

Leaps & Bounds

**A Cultural Pathfinder Project in
Birmingham and the Black
Country**



Introduction

- Local Authorities, Youth at Risk and Birmingham Royal Ballet
- Project commissioned at CEO level
- To address Shared Priority of improving the Quality of Life for young people and their families
- Combination of personal development/community coaching and arts



Project Aims

- Varied aims of partners including
 - To engage young people in an artistic process and ballet performance as a means of personal exploration
 - To engage with corporate sector
 - To secure meaningful accreditation for participants
 - To review youth service practice
 - To share practice between authorities



Expected Outcome

- Enabling young people to achieve something beyond their previous expectation, thereby
 - Revealing how much they had been limiting themselves
 - Raising aspirations for the future
 - Increasing confidence and motivation



Recruitment

- Trailblazers
 - Youth Service, Connexions, YIPs etc
- Young People
 - Wide range of disadvantage
 - Young offenders, homeless, teenage parents, abuse sufferers, mildly autism etc
- Life Coaches



Phased Approach

- Phase 1
 - Intensive personal development
 - Creative drama and contemporary dance
 - Community coaching around 3 goals
- Phase 2
 - Staging, rehearsal and performance of MacMillan's Romeo & Juliet at Birmingham Hippodrome



Project Management

- Network management
- No overall Director
- Partners led on different aspects
- Joined up evaluation
- Joined up promotion
- Shared practice



Participants

- Phase 1
 - 120 young people
 - 15-18 years old
- Phase 2
 - 70 young people
 - 25 male and 45 female
 - Average age 17
 - 32 life coaches



The Ballet Element

- Discipline closely aligned to Youth at Risk methodology
- 100% participation ethos
- Physically demanding, health outcomes
- Building on excellent practice at Birmingham Royal Ballet
- Participants will dance some key roles



Evaluation

- Outcomes approach
- Analysis of application forms and Life Coach records
- Interviews with participants leaving the project
- Analysis of applications for Phase 2
- Use of Connexions Wheel



Case Studies #1

- 18 year old male
 - Anger management issues
 - History of violent behaviour
 - Now recognises “red flag” and walks away from confrontation
 - Uses dance as an outlet for anger
 - No violent incidents since enrolment



Case Studies #2

- 16 year old female, living in care
 - History of abuse, abandonment and educational under-achievement
 - Stable new family
 - Academic predictions good
 - No longer disruptive
 - Physical appearance greatly improved

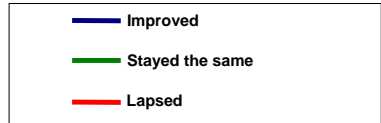
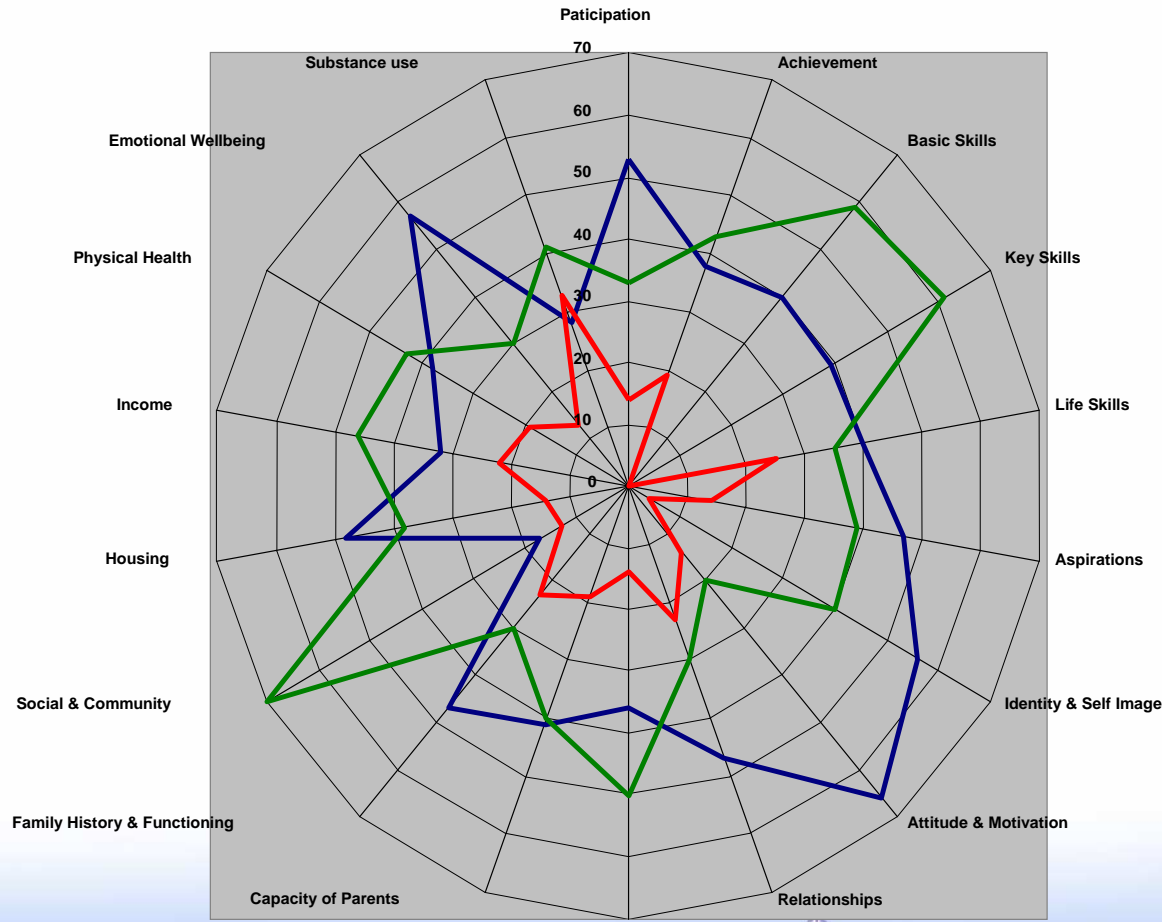


Case Studies #3

- 17 year old male offender
 - Fascinated by technical side of theatre production
 - Also participated in dance elements
 - Recognises himself “before & after”
 - 100% committed to a change in his life
 - Has not re-offended since enrolment



The Evaluation Wheel



Interim Findings

- 36% reported benefit from social interaction
- 27% said it prompted positive action about their circumstances
- 18% indicated improved self-esteem
- 18% indicated increased confidence
- 30% said increased self-esteem had made them feel able to tackle goals



What Next?

- Young People progress through BTec and Youth Arts Award qualifications
- Company rehearses for Romeo & Juliet intensively
- Filming continues
- Performance on 28 September
- Final evaluation, including assessment of relative importance of arts and coaching elements

