending and competing at a number of boxing tournaments; the establishment of The Naenae Boxing Academy website at www.naenaeboxingacademy.co.nz; the training and development of youth mentors and leaders; and the purchase of boxing equipment and a video camera.

Approach

The Academy can care for and nurture up to 120 young males at one time. The boys attend the Academy around 3 nights per week, to receive amateur boxing training and fitness instruction. Built into the boxing training are opportunities for participants to develop friendships, discipline, leadership and mentoring skills, pro-social values, (e.g. being respectful), life skills, and learn about health and nutrition and hygiene practices. Participants are also exposed to positive male mentoring, receive positive recognition and reinforcement and can get assistance with employment, education and training related issues, all within a safe and healthy environment.

I don't judge anyone. I just walk alongside them and help them through their struggles no matter how big they seem (Billy Graham)

The Academy follows a strict code of behaviour that includes: no drugs, no alcohol, no swearing, no gang patches, and no caps or hoods being allowed inside the premises. As part of the culture of the Academy the boys are encouraged to greet, and shake hands with staff, other participants and visitors to the gym at the beginning of each training session. After the 'meet and greet', training begins with the boys exercising for the first quarter of an hour:

... they all have to do exercise... before they... start running the place. We started getting the kids into the order of doing work so they're easier to handle because they were tired in the first quarter of an hour being at the gym... (Billy Graham)

Although fitness and boxing training are an important aspect of the NBA, only a small number of the boys who attend end up in the boxing ring or box competitively. For the majority of the boys who attend, the NBA offers a number of other attractions including opportunities for learning new skills, having fun, making friends and creating fellowship:

... we only have about eight kids who are actually boxing with a license while my other kids just love being there and like the atmosphere and don't mind learning how to throw punches and don't mind learning all the other things... that they're not just coming for the discipline. They are coming for the friendship, the fellowship (Billy Graham)

As well as the boxing training, the Academy hosts a number of events during the year for the purposes of "having fun" and providing further opportunities for the boys, project staff and friends/family/whānau to bond. This can include "fun nights" like table tennis, movie nights and BBQs. Guest speakers are also invited to inspire, motivate, encourage and talk to the boys about future plans and goals.

... I love the idea that a kid can go back to school and do another year just so he can do an apprenticeship and get the qualifications... Or do another two years and go off to varsity and get a degree so he doesn't have to work like I've had to work all my life with no qualifications... (Billy Graham)

Change Domains

Social cohesion

NBA has had impacts within the local community that are not related to boxing per se. The generic support that it offers to young men has seen a range of improvements in the wider neighbourhood and social relations in Naenae.

Increased project reach

The work of the NBA is well known in the Naenae community:

... he's putting back and respected for that and everybody knows about this project in the Valley. None of us know about the other things that are going. I'm sure there are [other things] (Parent, male)

Increased involvement with male role models and mentors

The NBA provides a positive and nurturing environment where young males are guided and supported by a number of male mentors and role models and are taught about pro-social values in a practical setting:

Boxing wise. I guess a certain success again is that you've got a lot of good role models. [Billy's] really good at getting not only teenagers but a lot of adults to role model... and he's quite old school. He's got old school values. Take your hat off. No swearing. All those type of things. And it really rubs off on everyone you know. And it doesn't matter who you are who walks in there. If you got a hat on he'll tell you to take it off. He's not shy... that's just him (Parent, male)

[He] is extremely positive and it's almost a mini tribal environment in some respects. If you go back several hundred years, boys of the age group that Billy takes on... they'd be going to work with the men one way or another, it just doesn't happen anymore. Certainly not until they're in their very late teens by which stage it's usually too late... [but here] there are half a dozen older adult males here every time the boys are here... to help the boys to keep them positive (Parent, male)

He did in a month what I couldn't do in fifteen years with my son and my son is a fatherless child and I think that I really truly believe why this works is cause it's men working with boys and that needs to happen more (Parent, female)

The NBA has also produced a number of young male mentors and leaders that the other boys hold in high esteem and are in roles of responsibility:

You know like Trevor you know. He's really you know, he can do a lot more than a lot of the boys can do so they sort of hold him up as being a bit of a role model, you know, so he's got it all worked out. Billy's got it all worked out of how the boys compete with each other, but everybody can do it if they try hard enough... (Project support staff, female)

Producing young leaders and mentors who are committed to continuing the work of the NBA is part of the NBA's current succession strategy:

I think Billy... 'cause he got such a strong influence I think all the boys that he's taught, the main core that are still there will probably go on to continue teaching exactly the same way that he's teaching. And it's gonna be quite hard when Billy eventually does move on (Parent, male)

Increased community involvement

The NBA has seen a number of community stakeholders including parents, schools, police, and sponsors supporting and promoting the project:

It's a community wide intervention is sort of what's happening here with Billy at the centre and all the other parents are like the spokes [of the wheel]... what we've been learning in Crim in Australia where they have this success with stemming the gang problem and the youth crime problem is when they have community wide intervention and that's when people have... you know it's like us, we're all prepared to come here and support this and play a part so they're the spokes... He's the leader but we're the community around him eh? (Parent, male)

A number of schools are also involved with, and support and promote, the project:

And I think a lot of the schools, from the boys who attend here are seeing the benefits of that, that they are talking that way. In fact I know with Hoani's school in particular, he had one of the teachers bring his son down and they just roamed around here and they were just absolutely [amazed] and they took that message back, back into the school and said "look this is what they're doing" and they had

photos taken and put up in this kid's bedroom because where they teach our children, this is not the sort of teaching that they get (Parent, female)

Having support from sponsors has been a 'draw card' for many of the young males involved in the NBA and a positive sign of the support from the community:

The other thing, the boys have said that the gym is being, that there's positive influences also come in, in that the gym is being sponsored by different people, so it must be the right place to be because all these other people are getting behind the gym and they see Billy as...one of the sponsors comes in like the Cookie Time people and Billy's up there and hello and welcoming them and gets all the boys to welcome them and so that person's drawn in as well and the boys see that happening and that's really good because that then says to them, this is the right place to be. I am in a good place. Because there's other people getting in behind this (Parent, male)

Increased sense of fellowship, belonging and identity

The NBA fills a need for many of the young males who attend by providing them with an environment where they receive guidance, affirmation of who they are and form close bonds and friendships:

Janet: They're going to feel good here and they feed off each other.

Ashley: One of the major things I think from a purely sexist, male point of view is that these boys are all approaching teenagers and... they need a leader and what this club gives them and what they're not getting outside from any other organization and they're not tagging and not doing anything bad out there. They get a sense of belonging and that cannot be understated in my opinion.

Margaret: No. I think that's crucial. That sense of belonging, that sense of identity and that creates that sense of confidence of self (Parents)

,,, that's what [my son] recognizes, it gives him a sense of... I can be a boy and even though I might not like some of the things he's does that's him being a boy amongst other boys and growing up that way and Billy gives them very strict boundaries about respecting yourself and being honest with yourself (Parent, female)

This sense of camaraderie and fellowship has also contributed to good retention rates and the boys developing a sense of group responsibility:

you might get them for one season or for one term and they may disappear for a second but then they'll always come back so there is something that pulls them back and I think it is that identity that they are part of a boys' group, that they... (Parent, male)

Alan: ... [My son's] got the whole club with the boys and Billy and all of us standing behind him but there's a safety in that for him as well 'cause like you say you bail him up out? and you know.

Tory: ... and they watch out for each other, so it does extend beyond the gym... even if they see one another on the street

Brenda: Yeah he is like a father to them all really (Parents)

Clear boundaries and rules allow for transgressions to be dealt with in just and straightforward ways:

Fred: You can be the best kid in the gym and you're out if you break the rules and they all know that.

Sally: It's as simple as that. If you do something wrong, you're taken right to the bottom and you're made to know that you are right down there with the rest of them (Parents)

I've never seen him so upset as when he's scared that Billy will find out that he's mucked up and what it is, he's so scared, he's got so much respect for him that he's scared that he'll lose respect from Billy but that almost, for me I think that's a really good quality when you're raised that you respect someone cause they're your elders (Parent, male)

Increased sense of community

The friendships and bonds formed between young people, their families and project staff also contributes to a strong sense of fellowship, belonging and community:

Phillip: I come along and do the adult class. I'm actually a senior citizen but I see all these guys that I train with. They're all younger than me but I see in the street and they're always you know. I belong....

Dana: And this is a village mate (Parents)

Capability building

NBA works to develop the young men as part of a community, enhancing their participation, growth and development.

Increased discipline and focus

The NBA provides young males with discipline and goal setting skills

... [my son] got his act together. Got himself into a course. And he actually loves something outside of boxing... 'Cause boxing's been his life. And Billy's kind of pulled him back... [so when] Rangi kind of drifts off track he [Billy] kind of pulls him back on (Parent, male)

Discipline. Heaps of discipline now [and] just the whole fitness thing and get out of bed and training... all that kind of thing (Project participant, male)

This is seen as contributing to school retention.

Also kids that were determined to leave school as soon as possible they've decided to stay on at school... Billy's really pleased about things like that. That they're not just gonna drop out and end up on the unemployment benefit or whatever, that they're actually wanting to have some goals (Project support staff, female)

Increased leadership and role modelling skills

The NBA provides young males with 'hands on' leadership and mentoring training:

And I think too with that they also have an opportunity to experience themselves as leaders as well with each other and I think that one of the things that really, I love this about Billy is he'll stop everything, it doesn't matter whether you've been here five minutes, five years and he'll go, "everyone get around here... now you do that again, you do that again" and they're like "ooh what have I done" and they hit the bag and he's like "now see how great that is."... and then so he'll get boys to come up and lead the group and I just think he's such, boys are starved for positive male role models and Billy's like the epitome of that of what's been lacking and I think we're so hungry as a community for that (Parent, male)

Increased sense of value and self respect

Through the work of the NBA, young males feel valued, learn self-respect and come to project those values to others:

Fred: What they get here is respect. They get it. It's not something they have to earn, they get given respect the moment they come in the door and that leads them when they walk out the bloody door into the community where everybody else is, that they have respect and...

Margaret: And they have expectations that other people will show respect as well (Parents)

Improved academic performance

A number of interview participants reported that many of the skills that they learnt at the NBA (i.e. discipline; concentration) helped improve their academic performance:

I was a bit, like I'm dyslexic as well. I used to like get, like I don't know how the boxing helped but it did help in a big way, like I used to get my P's and my J's around the wrong way and my B's and stuff and since I did boxing I'm getting that better now (Project participant, male)

Yeah [the NBA], helps me at school as well, with my concentration and discipline and stuff so I wasn't playing up as much. Started doing some work. Nobody believed me at school (Project participant, male)

Health and wellbeing

With the necessary focus of strength, speed, fitness and discipline required for the sport of boxing the spinoffs for health and wellbeing are many and varied.

More positive options for young people

The NBA provides young males with positive options in their local community, that weren't previously available:

They are there with the knowledge that there is more than one choice and they have the choice of options and they can make them, they can take the tough option, they don't have to take the easy way out and can choose the tough way. I know, I came from Moera which is social economic area not too dissimilar to Naenae (Parent, female)

for my boy at the time, when we found the club what was really available for him drugs, alcohol you know, just all that stuff that you kind of, when your kid gets to a certain age that they're suddenly exposed to, you try to protect them from it and those are things that was readily available for him but the things that were going to help him thrive in life weren't, you know there was nothing really (Parent, female)

For a number of other interview participants, the NBA provided a place and space where they felt comfortable and safe enough to try and explore something they may not have considered in the past:

[my son] came here thinking I can stand there and I can use my hands and I can get some coordination going and for the mere fact that it was a club that you don't have to be very good at running or very good at this or believe, you know have a religious background, that it was somewhere that he could go that he could feel safe than do that physical [stuff]... (Parent, female)

Yeah, I never, ever would have even considered joining boxing. Never would even consider doing cricket. Anything to do with sports, I just wouldn't have thought of, so if it wasn't for that little push (Project participant, male)

Increased sense of self belief

The NBA instils within young males the courage and fortitude to push themselves to do the best they can and be the best they can be:

And he's given them all the boys the ability to actually believe in themselves and trust that yes, if I give it a good go, I've given it my best go, even if I don't succeed and if I never get in the ring, I've tried and I've succeeded (Parent, female)

... how to push themselves. [And that they are] actually capable of a lot more than they thought they were and it really raises their self esteem and the reason that our boys can go out on the town on a Saturday and not playing silly buggers is because they're figuring out who they are and that they actually have some value and that they have their due respect (Parent, female)

For me it was just having like, pushing myself to do stuff that I wouldn't usually do like go for runs and get on the exercise bike instead of watching TV and just like not doing stuff that I would usually do as much, like watch TV or play Playstation. Get

outside more like going to the park or something with some mates (Project participants, male)

Increased confidence and self esteem

A number of interview participants noticed an increase in confidence and self esteem among young males involved in the NBA:

They'll come in. Their heads down. They won't look at you. They'll be, obviously got a low self-esteem. And within I don't know how many months they're smiling, they're shaking hands with other people. Or they're talking to you. A whole change in their demeanour and attitude (Project support staff, female)

Before I started, I was sort of not as tough as I am now. I was pretty... I didn't stand up for myself much. I just let people walk all over me and since I've been going here I've got my self esteem up and at school I have a bit more respect now. Not like heaps, just enough so I don't get pushed around ... [I don't] run away anymore from my problems. Yeah. Stand up for my rights (Project participant, male)

Before I wasn't really that confident but now I'm much more confident and I wasn't really into sports before but now I'm really into boxing (Project participant, male)

Confidence for me. Confidence changes everything (Project participant, male)

Improved fitness and wellbeing

A number of interview participants mentioned having better nutritional practices, weight loss, increased muscle mass and improved overall fitness and wellbeing as a result of being involved in the NBA:

Well before this I was pretty much overweight. I was real shy and I didn't really stand up for myself and started coming here. Billy was like really good to me. Helped me lose weight just with the training and stuff and I've got more confidence now, like I said, I just walk up to people sometimes and just shake their hand. Lost a bit of weight and got into my rugby too (Project participant, male)

I was not doing anything... but now, especially in the last ten or twelve months, I've noticed I've started to build up some muscle. They think I'm doing well (Project participant, male)

Yeah, just like not to eat heaps of carbs at night, like potatoes and pasta. Not every night and I lost 5kg.... I was at 60kg..., I got down to 54kg (Project participant, male)

Reduction in problem behaviours and offending

A number of stakeholders report changes in behaviour amongst participants and less youth offending:

Schools are reporting a change in their behaviour at school. The police. We have a letter from the police saying that umm he's having an impact on the community; on

the behaviour of the people; there's a downturn in graffiti in the area, community...
(Project support staff, female)

A number of project participants, some on medication for behaviour problems, showed improvements in their behaviour because of Billy's influence and work:

There have been kids who'd come into the Academy on Ritalin and various drugs to control their behaviours and since they've been here they're off them. There's been doctors' reports done in that school... saying that that is the case and that is because of the influence that Billy's had... (Project support staff, female)

Interview participants also reported less fighting:

I got into a really big fight and I sort of won but then I didn't stop and I kicked his head into the ground and I got in trouble with the Police and so mum brought me here. I haven't been getting into any of the fights (Project participant, male)

Challenges

Finding sustainable funding for the NBA and salaries for key project staff continues to be an issue:

The whole funding issue. I mean we spent the first two years paying for ... ourselves... and I suppose that wasn't going to stop him from doing it anyway. But umm it would have been helpful if maybe [we] had have gone along to that course on how to apply for funding for Trusts... (Project staff, female)

The funding issue also means that project staff have to split their time between jobs, which impacts on the time they can spend doing NBA related work:

... he wants to be able to spend as much time as he can in the Academy and with the children and the families but he needs to earn an income and there isn't enough for him to earn an income from what he's doing. So he has to still try and maintain a bit of a public speaking business... So we're wanting to get more funding for the academy... [so we can have a salary for Billy and Nicola]... (Project support staff, female)

One parent felt that the community in general could support the NBA more:

when the parent does turn up all of a sudden they kind of pick up the game you know. And it makes a huge difference to their training. I think that parents probably need to get down there to the gym not just to pick them up. But you know spend a good half hour before they actually finish and watch the change... (Parent, male)

Future Developments

A number of participants noted the possibility of expanding on the current activities that the NBA runs including music and public speaking and doing more classes to meet the increasing numbers of boys wanting to be involved in the NBA:

He has a very holistic approach. I know he wants to bring in more aspects to not just the boxing training but also doing things like talent nights. Developing kids musically and speaking publically. Doing things together like they paint Naenae. So it would be doing more activities together like that. Umm, it would be having umm I guess being able to effect even more [people]. We get so many people asking for help. Even from good sound two parent homes. They're wanting help with their teenagers. So I guess you know, could even double in size with more coaches. Umm you know, more Billys... (Project staff, female)

Naenae Boxing Academy Change Stories

Why we chose these stories

Only one story was omitted through the MSC process. Again the three most highly ranked stories were clear. The fourth was chosen because it was highly ranked by one of the funding team and because it provided the voice of the young people. Although each story was considered valuable and rankings were mixed, they are presented in an approximation of higher to lower ranking.

During the selection process the Vodafone Foundation participants commented that:

Without Billy you wonder if this would exist; in these stories you can see Billy there, holding the hands of these young people; it is so Billy.

The project is about motivation; taking people out of themselves.

The young people need someone to come in and deal with the schools. You don't get this sense in the other stories, boys having champions.

That saying – 'A kid in sport stays out of court'

The project is many things for a whole lot of different people. This tells me the concept works; it doesn't just focus on one set of problems.

Story one: Kevin's Mother's Story

When Kevin first came to the Naenae Boxing Association, his school was absolutely anti... the fact that he would even think to walk into a gym and their biggest fear was that he would start boxing or using his fists out there in the playground, and even to the point where he was hauled into the Junior Director's office and said "we're not in favour of you doing this..."

He couldn't read properly. What Billy did was he gave him a boxing book and this kid of mine would go home and read it. And then was taking the book into school and the school was saying, "no you take that home, we don't want it here" and he went through all of this and he became almost isolated out apart from some very close friends.

One of the things that Kevin suffers from, and he still does to some degree, is he's an ADHD kid and so he was medicated heavily. And Billy said to him, "I'm going to get you off this but we need the cooperation of the school."

The school were anti with the fact that he would even consider taking Kevin off because they were scared of the repercussions that would happen in the school... to the point where Billy walked in with Kevin alongside him, sat him down and told the Deputy Principal, "you will stand by this child. I'm going to stand by him. You're going to stand by him and you're going to give him an education. You're going to give him a fair chance." Without a word of a lie, my son cried in the Principal's room because he'd never seen anybody do that you know. Apart from his mother going in. But it's not the same. Here is a man who starting to stand up and actually talk to the school but they had actually stigmatised him the whole way through and Billy was saying "look, you give this kid a chance. Do not cut him out. Do not isolate him from reading material. So what if it's not the curriculum." The fact is Kevin picked up the book and read and he read it to them. They were absolutely astonished by it because he wasn't a success with reading.

He got into a regional science competition. The school was absolutely flabbergasted again and the concept there was, the man had given him the opportunity. The man had given him the respect. The man has said "if you like this, do it your way. You'll succeed when you do it your way."

And the change, the attitude change now is when Kevin came down to the NBA he would have been the only boy from the school coming down. Then it started to dribble in one, twos and threes and fours. Suddenly they had kids his age and his year level going right up to Year 14 who had seen Kevin in action, who were coming down to the gym and not once did they ever get themselves into trouble at the school. It was like they saw this change coming on in this kid and suddenly the teachers were getting behind him and the boxing gym. It had connotations around what the gym should be. They didn't have the discipline or the character to bring what we want into our school, you know, and these kids were suddenly following Kevin. It was just sort of breaking down those barriers and I think that's what exists now. When you come into this gym you see it, it's getting it out there so the rest of the community can see that it's not perceived in a bad way. I don't think there's been one boy who's actually brought a bad reputation on the gym.

Why this story?

- I liked this story the most because it tugged the most at the heart strings! It also strikes me as a classic story that could reflect the experiences of many ordinary families right across the country (Provider).
- We love to hear of boys being directed by passion and finally gaining confidence because they can do something! (Provider)
- And Boxing is the hero once again; as it is a tough sport; one that rates highly amongst boys and in their peer groups, and Kevin has an identity as a member of the NBA. He is proud of his gym and can be proud of it at school. Brilliant! (Provider)
- A boxing gym also definitely seems to have a negative image in our society and affects the willingness of big business to get financially behind what Billy is doing - people seem convinced that a sport that is violent cannot bring about any positive effects on youth if they already have issues with attitude and aggression etc. They don't understand how Billy's training methods can produce quite the opposite! This kind of story draws people right into what it's all about; as do the others (Provider).
- Three things stood out for me: it showed changes in the young person; it gave a sense of the Billy Graham story and his commitment and courage and it showed changes in the school and mindset around boxing. It was awesome (Vodafone Foundation).
- It challenges perceptions around boxing; obviously the idea of boxing is a challenge to some people. It got me that the boy was crying that somebody stood up for him; that was a real tear jerker. It shows Billy's power (Vodafone Foundation).
- This is powerful evidence; dealing with some really hard situations and coming up with some outstanding results. This is not to say that this is a panacea, but it really works in some situations. Some sceptics could say that in some of the stories that the young people are doing ok, but young people diagnosed and medicated for ADHD are not soft cases, they are hard cases around behaviour change (Whāriki).
- Ups the ante a bit; in this story and in some of the others the participants have been diagnosed ADHD and on medication so you end up with indicators of the seriousness of the problem (also the inadequacies of the system); it shows the ability of the intervention to reduce the need or eradicate the need for medication (Whāriki).
- Shows how boxing can be stigmatised and just seen as fight training; but in this case it is more than that and boxing is a means to other things (Whāriki).

Comments

- Kevin was described as ADHD, on medication and struggling with reading.
- Kevin experienced a lot of negativity about his involvement with the Naenae Boxing Academy.
- Billy intervened in the school and was able to get their support to bring Kevin off his medication; he was also able to motivate Kevin to read.
- The story shows wide spread of changes for the boy and changes in attitudes and support for the NBA from the school staff and students.
- Other boys who became involved after seeing what was happening for Kevin, were described as following Kevin and not once getting themselves into trouble; the implication is that if they were not involved in the NBA they would have 'got into trouble' in some way.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

Kevin became an ambassador for wider change; other boys wanted to follow Kevin and join NBA. The teachers also supported Kevin and the NBA when they saw what was happening for him.

Barriers have been broken down and the behaviour of the boys – not getting into trouble – is motivated most probably by their respect for NBA as well as how it impacts positively on them.

The story demonstrates the wider support, including parental support that the project attracts.

Capability building

He has a positive male role model in his life, who stands up for him and can provide the role that his mother can't; Kevin's reaction to Billy's support in the school clearly demonstrates the impact that this had on him.

Kevin has an identity as a member of the NBA. He is proud of his gym and can be proud of it at school.

NBA found a way to motivate Kevin to improve his reading; he entered the regional science fair.

Health and wellbeing

Kevin is off his medication. This must contribute hugely to his confidence. Also allows him to conquer more because he can think straight.

Not only was Kevin labelled ADHD and taking medication, but he was also labelled a non-achiever. Billy's challenge to the school made differences across the board and must have had a huge impact on Kevin's sense of wellbeing and self esteem.

Story two: Jeff's Father's Story

Jeff was really good at school up until intermediate 3rd form. About 4th and 5th form he started getting into pot and absolutely destroyed his thinking because he was quite an intelligent kid. At intermediate school he won a writing competition and all sorts of stuff.

Jeff's mum and I broke up when we were young and he was young as. He took it quite hard, he was about 5 or 6. That has probably had a little bit to do with the types of trouble he got into. He has mentioned it before. He has been on the crack and he has mentioned that before and I think he has kind of gotten over that now.

The NBA has had a huge impact on Jeff. Hitting his teenage years I guess he went right off the rails. He had a problem with pot, you know smoking pot. He was staying in Naenae with his mum and his mum was a nurse so a lot of the time she couldn't look out for him and the little bugger was out the window and getting stoned. Cut a long story short he wanted to box... he was turning up to boxing stoned... we couldn't figure out why some nights he would be absolutely on fire... and the next day he would be getting knocked around by a kid who has only had a handful of fights. We couldn't quite figure it out? Jeff wanted to do both things. He wanted to smoke pot and box. I gave him an ultimatum it was either one or the other...

Billy had big input... He was having trouble at school. Billy would go out of his way, he would turn up at the school. Jeff was going to get kicked out of High School at the time and he was very near. I wasn't quite sure what to do and he Billy said "Don't worry I will be there in about five minutes" and sure enough he came... he seems to know everyone. Absolutely everyone. I didn't realise... he said "I will go and see so and so," some counsellor that is in the church with him and all of a sudden we are in the Deputy Principal's office and he says "Oh no I will see the Principal"... He talked with the Principal.

Jeff got back in the pot again. Billy said "Look. I can't keep on telling kids at the gym to stay off pot and I have you there, knowing you are using pot. I am going to have to let you go if you keep using pot." It was a hard line to take, but that is what it came down to. Billy kept on bringing Jeff around home and he said "I am going to have to drug test you. That is the only way you are going to get back in." He took Jeff to the nationals and Jeff was almost through the medical and the doctor stopped him because he had all these scabs and that was the end of the barrel and Billy said "look, this is it! If next year, 2009, if you stuff up I will have to let you go." ... Jeff was spending a lot of time at Billy's place with Billy's son and they knocked around and he has really sorted his game out you know. He is back on a course, doing a mechanics course, doing really well and his boxing is back on track and he won his

last four in a row so you know... he has got a clearer head, bit more mature. And Billy would have been one of the biggest influences in Jeff turning around.

I am really, really proud of how he has actually turned around... We have quite an honest relationship and just the small things that impress me the most about him, he will just pop in, he has a younger brother here and wants to hang out with him for a little while whereas before everything was around his mates and cars and girls and all that kind of stuff. He goes out of his way to do that now... and he will pop into his grandmother's place... just the small things, the things that more mature people would do you know. Instead of – I think at that age I would have been avoiding my grandparents and my parents. It is just the small stuff, he goes home and cleans all his mum's clothes and looks after his mum really well, you know that type of stuff.

He is a lot more grounded you know... He has grown up into a bit more mature kid. The thing I failed at most was actually saying that. Every time I said "Oh he is doing good" the little bugger would stuff up again. I would get a ring from the cops and they would say "He is at the police station." I have always been afraid to say he is doing good. But now it is kind of, oh he is doing good. Don't get the 4.00 am phone calls.

Why this story?

- This is so inspiring and encouraging to hear how close this boy was to going completely off the rails. He had a very bleak future because he'd got himself so trapped by drugs. You could see the potential for him to spiral more and more out of control and end up another prison inmate! I loved it because Billy made such a difference by offering this boy something that appealed enough to draw him out of his pit. Not only offering him boxing, but also being so actively involved in the wider aspects of this boy's life and demonstrating another way. I love the way Billy is so connected with his own family that they are completely incorporated into what Billy is doing to the point that he can entrust his own son as a friend and mentor to this young person! (Provider)
- Jeff's story is that of a typical NZ family really. Of a boy with opportunity and great potential, (damaged by divorce), of parents who care about their son but who were increasingly losing control because of his drug involvement. (Provider)
- The reason for choosing this is it shows the restoration that is happening for the family. This is so good to hear when we are dealing with broken family situations (Provider).
- We also like the support we get from the father. He has confidence in us and we in him (Provider).
- It felt like it was going to fail, that the boy wouldn't make it; it felt like it was real. If you don't change your environment the young person is not going to change as well; his home needed to change and I thought "Yeah" and that made it really powerful. It showed how important Billy's role is in all this (Vodafone Foundation).

- There is great power in how the dad observed changes; the boy looking after his mum etc; they are probably not massive, but probably very fundamental changes (Vodafone Foundation).
- It is a great story of significant change for a young person to go from pot to training, behaviour changes; it's very telling; doing mum's washing, his relationship with his brother. I also loved the last comment about not getting the phone calls any more from the school (Vodafone Foundation).
- Good story, shows not a simple trajectory, but someone slipping in and out and an escalation of the intervention (Whāriki).
- He is a hard case, whereas some of them are relatively easy; this is one of the differences between the stories (Whāriki).
- Shows Billy's resourcefulness, persistence, ideas and strategies, his mana and contacts (Whāriki).
- Demonstrates the difference between getting youth involved and involving yourself with youth; from that initial positive adult involvement, Jeff gets involved in a range of life changing events (Whāriki).

Comments

- Jeff was doing well and then when he became a teenager he started getting into difficulties and smoking cannabis.
- He went to boxing but continued to use cannabis and was about to be expelled from college.
- Billy went down to the school and spoke to the Principal. After ups and downs Jeff was issued with an ultimatum, to quit drugs or leave the gym.
- Jeff has managed to stay clean, is doing well in boxing, has "turned around" and showing greater maturity.
- The way the father tells the story clearly demonstrates his respect for Billy and for what has happened as a result of his involvement with Jeff.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

Reaching out beyond the gym to community wide intervention; Billy will work in whatever network the young person is in.

Capability building

The story shows improved family relationships. A boy who can leave his bad mates and stay at home with his family is doing really well.

Jeff is also taking responsibility for his mum which is lovely to see when parents have split. He is being the man round the house.

Health and wellbeing

Sounds like he came close to being excluded from the gym, then a turn around occurs and he is clean, doing a training course and boxing.

Jeff really loves boxing, boxing requires such a high level of commitment; physically, mentally and time wise that it brings issues to the surface, such as in Jeff's case. He has to decide whether he is going to box or be an idiot with his mates.

Story three: Arthur's Mother's Story

Arthur, like many others, is drawn to Billy's larger-than-life personality; and he's also been influenced by the passion, positivity, and the genuineness of Billy and his team. When Arthur first attended NBA he was a very overweight, inactive, almost reclusive boy who escaped into books. Arthur thought it better to have 'bad' friends than to not have friends at all. Growing up in domestic violence I could see the effects on my children but I just couldn't break free. I just didn't know any other way but to keep trying in the hope of change. Arthur's Dad and I have been separated for one and a half years now, but I've only been free of the old mindset for the last couple of months.

The catalyst for change came while attending NBA's Naenae's Got Talent quest. Arthur played an impromptu solo, of which he only knew eight bars; with a little pep talk about participation, and just having fun he got up there, and was so proud of his personal achievement. Billy said something poignant that night: If someone thinks they're always right, they usually are; they will be the ones who will do whatever it takes for the betterment of their family. Okay, so it's slightly paraphrased but those words sank deep into my spirit - I am that person! I resolved to never doubt what I know to be true for myself.

Today, I have a young man who makes decisions for himself, who stops and takes the time to weigh up consequences of potential actions, and continues to value my role as mother in his life. He is a critical thinker, and I'm proud to say, challenges the norm's of society. He attended his first major party recently and was disappointed in the drunkenness, drugs, and the so-called adult supervision (pew). He still has a way to go, as we all do; and Billy and his team have been an integral part of this process, as have I.. NBA's team, doesn't just build up the boys; by proxy, they also build up the parents. I am more confident in my parenting because I sense a genuine support from the team.

Why this story?

- What I liked about this story is the mother's comment about Billy building up the family. This is very important to working successfully with young people. If we can support and encourage youth to the point that they are reconnected with their own family and can learn to respect and communicate with their parents then the impact is so many times greater than working with them in isolation. I was excited to read her comment that her son is a critical thinker too. I am training as a literacy tutor and I realise increasingly how important it is that people; particularly youth, can learn to think critically. This is a very important skill for an individual to develop so they can mature well or choosing to contribute meaningfully to society. This is, or should be, a crucial part of education teaching youth to think critically! Billy is developing these kinds of skills in his interactions with youth (Provider).
- The reason for ranking this high is that if the parent is changing the young person will change; has a much greater chance of changing (Provider).
- The parent can carry on at home what we are doing at the gym (Provider).
- We are very encouraged by this! (Provider)
- What more could we ask? (Provider)
- I liked the story, but it was not as powerful as the previous one. (Jeff's Mother's Story). He was a different sort of person; it wasn't coming from a bad boy angle and yet it was meeting his needs as well; this says something about the service meeting the needs of a range of young people (Vodafone Foundation).
- It was cool to have different layers from young people to changes in parents (Vodafone Foundation).
- Moving story, articulate and heartfelt (Whāriki).
- Gives strong examples of what has contributed to change (Whāriki).
- Again brings up theme of the importance of positive male role models (Whāriki).
- Trajectory from doing ok to beginning to slip; then the turn around – obviously the whole discussion about how this affected the whole family (Whāriki).
- Brought in the domestic violence and how this was paralysing the mother (Whāriki).

Comments

- Arthur grew up with family violence, until his parents split up. His mother feels she has only recently “been free of the old mindset”.
- Arthur is described as inactive and somewhat reclusive until he got involved in NBA.

- As a result of Billy and the NBA, Arthur's mother describes a range of positive changes for herself (better parenting, confidence) and for Arthur (greater maturity, thoughtfulness, more physically active).

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

Mother has changed as a result and is a more confident parent; the story touches on the idea of a community intervention where parents are supported as well; again boxing is the method for lifestyle change.

Also restores family harmony which is vital for progress.

Capability building

Arthur is self actualising; more confident, thoughtful, thinking critically, taking responsibility for himself and respecting his mother.

He was at a critical point (adolescence and teen years) when a male role model and opportunities were provided that enabled him to take a much more positive path; having someone like Billy gives him a male to respect and that then changes his own ideas about males and about himself and who he is and who he can be.

Health and wellbeing

His reactions to the party he went to imply that he has a healthy stance on alcohol and other drugs.

He is more physically active and has lost weight.

Story four: Youth Stories

Chris: Umm before I started at the NBA I was sort of ah um not as tough as I am now. I couldn't stand up for myself much, I just let things get on top of me. Since I have been going here I like got my self esteem up, and at school like I have a bit more respect from my peers now - not like heaps - but enough so I don't get pushed around. I wouldn't exactly call it bullying but I used to get pushed around a bit but now it doesn't happen anymore. Yeah and because like... I feel they would say jokes at me... but um yeah I have felt a change... that I can stick up for myself more and... yeah people don't just burn me anymore. I'm not the kind of person that will run away anymore from my problems. Umm like I'm dyslexic as well... I had a box of help [resources] but it didn't help but the boxing did help in a big way like I used to get my p's and my j's around the wrong way and my b's and stuff.

Ken: *I used to get bullied a lot at school. I used to hang out with not really not good kids and I ended up getting suspended and sort of um... I've seen a change in attitude and... my mum home schools me*

Tim: *Umm before I wasn't really that confident but now I'm much more confident and I wasn't really into anything before but now I'm really into boxing . And more into sports.*

Chris: *I was getting into fights at home, Mum and me and playing too much Playstation and... I sort of got into fights at school... Cause if someone thought that it was like a joke I would take it the wrong way... I'm sleeping better... I lost weight*

Paul: *At school I got into a real big fight and I sort of won and I didn't stop and I kicked his head into the ground and I got in to like trouble with the Police so my mum bought me here... I haven't been getting into any fights... It's good*

John: *Umm I remember my parents looking in the paper one day and seeing an article about the NBA and that's how I got here... I was doing nothing... I didn't think much of the NBA, I just came with my parents... it's really helped me. I'm starting to... physically challenge myself... especially in the last 10 or so months I've started to build up some muscle... my confidence has got a lot better*

Why this story?

- I liked this the least, simply because they were such very short snapshots of what young people have to say. Still fantastic. Great to hear them, but not as gripping when they are so brief (Provider).
- What we love most about the feedback from the boys is that it shows they are aware of the real issues and they like the good results (Provider).
- It shows us what is really important to them and it is good to know that what the adult thinks is important for the boy is actually important to the boy. They will make fine dads one day! (Provider)
- There is such a range in this story and all about great changes; although not a lot of info, the info that there is really rich; all the stuff we would hope for in the programme and from the voice of the young people (Vodafone Foundation).
- I probably rank this number 2 because I like the one with the principal so much; but this is lovely vignettes (Vodafone Foundation).
- I love the one about playing too much Playstation and now sleeping better, lost weight (Vodafone Foundation).
- See this as a co-construction and each adds and endorses the other – ten stories all rolled into one; think we should keep it as a change story (Whāriki).

Comments

- Six young men are each talking about difficulties in their lives; dyslexia, being bullied, getting into fights and getting in trouble with the police.
- They each feel that NBA has helped them with these difficulties and they talk about increased confidence, sleeping better, being more physically active and being more active and involved generally.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

They are not being bullied.

They are not getting into fights.

Capability building

Their confidence is building; improved self esteem.

Their schoolwork is improving, along with their discipline.

They don't feel they have to run from issues but can stand up for themselves, i.e. they are turning into good young men!

Health and wellbeing

They are getting away from Playstation, videos etc and into sport.

There are physical benefits; up off the couch, building muscle, sleeping better and losing weight.

Summary

The Naenae Boxing Academy provides a positive and nurturing environment where young males are guided and supported by a dedicated team of male mentors and role models. While boxing training is an important aspect of the project, built into the training are opportunities for young males to learn a number of important life skills, pro-social values and develop strong friendships and bonds with other young males.

Participants identified a range of positive changes that they attributed to the project. Particularly telling is the number of young males, some previously on medication for behaviour problems, showing improvements in their behaviour and in their engagement with school because of Billy's resourcefulness, persistence, ideas, strategies, mana and community contacts.

The change stories show the positive impacts that Billy's work has had on many of the young males and families involved and the sense of fellowship, camaraderie and community that has developed around the Academy since 2006.

Finally, the findings of this report challenges many of the negative perceptions that exist around boxing and stand as testament to the broader social and health related impacts that boxing can have on individuals, their families and the community.

Streets Ahead 237

What:	A youth focussed, grassroots, community owned project that run various youth focussed activities and events five times a year and mainly works with youth involved or at risk of becoming involved in gangs
Why:	To establish and maintain relationships with youth gangs in the Porirua region of Wellington and provide an alternative to gang life
How:	Counselling, team building activities, health checks, mentoring, leadership training, role modelling, community development
Who:	Young people, particularly those at risk of getting into gangs
Where:	Porirua, Wellington

Project Description

Streets Ahead 237 is a youth focussed, grassroots, community owned project that runs various activities and events for young people in Porirua, five times a year. The project also provides support to young people and their families by connecting them to relevant services, counselling, mentoring, free health checks and employment, educational and training opportunities. The project works mainly with youth involved or 'at risk' of becoming involved in gangs.

Run with the support of the Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic in Porirua, the project is coordinated and managed by Wayne Poutoa and a dedicated team of support people (helpers/family/whānau/friends/volunteers/parents). Apart from Wayne, no one involved is remunerated in any way.

The overall philosophy of the Streets Ahead 237 programme is summed up in the following saying:

Brothers not colours

This is reflected in the aim of providing alternatives to gang life through breaking down walls, supporting people to adopt pro-social values, have visions, to set goals and to realise them. One powerful symbol of the 'Brothers not colours' message is the pole where young people tie their scarf/bandanas when they leave their youth gang behind.

As the project leader describes it, this is about community reaching community through an indigenous based organisation and with the help of everyday people:

The work that I do now is with youth gangs in Porirua and youth that are at risk of getting into gangs. I share a bit of my journey, what it's like being in gangs and give them alternatives (Wayne Poutoa)

A main driver for the programme is that it showcases the ability of the community and of the people to make decisions; coming together to create a programme that meets the demands of young people and their whole family. The project leader sees getting “your own people providing their own solutions and implementing things” as a dream in itself.

Background

The Streets Ahead 237 project grew and developed from Miranda St, Cannons Creek, Porirua in 2006, and was initially founded, coordinated and managed by Wayne Poutoa, his family and friends to meet their understanding of community needs.

This programme... started from the community and started from the people (Wayne Poutoa)

At the time there were a number of local young people that Wayne and his family were involved with:

Where we lived is a prime crime residential area in Miranda St. We had drug dealers and gang members living in the street and we had this school right across the road from us... heaps of kids parents use to send their kids to us. They'd say “go play outside Wayne's house because he's a social worker”. So we ended up with all these kids. So my wife and I brought a trampoline a basketball hoop and then a neighbour did the same. Someone else brought a swimming pool... We created this big park... and kids [were] just flocking to it... (Wayne Poutoa)

Although long-time residents of the area, it was during this time in particular that their bonds and friendships with the local young people, residents and families were strengthened:

My wife was like the nurse... did the hairdressing thing for like kids who had events like the prom and all that sort of stuff. It was crazy. I was going to food banks picking up heaps of food and delivering it in the street to all our neighbours... it was just really a crazy time. It brought us close together with everyone and this pan tribal sense of belonging... because you had different ethnicities but all joined by the common factor of surviving (Wayne Poutoa)

As the Streets Ahead 237 project evolved and the number of young people, families and support people and networks grew, the local marae became a focal point for the project. The focus of the project also moved from residents and families to include youth gangs in response to concerns around rising gang recruitment and other related issues in the area. Wayne was ideally suited to work with these young people being a former member of the Porirua Mongrel Mob, having experienced some of negative consequences of gang life and knowing what was needed in order to make positive changes. It was also during this time the project name Streets Ahead 237¹ was developed:

¹ 237 are the first digits phone numbers in Cannons Creek

... we decided to... take the next step further... [we took] some of these kids to the Marae... I went around and we made up flyers and I went around and I introduced myself... I went to all the houses and I had really good feedback. We went to the Marae, that was a real success and we had thought 'wow' we'll do it again and we thought we'll try Fantame St and we started thinking each street and hence "Streets Ahead". With the name Streets Ahead, I just think it's really prophetic because it's about going forward with our people and taking our streets as a community you know, Porirua... New Zealand... just running with it (Project support staff, female)

During the formative years of the project, Wayne started doing street patrols in the early hours of the morning, working with youth gangs and managing gang tensions. Key relationships with 25 youth gangs and senior members of the Porirua Mongrel Mob were also established. Wayne also spent time networking and fine tuning the next stage of Streets Ahead 237 (part of this was engaging with community police) and working closely with key community figureheads including local councillors to access further resources and funding for the Streets Ahead 237 project.

In 2008, Wayne was a recipient of the Vodafone Foundation World of Difference programme funding which pays the salary and expenses of six passionate people each year, so they can work with the youth-focused cause of their choice.

During Wayne's World of Difference year, he was successful in obtaining funding and resources to sustain the Streets Ahead 237 project for a further three years as well as identifying other 'potential' sources of funding; establish a youth centre; strengthen relationships and networks with a number of agencies (e.g. Child Youth and Family, the Courts; Police) including local and central government; establish a youth committee (known as the YC) comprising youth leaders and mentors; employ a Youth Coordinator; work with Te Wānanga O Aotearoa to tailor a NZQA accredited 'social work' programme that commenced in 2009 and is currently working with around 10 students from the Streets Ahead 237 project; and further develop the Youth Services Department within the Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic. Several of the young people Wayne has been working with are involved in various youth advisory councils within the community, including Porirua City Council, CCDHB and Healthlinks. Technology (e.g. video camera; laptop etc) was also purchased for the purposes of creating a visual library that would aid in the "overall ease of handling information" as well as furniture to accommodate the large number of young people involved in the Streets Ahead 237 project:

I spoke about changing conversations... 75% or even 80% of the parents to the kids we work with spent most of their time on the couch getting on the piss, smoking dope. So what we wanted to do was change the conversation. So we started creating our own DVDs and started giving it to kids who started putting it on the TV... programme after programme they started to change and the parents [said] "ok I wanna meet this guy". And a lot of them knew who I was and a lot of them didn't. And so when they started to meet me I started to invite them to the programme... As soon as I gave them a bit of responsibility [and told them "this is your part of the programme that you can take care of" things began to happen; eyes began to light

up; lives started to change. And as a result of that we now today have young people who were ex Bloods and Crips... families way down entrenched in welfare dependency and various other things now involved in this programme and looking to bring others into it... (Wayne Poutoa)

Since its inception Streets Ahead 237 has received increasing amounts of local and national interest. There have been numerous magazines, newspapers, and radio talk shows about the project. The project has also gathered strong support and awareness within the Porirua community:

We were in the chemist this morning and we had our Streets [Ahead 237] jackets on and the guy behind the counter said "Oh. Streets Ahead [237]. I heard of that. He said "I've heard it's really good" and he was asking us if we were on that and we said "yeah, we're on our way up there" (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff, female)

Approach

We connect our people back and say, 'You're an extension of your ancestors' journey and therefore you have a legacy to fulfil' – when we bring you to the marae under an indigenous umbrella, you're able to understand 'Who am I? Where do I fit?' and therefore you become complete. That's a key component in helping people come out of gang life into better things. (Wayne Poutoa)

The Streets Ahead 237 project uses a development model with strong cultural and community based underpinnings. Educating and empowering young people and the communities they live in, and the notion of "legacy" are seen as vital components of this model:

Our people are taught right from the outset that their voice is important. It's [their voices that] get put into policy... We have been able to reconnect our young people to culture in addition to education and explain the importance they have in setting legacies for the future of rangatahi. This is about cultural responsibility in taking our youth off the streets and realising their place as extensions of their ancestors' journeys. (Wayne Poutoa)

The concept of Ngā Hau e Whā, which acknowledges all people of all cultures, and Wayne's status as a Samoan Chief, have been important in ensuring the Streets Ahead 237 project is both 'inclusive' and 'indigenous'.

Also pivotal to the design, development and implementation of the Streets Ahead 237 project is the 'youth voice' and the Streets Ahead 237 youth committee. Youth talking to youth has been an important element in "encouraging members [other young people] to enrol on courses and look into employment opportunities" and spreading the word about the project "far beyond the gangs of Porirua with opposing gang representatives attending the programme."

The Maraeroa Marae and the Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic provides an important focal point for the project as well as access to health services:

This is about community reaching community with an indigenous based organisation sponsoring and facilitating with the help of everyday people to address the youth gang problem that exists in Porirua. Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic... attracts Māori, Pacific and other ethnicities. It also allows us to work with gang families where the young people parents are gang members... we are situated to work collaboratively and produce what I believe is a project that can and is breaking mindsets that hold our people captive (Wayne Poutoa)

Current resources allow the project to cater for up to 60 young people five times per year to which approximately 20 are members of the youth committee and 40 new entrants. The new entrants are made up of youth gang members and those involved in the courts. Since 2006, the Streets Ahead 237 Project has come into contact with over 1000 young people.

Activities and events during the year range from camps, marae noho, trips to sports events, conferences (e.g. World Indigenous People's Conference on Education (WIPCE); road trips), "amazing race" type events, Laser Strike and other fun relationship/team building and learning activities. Keynote speakers are also invited. In the past this has included local judges, politicians and police inspectors. Activities and events provide an excellent opportunity for project support people, young people, parents, families and stakeholders to engage and connect with one another:

Having their parents work in kitchens, having police interact to the point where they become part of the family, having traction in local and central government, having keynote speakers fly in from all over the country at their own expense, being mentioned in media all over the country at least once a week, having current [gang] members remove their colours and ask for assistance to work with their whānau (family), connecting whole families to resources around health, education and employment and doing presentations on Streets Ahead 237 at numerous agencies and conferences by invitation has all helped to contribute to the ongoing success of the programme (Wayne Poutoa)

Key to the increasing recognition, credibility and awareness of the project has been the leadership, commitment, integrity and unique set of qualities of its founder Wayne Poutoa, with strong support from family, friends and colleagues:

... the fact that Wayne first of all has had a background in the gangs. Has got a degree in social work and actually lives in the community and was prepared to give a 24 hour commitment... Here were people who lived in the community, who had those backgrounds and who could actually connect with them... And I think that's why he [Wayne] was very successful because he was basically 'walk the talk'... and that's for me, they've done their apprenticeship... You know, and they've got a high profile in terms of involvement in the community so they're not being hidden away, or working away in a backstreet corner. It's very much an intrinsic part of the community here... you really need a good leader and I think that's why Streets

Ahead 237 are very lucky. Because Wayne is incredibly unique and umm, really does give the huge commitment and is very good in engaging and connecting [MP, female]

As the profile of the project have grown over the last 3 years, so has media interest in the project which has included interviews for Radio New Zealand, Newstalk ZB, TV One Close Up, Kapi- Mana Newspaper, City Life Newspaper, Philanthropy New Zealand News and the Ministry of Social Development magazine titled "Rise". The project has also attracted considerable amounts of interest and support from the local Porirua Council, Police, central government agencies, politicians, judges, key community leaders and sport personalities:

He's getting out there in the papers. He's met our boss [The Police Commissioner]. He's meeting the right people. He's got the support of the Mayor... and he's got pretty good contacts with all the sports people we've here in NZ... (Police, Male)

Media and national interest in the Streets Ahead 237 project was also generated through the help of the Vodafone Foundation, Prime Minister's Social Heroes Awards ceremony and various presentations throughout the country including the INVOLVE 08 Relate Conference held at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington. The Taranaki WAVES project spearheaded by Louise Roebuck has also been working closely with Wayne to develop and implement a project like Streets Ahead 237 in their communities.

Connecting young people and their families to health resources through the Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic - including free health checks - is an integral part of the Streets Ahead 237 curriculum:

... here was a programme that was about supporting rangatahi out in the community and here was an opportunity for the health clinic to support these young people with the health services we provide here. And most importantly to provide messages about good health (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff member, female)

Currently in development is Streets Ahead 237's model of practice, which acknowledges the importance of interventions that look at the young person as a whole (i.e. wairua, tinana, hinengaro), as well as their family and neighbourhood environment. This includes Wayne mapping out where each young person has come from (whether that be involvement with gangs, drugs, alcohol, abuse), and looking at how these factors have lead them to their current situation (i.e. going from "What was?" to "What is?"). From there Wayne is able to determine a pathway and provide positive alternatives by 'showcasing opportunity' (e.g. attending events; inviting guest speakers; and/or connecting young people to employment, training and education opportunities) and helping them to realise and actualise their potential. According to Wayne, the ultimate goal is that each young person that goes through Streets Ahead 237 "can go back to their own whānau/friends/neighbourhood" - with support from the project - and be "role models of change". Part of this development model also includes young people gaining NZQA qualifications:

This is the reason that Māori moved from rural to city, and Pacific moved from the islands to New Zealand. To create a better lifestyle for our peoples. This model is cultural responsibility in action.

A particularly innovative aspect of the project was the creation of a visual library that uses images, video and music to document the journey of the Streets Ahead 237 project and of those involved. Streets Ahead 237 videos (and other related information) can be accessed via YouTube, Bebo and Facebook. Future developments may include a respite care package similar to the “reception homes” project in Auckland.

Change Domains

Social cohesion

For Streets Ahead divisions and disconnections in the local community meant that it was relatively easy for gangs to pull young people under their influence. As a result, rebuilding the community has as the organisation name suggests been a key focus of its work.

Increased family involvement with young people

Getting families more involved with young people and having them walk alongside their young people in their journey towards adulthood and self-efficacy is an important element of the Streets Ahead 237 project:

That’s a very important component where the whānau get involved in the programme and they are part of it. It’s not a programme where young people are referred to us although some of our young people are. They have to want to get on this journey... (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff/Project support staff, female)

Increased support for young people and their families

Streets Ahead 237 provides young people and their families with local and accessible support, and the opportunity to form close bonds and positive and healthy relationships, all within a safe, secure, family orientated environment. Supporting and connecting young people and their families in this way is seen as a way of healing families, particularly those affected by decades of intergenerational disadvantage (i.e. poverty, racism, health inequalities):

... I’m impressed with kids who at the beginning wouldn’t talk, wouldn’t communicate. Go around with their hoodies you know, covering their faces, were out of it a lot of the time. Now you’re meeting young people who are very confident and I think that process of healing shouldn’t be undermined. But to get that healing going... a lot of this stuff is intergenerational. And um, I think that if we could have more programmes like this one, it would really provide local, accessible support for the families. If you turn the kids around you turn the families around, and in turn, you turn those communities around. And I think that interconnectedness, that whānau thing... (MP, female)

Increased community ownership and solutions

Streets Ahead 237 provides a means by which the Porirua community can work together to address issues affecting young people:

... there was one stage where we had kids, we advertised it, duh and every Tom, Dick and Harry wanted to drop their kid off... But safety was always the main thing and I would watch kids like a hawk like I would my own and people came and we had a hangi man, he'll come and do the hangi, we had the guy that cuts up the meat all the time and people were just coming and it was a real community and it still is (Project support staff, female)

Streets Ahead 237 also empowers, supports and provides a space for communities to provide their own solutions:

Another one of the main drivers for our programme is that it showcases the ability of community, of the people to make decisions. To fashion a programme that meets the demands of young people 'at risk' and their whole family. That's a dream in itself. When you get your own people providing their own solutions and implementing things because they're academically fit to do the job (Wayne Poutoa)

Increased positive and healthy relationships

Streets Ahead 237 provides young people with the opportunity, space and tools to form positive and healthy relationships based on trust and respect.

... you can tell who the new ones are because you know they're just like ... when we went out to the Hutt and did that rock climbing and all that sort of stuff and that's where I found a lot of them started to trust a lot more, so that was really cool [Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff/Project support staff, female]

When I first came along I must admit I was a bit shocked at the way some of the kids behaved. Their attitude and they were really quite rude to me and I was like 'oh my gosh'. But then I got talking to them and I'd say to them, "you know if you need to talk to me just come and talk to me or ask me properly, don't come up and be real staunch about it. I'd rather you'd be able to come and talk to me". And that's exactly what they do now. I've seen the change in them (Parent, female)

Increased sense of belonging

Through Streets Ahead 237, young people are made to feel that they are a valued part of the community:

... there's that sense of love or belonging or belonging to something ... so it speaks for something. If that love or that hope can keep someone alive, then that's what we're doing. Even though it's just an emotion, a feeling (Youth leader, female)

So the children don't feel or the young people don't feel that they're not part of the wider community, not at all. They're part of that wider fabric... (Community stakeholder, female)

Fewer young people in gangs

A number of interview participants noted that there were some indications that young people in gangs in Porirua seemed to be on the decline:

When we talk to the community, we do have slightly fewer youth gang members. We also hear from the [gangs] themselves ...they find it hard to recruit good people... so it comes from them as well. We just can't put numbers on it and I don't think we ever will (Police, male)

Working with the gangs in Porirua, and building mutual relationships of respect and trust has been another key factor in addressing some of the environmental determinants that influence young people to join gangs:

Jill: I've seen Wayne talking to them [The gangs]. Yeah and it wasn't like an angry meeting or anything like that... there was a lot of [gang members who] want their kids to come into the programme because they want something different for their kids.

Evelyn: They don't want them to be like them which is good if we can get all of our kids out of those bloody gangs.

Jill: Yeah cause the gangs probably think "Oh well. We'll just get somebody else" you know. They recruit. One down, two in.

Evelyn: But they're [The gangs] not against Wayne and what he's doing so it's really cool [Project support staff, female]

Brothers not colours

One powerful symbol of the Streets Ahead 237 project is the pole where young people tie their scarf/bandanas as they leave their youth gang and embrace the message 'Brothers not colours':

The amount of bandanas that are on our flag pole is a pure sign of kids saying "nah. That's enough." You can also measure that by having ex Bloods in your programme and who don't care what colour they wear and turn up at your clinic with a blue jersey on and not think anything of it (Wayne Poutoa)

Sally: Well I think "Brothers not colours" is the thing.

Jan: And the changes.

Karen: The changes definitely.

Sally: Cause that's what he's done. You can see none of them here with their colours and that's what....

Jan: And they used to, they used to wear them around. Round their necks, around the wrists.

Sally: Yep. That's certainly come out, the respect.

Jan: Wearing different colours.

Karen: That's a big one eh? (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff)

Improving organisational relationships

Building relationships within the wider community has been an effective way of breaking down barriers between gangs, young people and the Police and finding areas of mutual trust and respect:

[It's a] huge opportunity for us as Police officers to engage with the young people and 'break down the barriers' between Police and young people... from them hating Police to actually getting on with at least some of us... this gave us an opportunity working with Streets Ahead 237 to be proactive... We know these things are working because we can work along side them at the camps without any negative attitudes, or very little. And also, the successes of each of the young person's that have gone through the programme... [Police, Male]

Having young people involved and participating in the community decision making processes has helped foster a sense of community ownership and connectedness:

... they came here. They came to the council. He wanted the kids to see, and this is the thing I think is quite visionary, he wanted the kids to see that this was their council. And that they needed to hear from them. You know. How they've changed (Community stakeholder, female)

Building relationships within the wider community has also been beneficial in getting stakeholder 'buy in' and participation in the Streets Ahead 237 project:

One of the things that Wayne and the programme are really good, they've been really generous in terms of always inviting people along to come along to their initiative. To come and speak, to come and meet the kids. You know and they've got a high profile in terms of involvement in the community so they're not being hidden away, or working away in a backstreet corner. It's very much an intrinsic part of the community here (Community stakeholder, female)

More community 'buy in' and involvement has also lead to the formation of valuable stakeholder collaborations:

I think the success story is basically working in partnership with the schools and also, you know, the police, with the alcohol and drug counselling services through Well Trust... (Community stakeholder, female)

Karen: That's cool eh? They've been here for about three or four of them. Yeah and they get really involved and it's the community police, it's not...

Sally: But it's good, those two (Police officers). The ones that they know.

Lisa: Eddie.

Karen: Eddie, those are the ones that have been at the last three or four (noho marae)...

Lisa: What's her name? Nicky eh.

Karen: They took part in the last one and they did that amazing race and the cops had to end it eh when they had that race. Oh man that was a crack up then they had that show. Remember and they did this thing, just chucking all that food in their faces.

Lisa: But the Police have been so cool.

Karen: And they [the young people] go up to them and say hey how's it going.

Lisa: But also it's a real eye opener to them. They have said that. They have said that they had no idea that people could change like this and...

Karen: So it's good cause they can both see each others, through each others' eyes what it's like.

Lisa: 'Cause normally they'd be pigs (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff)

Capability building

The development of young people and their supportive networks is a key target and operates in a number of arenas.

Offering positive alternatives to gang life

Streets Ahead 237 offers young people a vehicle through which positive alternatives to gang life can be accessed:

[When they] start thinking "ok. Lets make a decision." But we can only get to that point when we educate our young people through this programme; community based initiative where we say to young people, "Alright. Here's the decision you make.". Every kid I come across in this neighbourhood has to make a decision whether they're gonna join a gang or not. And so when I showcase what opportunity looks like we jump into a plane. We fly to Vodafone Headquarters. We go to a rugby match with Ruben Wiki... We show them something different. When they have to make that decision, they make an informed one whether they commit their lives to gangs or not (Wayne Poutoa)

... what we're showing them is another journey. Their journey currently... is straight to the dole. That's all that they know. Many of them have dropped out of school

and they're hanging around on the street. You know, that's their journey. But we recognise that that's not their only journey. There are other things out there. There's another world out there that, with potential... (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff member, female)

Letting young people know that other choices, possibilities and opportunities are available to them has been another factor in helping young people to leave gang life behind:

Sally: 'Cause you know, Sarah left aye. Remember. She left?... She went back to see if that gang life was really for her.

Lisa: Isn't it amazing how they can actually go and then it's them wanting to come back.

Sally: Yeah it's good eh because they can see it from a different side now. You know, they've seen what it's like on the streets. Probably when they go back and it's like "Oh nah. I can't do this". You know. It's good. And then look. Look at her. She's back.

Jan: This is the second one she's been back at.

Lisa: Oh. Yeah. After she left aye (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff)

Increased employment, education and training opportunities

Many of the young people that have been involved in the Streets Ahead 237 project have been assisted into diverse areas of employment, education and training including social work; security; carpentry; fisheries; sales; retail; sports; traffic management; building; fashion design; hairdressing; and office administration. Two former participants have found work overseas (one is on a rugby league sports contract) while others are now attending a youth course (e.g. Youth Navigator's course) or have remained in school to gain further qualifications.

We've had some of his kids that have just come through doing a social worker course... it's fantastic that he's [Wayne] actually looking ahead to what these kids need. You know, wonderful. I mean there's a year social worker course. I think he's got seven or eight kids on it? (Community stakeholder, female)

... we see them going from the streets to being in an environment where they feel valued and moving into training opportunities... we can see now that some of them are doing youth worker courses and social work courses. We had some that are apprentices in umm building and stuff like that. I mean that's the best type of outcome you can have... (Police, Male)

Employment and training opportunities also have the effect of moving young people towards leadership roles

I think the biggest change that we saw was at the start there was 18 young people who stuck it in and stayed the full course. And the young person I was talking

about... they disappeared and came back a year later. And what was amazing to watch was that the young people who stuck it out, who stayed there the full course, just going ahead leaps and bounds and this young person who returned to the programme. It was like having a baby that was just learning to crawl in amongst babies that were already talking. You know, there was huge divide between where they were at as individuals. And you know, it was really difficult for that young person to get back into the group because the group had moved away from you know that attitude stuff and that rubbish they actually walked in with too. And suddenly they're [saying]... "Oh. Were we really like that". And saying "No way!" But the good thing about the group was they took the young person into the fold and said "Come on. You've got to move on.". So to me, from the group it shows leadership and it shows a willingness to manaaki and tautoko the other members of the group (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff member, female)

Increased leadership and mentoring skills

Streets Ahead 237 also provides young people with 'hands-on' leadership training through the Youth Committee (The YC):

They're all doing their own leadership training by being on the youth council (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff member, female)

Young people on the YC are supported and mentored by other youth leaders. Roles, boundaries and responsibilities are also established:

... I try as much as I can to let them lead just to build their confidence as well and intervene when I need to... we try to establish roles where they can see who the leaders are; setting boundaries as well. We're dealing with kids, you know, that need boundaries.... So we try to implement boundaries with our programme... (Youth leader and mentor, Male)

Through the YC young people learn valuable lessons and skills around working in a team, planning, organising, designing and implementing activities and events

Alice: I'm on the design team. It's just basically what she was just saying, it's just around designing the programme that's run, but that is a group of, can be up to 10 or 12 people and so no one person is in charge of that but it's overseeing always by Wayne in the end...

Pam: Cause we try and encourage the ones that have been with us and stick with us, we encourage them so they are now designing, they're part of the design team and... (Youth leader (Alice) and Project support staff (Pam))

Having young people take up leadership and mentoring roles and acting as role models and ambassadors of change is also seen as an effective way to affect positive change amongst their peer group:

... then seeing them become leaders and then you can see the difference from when they first started and then to change because they're leaders now, but they don't

act like it. They're not leaders as in bullies or anything like that (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff member, female)

Creating youth leaders and mentors is also seen as important to the long-term sustainability of the Streets Ahead 237 project:

The neat thing about Streets Ahead is Wayne gets these kids into a family environment... they're in a secure environment. He gives them the tools to make the right choices. He turns these kids into leaders... And he gets them into some type of training... And they also come back to Streets Ahead and help the next generation come through and teach them what they've gone through (Police, Male)

Alice: The YC (Youth Committee).

Pam: That's made up of a lot of the kids that first started. That's like the leadership role that we were talking about before. So they go into the YC and they become the Youth Committee.

Interviewer: *And that's just about them getting more involved eh? And it's about delegating...*

Pam: Yeah it's letting them take control of things...

Alice: The older ones looking after the younger ones.

Pam: ... so you know, Wayne can like sit back and let them do it (Youth leader and project support staff)

Health and wellbeing

The association between the project and marae with its health centre means that improving health and wellbeing of young participants is a natural priority.

Increased interest in health

Providing free health checks and messages about good health has helped to raise levels of interest and concern amongst young people about their health and wellbeing:

Alicia: But you know now they're even becoming interested in their health...

Dawn: Even though you're only doing blood pressure and weight but they still want to know whether they're normal. So it's also looking, it's not a big health check but at least it's something to do with health (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff member, female)

More young people and families are accessing health services

A number of interview participants note that more young people are accessing health services via the Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic:

One thing they have up there [Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic] is access to health care... they do have health issues and some of those kids won't, maybe have never seen a doctor because their families don't do things like that. So through Streets Ahead [237] they do get health checks and things like that... (Police, Male)

[In terms of the Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic] their mahi was to basically create a programme and reach youth and steer them to be registered in the clinic; to get their health and blood checks and all those various other things. We've achieved all those. We've ticked all those boxes... (Wayne Poutoa)

Reduced harm to young people

Interview participants were able to provide numerous stories around the positive changes in the health and wellbeing of the young people involved in Streets Ahead 237 that may seem incremental from the outside but are meaningful within the context of each young person's life:

... it's happening but in small. We're moving small mountains in people's lives... like one girl, she was a cutter and she was always drinking and every weekend in June, she'll ring up, "Oh Wayne" you know, 'cause we said to her "You know if you ever can't get a lift, ring us up" because we want them to be safe. Now she's doing a retail course... she's starting to show that she cares about how she looks. It's just like you see the changes, just little ones (Project support staff, female)

Reduced alcohol and drug related harm

A number of interview participants note a particular reduction in alcohol and drug use among project participants:

I guess one of the biggest outcomes we've addressed alcohol and drugs for our young people (Wayne Poutoa)

Reduction in problem behaviours

Connecting, involving and engaging young people in their community have also led to a reduction in problem behaviours:

And the success story is the fact that you know I don't think I've heard any of them do absolutely anything wrong since they've gone on the programme... (Community stakeholder, female)

I know at the creek there's, the young kids used to hang out down at the creek really bad because of the alcohol that they sell in the bloody shop but like Wayne and that, they patrol as well. They do night patrols as well and now when you drive past the creek about one or two in the morning, you don't see the kids out there. They're not there. They're just not there which is really good (Project support staff, female)

Challenges

A number of interview participants felt that Streets Ahead 237 would benefit from more people taking up leadership, mentoring and administration roles within the project, allowing for other aspects of the project – such as the business side – to be prioritised:

At the end of the day, we want the people to run you know the vision while we're out there overseeing or just getting the stuff in and just training our people 'cause like when these young ones get older, they will want to take over and we just want to leave and...or think of another project you know, we're not dead. Just because you're getting on oh well I'm not but you know, your work's not done until you're in the ground mate (Project support staff, female)

Yeah, 'cause Wayne wants to. He wants to concentrate on the business side and he just wants to go and do the business side of it and go to the meetings and that, instead of concentrating on the programme, getting meetings together to design the programme... (Project support staff, female)

Having more people taking up positions of responsibility was also seen as important way of avoiding any likelihood of burnout:

... people should look at the causes of burnout... because a lot of the causes of burnout is that there is not enough people to do the work... And that burnout thing, I don't believe that's Wayne problem. I think it's an issue where people have got to look at it much more in terms of saying, "Well where is the support?" (Community stakeholder, female)

Creating and finding time for professional development and personal growth was seen as another option:

Because what's worried me over the last year in terms of the Vodafone scholarship is the fact that they keep saying to them "when are you and Jenny taking a break?". And I said, "Part of this is for you to go and get your own personal professional development." I was just delighted over the last 6 months that he trained up youth leaders... it's very hard for someone like Wayne who is giving so much to those kids... they cannot become too dependent on him. And that's the hard thing. You know, I've seen youth workers burnt out. But Wayne is really careful, he's got his own life apart from that. But I keep saying to him, "You've got to think what you want to learn for yourself. This is your one opportunity." So if I have any criticism of that guy at all is that he hasn't done that... (Community stakeholder, female)

More males taking up positions of responsibility within the project was seen as advantageous, particularly in helping to alleviate current capacity issues:

Wayne. He always, he's only one man and... that's why we need another male that's gonna help him carry the load... we need another male support ... we need more father figures and we need more males. You look in the social work realm, there are more females in social work... where are our males, we're calling on the males to

come up and to be men and to start playing the part and standing in the gap for these kids you know because these kids, I mean that's why they look to themselves (Project support staff, female)

... it's just creating that balance and that's why and we've just been praying that and there's been a lot of shifting, like people come and people go and sometimes it's like people dropping off, but you know what I really believe that there's a shifting of the people like in the leadership, like the adults that we're putting the right people in place and these right people are going to come and they're gonna run with it because we need, we need leaders to lead our kids (Project support staff, female)

... you've got to support innovation and creativity with our leaders especially with our men. It's just so good to see our men like Wayne and others doing that role modelling because so many of it too...it's women. Not that women don't have an important role. But it's really important that there's good role modelling of men running our services and programmes as well. Especially for the boys and the girls (Community stakeholder, female)

The constant need to find funding meant that other important areas of the project received less times:

The never ending pursuit of funding is taking away valuable time that I need to achieve and work with young people in the capacity to which I am accustomed to (Wayne Poutoa)

Varying criteria and accountability requirements amongst different government agencies was perceived as another barrier to getting funding for the project:

... I think it's really hard for our programmes on the ground, you know what I mean, they apply to MSD there's a different criteria, there's all this accountability, and they have to apply here, apply there... (Community stakeholder, female)

A number of interview participants mentioned that community perceptions and expectations could sometimes be unrealistic, particularly when the project is working with youth at varying stages of development:

Exactly and that's how we measure but the world, they come in and they go oh well you know, we even heard a comment from somebody where they were going "Oh yeah they go to Streets Ahead but oh yeah but I saw some of them still walking around" but they think the negative and it's like these teenagers, they're not going to change overnight. There not going to miraculously you know and at the end of the day, we're there and we don't just run a programme and go "oh well, you're going to be all better now" (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff/Project support staff, female)

I guess when you're providing a programme such as this one where failure is not an option then you're going to get both positive and negative reactions... 'Cause at the end of the day we are here for the young people. And we will do everything to protect them and support them on their journey (Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic staff/Project support staff, female)

Managing how the Streets Ahead 237 brand is understood and perceived out in the community was also seen as important to protecting the integrity and credibility of the project:

But then you know and in our last meeting we had a conversation, because there was one instance where I was at work... and R---- was having his lunch and they had a Student Association meeting and I just went into have a feed and R goes "Hey. Do you know that chick over there that's wearing the Streets Ahead tee-shirt? And I looked over and I go "nah", I don't even know, and she was being really rowdy and going "oh yeah" you know "how come we don't have a bar here on campus"... and she's wearing the Streets Ahead tee-shirt... [And] he was like "get that tee-shirt off" you know, "get that off"... when we wear our Streets Ahead tee-shirt, people are looking to you because you know and kids are looking to you so you need to, we're our role model you know it's like you can't just go and go "oh let's go on the piss" and all that you know... (Project support staff, female)

Future Developments

Sharing the Streets Ahead 237 vision and learnings with other communities was seen as a good long term vision for the project:

Oh wow, you know what, we would be opening places up, we will be taking this vision all over New Zealand and I'm thinking, for me, I'm not sure about Wayne, but Australia as well. Going overseas because it's something that works but we would get people in Australia to do Australia because they know they're people and it would go all over the place (Project support staff, female)

Several interview participants mentioned that it would be beneficial to have a drop in centre where young people could hang out and where various youth services and support could be centralised:

Karen: You know, if they had a drop in centre.

Lisa: Yeah the drop in centre. Somewhere they could go to would be a big help (Project participants)

Streets Ahead 237 Change Stories

Why we chose these stories

The first three stories were generally ranked highly by the selection groups. Although not ranked as highly by the others, the provider ranked Sarah and Karen's story as number one. Because of this and because it provided change from the participants' view, this story was included as the fourth story. Although each story was considered valuable and rankings were mixed, they are presented in an approximation of higher to lower ranking.

During the selection process, the Vodafone participants commented that:

The core of the stories is about positive choices and this came out really clearly, but the stories also show heaps of stuff over and above this, for example the police story. I was surprised by the relationship with the police and the stigmatisation, it amazed me that someone would do that; the story puts you in the kids' shoes.

This is the workforce of the future; could be police, social workers; this is a theme of all these stories.

Stories are an incredibly powerful way to get a glimpse without being there. The stories tell a story of the service and relationships, between young people and each other and with the police and with Wayne and his crew and the young people. That's what makes it work and then you get the picture of a ripple out from this core – parents, graffiti, police, families.

Story one: A Police Officer's Story: Tales from the front

Our job as Police Officers - especially on the front line - is it's always reactive you are always finding jobs on the go, umm but... Streets Ahead 237 gave us the opportunity to be proactive.

Seeing some of those kids, the alternatives of what they are doing to what they used to do are just remarkable. We see them, first of all, hanging their colours up. Secondly we see them going from the streets, [to] being in environments that they feel, they feel valued, and moving into training opportunities and you can see now that they are doing youth worker courses and umm social work courses, some of them are. We've had some that are apprentices in building and stuff like that, I mean, that's the best possible outcome you can have for these kids.

The neat thing about Streets Ahead [237 is], Wayne gets them into a secure environment. He gives them the tools to make the right choices. He turns these kids into leaders mate, and he informs them and gets them into some type of training so that they can... get a job you know. But they also come back to Streets Ahead [237] and help the next generation of kids that come through, and teach them what they have gone through.

At the same time mate, most of these kids - their dealings with police - have sort of like been in the negative. When we were in Streets Ahead 237, they got to know us outside of the uniform and how we are walking the beat and I'm pretty sure [my colleague] will agree with me, these young kids that we dealt with in Streets Ahead [237] come up to us - no qualms what so ever - come hug us, kiss us, shake hands with us you know? That is a great feeling, a great feeling for us, it shows that we are out there doing it um, and it's working.

It's also a huge opportunity for us Police Officers to engage with the young people and ah break down the barriers between police and young people and um [from] them hating the Police to actually get[ting] along with at least some of us.

The changes would be in how the relationships with the kids have changed for a start. And we know that these things are working because we can ah work along side them at the camps yeah [without] any negative attitudes or very little, and also the success of each of the young persons that have gone through the programme. They are doing their own leadership training, by being on the youth council um, and seeing and hearing about the suggestions they have made... you know just a, yeah, successful.

I feel there's a reduction - I don't have numbers - but I mean we have talked to the community out there. It's my feeling that we do have... fewer youth gang members and we also hear from the Mob themselves - the Mongrel Mob - and they find it hard to recruit good people, so it comes from them as well umm yeah we just can't put numbers on it and I don't think we ever will

For me that's a sign of the mana that Wayne and the marae have... same with the churches in the area um, I've got a couple of billboards around Cannon Creek that are right outside the churches, and they haven't turned it into [trash], you know that's a sign of people - even the young ones - respecting, you know, sacred grounds. You know, what I'm saying is it only takes one person to change, just one person to change.

Why this story?

- This kind of depth is very encouraging for my wife and I (Provider).
- This is a clear standout (Vodafone Foundation).
- Good summary; it encapsulates changes the other stories tell (Vodafone Foundation).
- The story has great insight and is a big picture story (Vodafone Foundation).
- It's a good police change story; it reinforces, but is separate from the (following) youth leader's story (Whāriki).
- The story shows wide impacts on community relationships and cohesion (Whāriki).

Comments

- This story is an overview of a number of observations and changes from the point of view of a Police Officer.
- It details the comprehensive approach that the project takes and the impacts that flow from this.
- The Officer describes changing relationships between police and the young people and is obviously an enthusiastic supporter of Streets Ahead.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

The story demonstrates the breaking down of barriers as mentioned in the youth leader's story, but from the perspective of the police.

The project provides a huge opportunity for the police; it describes initial police reluctance shifting to where police value the project.

The story describes big changes in young people and wider community impacts such as less tagging and fewer gang members; the Mongrel Mob say it is hard to recruit.

It must be empowering for the police and a great reflection on them because they can see this is a way of making it difficult for the Mongrel Mob.

More positive relationships are described; young people will now ask for a particular officer they trust because of the programme and if police are part of the Streets Ahead programme they will get waved at in the streets.

Capability building

We have endeavoured to create a program that allows people to regain an undisturbed possession of who they are as individuals and as members of family and as cultural identities empowered by their values and beliefs. For some it has been a journey of discovery to find that place which is special to them and their families. 237 created a safe space for this to happen in order for our people under the ngā hau e whā concept engaging all cultures to prosper.

Jennifer and I are glad that police perceive us in that manner and are very privileged to be seen in this way, but we are more blessed in the way they have become a part of the village that is 237 focussed on the raising of our people.

This demonstrates hanging up the colours; moving to a safe environment and training, transforming relationships, breaking down stigma, making healthy choices and fewer young people in gangs. The Mongrel Mob having fewer prospects, that was awesome.

Health and wellbeing

The Officer talks about young people showing respect and being able to express positive relationships with the police.

If you work positively with young people the evidence shows that you have less graffiti. The billboard story is a tangible outcome; stopping graffiti by giving choices.

Story two: A Youth Leader's Story: Go home!

I have one story in particular and I always think of it and it's a community one. It's the relationship between the kids and the cops. There was one particular instance which changed them - the cops. When the cops shared how this experience had made them feel, the kids felt cared about.

It was when we went into town two programmes ago. We took the kids to Laser Strike and one of the officers, she was walking down the street, and she had all the Porirua kids walking and we were like smack, bang in the middle of town, Wellington. There's all these swanky clubs. The officer was walking... leading the kids down to Laser Strike, and there's a lot of them behind her, a whole van load. Some woman sitting down, and she had her flash glass of wine and pretty clothes, and she just sits there and she said to the kids as they walked past, "Oh why don't you just get out of here, go home!!" They hadn't done anything, the kids, "yeah go back to Porirua." She immediately knew that stereotype of what 'Porirua people' look like, and she verbalized it to them, and the Police Officer, she just turned around and looked at her and was like "what did you say", and the kids were standing there, she's like "what did you say". The lady said "oh take your kids back to Porirua, just get them out of here" and the Police Officer turned around and she stood up for the kids right then and there. She came to me, and the kids got to the Laser Strike and the officer shared it with us and she's like "I can't believe it. I've heard all these sad stories about kids being treated badly. But when I heard this woman just totally disregard our kids... I never knew what our kids face." And at the same time, the kids, some of them, they came back telling the story too, "Man... she told her [the lady] where to go". It's just changed [the relationship between the cops and kids]! You go down to Creek Fest now and the kids are jumping up on the cops, high five, you know "what's up bro", it's, you know, they wear the uniform and you just don't see it though.

It's huge and I've got to be honest, they the cops even changed my perspective 'cause plenty of times in my past I've been in the back seat.

Why this story?

- The young people and police amazed each other in this story, which I find somewhat amusing but at the same time life changing. You have two groups that oppose each other due to the ethics they live under, in respect to police policy and street ethics

who are fully engaged with one another to the point of defending each other's worldviews (Provider).

- I loved this. It was told by a youth leader and they referenced other people telling the stories; this gave it more credibility and I like how she had been in the back seat of the police car (Vodafone Foundation).
- I ranked it high because it talked of the external experience; it is like a public story, this is powerful. I don't get an idea of how the young people benefited, but you assume they did. It is poignant and makes a powerful story. I would love to know what she actually said (Vodafone Foundation).
- You can assume that there would be a lot of people that would behave like the woman (Vodafone Foundation).
- Courtenay Place person; it could be a powerful story to an audience (Vodafone Foundation).
- On one level it's a story of turning the tables on power; it's about the police getting an insight into something they might never experience. It provides the police with experiences that can change their whole approach and understandings (Whāriki).
- It clearly describes changing relationships and breaking down perceptions and barriers (Whāriki).

Comments

- This is about how the police are involved and how this has impacted on them, on the young people and on the project. It's about building a relationship of trust and respect between police and the young people.
- Police Officers were on an activity with the young people, when a woman turned around and spoke abusively to them; this opened the officer's eyes to the discrimination.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

This is about changing mindsets and delivering our people from generational ways of thinking to the point of bringing a people together. The project is changing life cycles that contribute to cycles of violence and crime. The generation that my grandchildren will be raised in will have come closer to true collaboration between community and agencies working with youth that will benefit them due to the cliché of collaboration truly coming to life from what our generation has created NOW!!

The story shows the value of police involvement in the programme. It is beneficial for the programme objectives and for change in terms of better relationships, but it also educates the police. This can potentially contribute to changes in police culture, which is one of the environmental factors that the programme and the people deal/struggle with.

Capability building

It must be affirming for the young people, who most likely experience discrimination regularly, for the context and outcome to be entirely different. In this case, the abuser is dealt with by the police.

Health and wellbeing

You can feel the joy and the positivity that is a result of this event and the part that this played in contributing to more positive relationships.

Story three: A Mother' Story: Proud of you

I came on Streets Ahead to be a volunteer helper in the kitchen. In saying that, I've now got more involved. I love talking to the kids. I've got six of my own and have been through a lot, so I don't like to think of myself as just a cook. I like to think of myself as their friend... I got onto Streets Ahead through Caroline. Caroline had quite a few kids go through the Streets Ahead programme. When I first came along I must admit I was a bit shocked at the way some of the kids behaved. Their attitude and they were really quite rude to me and I was like "oh my gosh". But then I got talking to them and I'd say to them, "you know if you need to talk to me, just come and talk to me or ask me properly. Don't come up and be real staunch about it. I'd rather you'd be able to come and talk to me," and that's exactly what they do now.

Before I came onto Streets I was quite depressed; split up with my old man and having problems, and the kids were sort of all against me and it was horrible, so by coming to this programme, I said to Wayne "oh my gosh... Streets Ahead has given me something that I really love doing". Made a real big difference in my life and I just love it.

I've got my kids Sally and Mike here who are [youth] leaders I've seen the change in Mike and Sally.... I also have my granddaughter involved in the programme.

When I started getting involved, and then Wayne met Sally and he said "what does she do" and I said "nothing" and he said "would you like her to get involved." I said "ask her," so she came along and gosh Wayne had only known her a few days and he said "I want you to be a leader," and she's like "what!" So yeah that's why she's where she is today... she's doing a Social Working course. Really happy about that! But even Mike, as a kid Mike was such a rebel and he had so much anger and when we first come to Streets I used to say to him, "get outside" 'cause he used to swear... I said to him last night, "you know what Mike. I 'm really

proud of you, I've seen a big change in you," and he goes "have you mum?" That's cool that you can say that to them eh cause they think "ooh look my mum, she's really proud of me."

Why this story?

- Parents are a key component in the program and I was blessed to read the amount of progress made within her family and the use of 237 as a focus point to bring about change within the home environment (Provider).
- It gives a sense of community that someone outside might not understand (Vodafone Foundation).
- It's really her story as opposed to that of her children. It made me laugh as well. She was out of her comfort zone, but she was there for her kids, for her grandkids. I was surprised she said "Oh my gosh," but it was clearly right for her (Vodafone Foundation).
- Shows family wide impacts (Vodafone and Whāriki).
- Shows snowballing of involvement (Whāriki).

Comments

- She described herself as depressed and relationships in the family weren't going well.
- She loves programme; the way she talks shows how involved she is with the programme and the people.
- Things are a lot better for her and her family (children and grandchildren) and she sees the project as having played a major role in this.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

Individuals plus family make connections through the project; the whole whānau is positively impacted on.

The project involves the whole family and the story demonstrates the layers and wrapping in the community; in terms of the impact that the programme has it demonstrates the ripple out effect.

The story is about young people as a foundational platform to reach whole families and bring about positive change for however long they want 237 involved in their families.

Capability building

She described herself as depressed; she now feels she has a vision and passion.

Her son, daughter and grandchildren are involved; there is a sense of shared family visions. She has seen changes in both her children who are now leaders.

She talks about being proud of her son and being able to say this to him. Her talk and his reported response show that relationships in the family are much more positive.

These systems in the project work on the basis of everyone that is there; she is a mother and a support worker. It tells two stories; hers and her family's. She is surprised and she tells the story through a mother's eyes.

Health and wellbeing

She was depressed and, by getting involved, that has changed for her.

The improvements for her and her whole family show a much healthier and happier picture.

Story four: Sarah and Karen's Story: A tale of two sisters

Sarah: *Umm yeah I was on the block to be a blood girl but I stole heaps of car's and then I was an alcoholic and a druggie. And I was... doing a course and I stopped going... and then my other tutor had to come and pick me up in the morning, to make me go even though I was hung over and my tutor told me to come [to Streets Ahead 237] and so I came. But I got into more trouble and I moved in with one of the other girls. Yeah, and I didn't get along with any of my sisters because they were running with the cripsters. I'm on a course now.*

Karen: *... she was drinking everyday and she, and she stopped coming home and was bringing home ugly guys.*

Sarah: *Had to throw that in!*

Karen: *umm, she started turning up to the course, graduated with a full apprentice. She cut down on her drinking.*

Sarah: *Well it was hard too. Like changing? The support, the people support. There is support to get off the streets because they are hard out there for you. And if like you've got a problem you can talk to them [Streets Ahead 237 staff] and they will figure it out. Like me and my sister, we have got depression and they help us a lot with that.*

You come here and you forget about where you come from, like how much stress that you have at home and all the trouble that you have. You come up here and zone out. Forget about it all and just have fun.

Why this story?

- This story stood out because it was very graphic in respect to being on the block and crime but this is the reality of what the project deals with on a regular basis (Provider).
- It showed the coping mechanisms used with alcohol and drugs and turning to gangs for the love that was missing in the home environment for whatever reason (Provider).
- It was clearly a story of change; it made an impression (Vodafone Foundation).
- It provides examples of a turnaround from pretty desperate to having a direction (Whāriki).

Comments

- They have both had difficult experiences and, although it doesn't appear that life is now easy for them, there have been some significant changes.
- Sarah has persevered to complete and experience success in her course.
- The role that Streets Ahead has played in supporting them has clearly made a difference.

Criteria indicating significant change

Social cohesion

Streets Ahead 237 is seen as a safe haven.

They have a good support system and network and more positive options and choices.

Capability building

Sarah was not going to school, she was on a course and not attending; 'doing nothing', alcohol, drugs, car theft, relationship issues and issues in her family. She now has a purpose and has completed a course and, although it was hard, has made significant changes.

Health and wellbeing

Sarah was drinking every day; reported depression in the family; she had a major illness and is now doing a course; both sisters have been helped with their depression.

I interpreted it that she is now in an open enough place to be able to acknowledge the depression.

Summary

Important to the success of the Streets Ahead 237 project has been its grassroots, community focus and its ability to empower communities to provide their own solutions. Connecting young people and their families to community and culture as well as to available community resources and services has also proved invaluable in improving the lives of the many families involved.

The various events and activities run throughout the year have provided opportunities for young people, project support staff and community stakeholders to break down barriers and learn to communicate and collaborate in healthy and productive ways. Participants in the evaluation spoke of having a greater sense of purpose, feeling supported and being more able to realise their aspirations. Other changes included cultural shifts in relations with police and a realising of the Brothers not colours concept.

The change stories also highlight the success the project has had in opening up a world of positive alternatives for young people and how many of the successes of the project have rippled out into the wider Porirua community. Underpinning the successes of the project is an unwavering commitment from Wayne and his family to improving the lives of young people and their families in the Porirua community and in supporting and helping them to fulfil the journey and legacy of their ancestors.

Conclusions

Here we do not revisit the projects per se but draw out more general issues that we observed in the course of the evaluation.

The first of these is to highlight the point suggested by the Introduction and the sketch of materials from other local youth projects, to the effect that the three Vodafone Foundation World of Difference projects reviewed here are all exemplars of the Positive Youth Development paradigm, as articulated by the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. They demonstrate an excellent fit with the tenets of youth development and with the concept of *building stronger communities and supporting better outcomes for young New Zealanders* (World of Difference aims).

The projects demonstrate the value of engaging with young people in order to work successfully with them and to bring their concerns and aspirations to the centre stage. A range of positive changes were identified, grouped broadly under the areas of social cohesion, capability building and health and wellbeing. They engaged young people, their families and the wider community including key agencies such as the police and schools, producing positive changes at all these levels. They have become firmly integrated into neighbourhoods and communities, take strengths and values based approaches and focus on youth interests within the broader context of their families and communities. A key success factor is the people involved, from driven individuals and families leading the projects to those who have become engaged and committed to each project.

In each instance the hallmark of the project – dance, moving away from gangs, boxing - is seen as a hook to learning and development rather than solely as an end itself. However, boxing and hiphop also provide a sense of achievement and increase physical fitness and ability. Their successes bring prestige and pride to individuals, groups and communities.

In working with young people who are in many instances, not interested in school, “under achieving” and seen as likely to leave, the projects offer alternative pathways and demonstrate positive outcomes. The themes and stories in this evaluation show multiple instances of project leaders and staff intervening in the systems that are not working for young people in their care, making often simple changes that, for the young person, produce changes in outlook across the board. Such changes have been achieved in sometimes fairly dire situations and it is clear that, without the work of the projects, things could have been very different for the young people and their families.

This is an endorsement of the projects, but also an indictment of aspects of our society and many of our youth institutions; for example, school principals and police officers have sought out the projects to provide what should be within their domain of their activities. The evaluation tells of young people living in environments where they may not feel well supported, whether it is due to dominant cultural norms, socio-economic circumstances or the lack of positive male role models.

Although Positive Youth Development is seen as a valuable way forward and a number of initiatives are based on its principles, there is little evaluation. Although evaluation may be

seen as taking resources from the 'coalface' of work with young people it also provides a powerful tool for the development and understanding of projects. Without such research based knowledge there is a danger that the gains made by any particular intervention will be lost to the wider community of those working to improve the health and wellbeing of young people.

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