



Title: The Street Project

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<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/public-safety/17141/practitioners/casestudies/street-project> (accessed July 14th 2010)

SCS topic headings: Community Engagement, Safety in Public Spaces (ASB), Personal Safety, Safety of Vulnerable Groups

This document is a REPORT of an effective intervention approach.

Summary of the intervention's aim

The aim of the project is to discourage young people from ever engaging in anti-social or damaging behaviour by highlighting the potential damage it can do to themselves and others. It encourages youngsters to think before they act, to take responsibility for their actions and to be aware of the consequences of destructive or anti-social behaviour.

The Street is a targeted diversionary scheme aimed at young people involved in, or on the brink of becoming involved in, youth disorder and anti-social behaviour. The initiative uses hard hitting and immersive theatre to teach young people about the potentially serious and dangerous consequences of actions that are often all too common in their social environments and backgrounds. It is the first scheme of its kind in South Lanarkshire.

Outcomes

There are two main elements to The Street experience:

A theatre event: An immersive theatre event brings a group of targeted young people to an industrial unit in Hamilton in which a virtual Street has been created. The youngsters are not informed about what to expect or that any of what they are about to experience is simulated or staged in any way. In a high octane and hard hitting experience groups are escorted on a 20 minute walk around the dark twists and turns of The Street, meeting several of the locals (played by groups of these targeted young people themselves) on their way.

A post-show workshop: The theatre experience is immediately followed by a workshop facilitated by top quality youth workers who help the young people explore their thoughts and feelings about what they have just witnessed. The workshop allows young people to identify and come up with alternate options at crucial decision points within the scenes.

The project runs three nights a week with two sessions each evening and has so far brought in more than 255 targeted youngsters from across South Lanarkshire.

Monitoring and evaluation

The scheme is reviewed by the youngsters who rate their experiences on a scale of satisfaction on the following eight aspects of the whole event:

- Overall impact
- The issues
- The acting
- The workshop
- The build-up
- The special effect
- The volume
- The venue.

They also write comments on how individual scenes made them feel and leave comments for the cast and crew on their overall thoughts. A table illustrates feedback received to date that indicates predominant service user satisfaction across each of the eight aspects that are monitored. This system of self-review ensures that The Street experience is kept as realistic and as authentic as possible as it is the youngsters themselves that determine how genuine and engaging the different scenes are.

With the help of youth workers from various organisations, The Street aims to evaluate the impact of the project 6 months from the groups' visits. This will be done using a variety of methods including self-evaluation from the young people, youth worker observation sheets and information from local problem solving groups.

Regen:fx hope to develop a resource pack with interactive DVD that youth workers can use to continue work with their groups building on the events of The Street: continually reminding them of the issues, keeping a dialogue open and monitoring the change in their attitudes and behaviour.

Summary of evaluation conclusions

The Street organisers anticipate that the project has the potential of becoming a way forward in helping to combat youth disorder and anti-social behaviour within our communities. Youth workers involved believe it should be an integral mechanism for challenging young people's negative behaviour and highlighting the consequences of their actions.

Importantly, this brief review highlights two key challenges for further developing the scheme:

- Specific targeting, recruitment and retaining of young people currently involved in youth disorder to become trained in drama, special effects and technical skills in order that they can deliver to other peers
- Securing long-term suitable premises and funding.

How the evaluation gathered information for findings and conclusions

This small report on the rationale, processes and experiences behind The Streets initiative is based on self-reported evidence from both the young people involved themselves and also from the supporting youth workers too.

An emphasis is made that the scheme is reviewed primarily by the young people themselves, providing user experience feedback to their perceived benefits in the short term. The authors acknowledge that long-term data on the impact of The Street experience is yet to be gathered, yet a project partner is seeking ways in which to keep participants engaged with the schemes key messages through a DVD.

The sample size of more than 200 young people already ensures that conclusions drawn from feedback gathered in this manner is likely to be representative of their experiences (if all the data is comparable for all of the eight aspects highlighted in the above text).

**Further details about the SCS evaluation of this report are available on request.
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