



ANNUAL REVIEW

FOR

Project name: SOVA Young London

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Period of the report: April 2009 – March 2010

3 Introduction

Brief History of Project

SYL began in October 2008 initially with funding from The Jack Petchey Foundation and London Councils. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen economical circumstances, The Jack Petchey Foundation was unable to continue to fund the project post March 2009.

Since 2008 SYL has worked with 179 young people who have been referred from a variety of statutory and community based organisations from within the agreed Local London Authorities namely Bexley, Bromley, Brent, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Harrow and Hounslow.

They types of projects the young people have participated in are: a music and video production, peer mentoring training courses, a short film raising awareness of the negative consequences for young people entering the criminal justice system, a youth focussed health handbook for Young people in the borough of Camden, a back to work/ education programme for young ex offenders and currently the project is working with young people in Bexley to create an advert on stereotypes of young people who grow up in care.

Aim of project, categories of beneficiaries; use of volunteers; focus of activity and intended outcome.

The aim of the project is to offer free diversionary activities for groups of young people aged 11 – 24 years with the aim of reducing the levels of criminal and anti-social behaviour amongst this age group. The types of activities we provide are: drama workshops, short films, music and video productions, young people health handbook workshops, peer mentoring, employment preparation classes and art workshops.

The project also recruits and trains volunteers to work with and support the young people. The volunteers facilitate the sessions and report to the Project Manager

The beneficiaries of the project are:

Young people between the ages of 11 – 24 who are:

- NEET
- Socially excluded and/ or
- Disadvantaged in some way

These young people may come from the following areas:

And who are living in the boroughs of:

- Bexley
- Brent

- Bromley
- Camden
- Croydon
- Ealing
- Harrow
- Hounslow

The main focus of activity is the use of diversionary activities to assist young people who are at risk of offending to participate in positive activities. Volunteers are used in a mentoring capacity to help the young people reach their goals individually and in a group setting, to take the steps to ensure they continue to abstain from offending or reoffending through newly learned or developed techniques or signposting.

Funding source(s). For projects with multiple contracts please include list of contracts and funders.

For the reporting period, the project has continued to receive funding from London Councils and through an agreement with SOVA Ealing will receive additional funding for delivering peer mentoring training to young people and young ex offenders with a member of staff from the Croydon Young People's Project.

Staffing, structure and composition.

There is only one employed member of staff on the project which is the Project Manager.

It is the responsibility of the Project Manager to:

- Manage the administration of the overall project and individual local projects
- To manage the budget of the overall project
- To recruit, manage/ supervise and train volunteers and sessional workers
- To build relationships and network with local statutory and voluntary organisations
- To source and recruit service providers where necessary
- To develop the project to ensure it meets its objectives and targets
- To seek necessary and relevant training to assist in the development of staff and the overall project

All direct project work is carried out by the Project Manager and the volunteers.

Composition of Steering group

N/A

4 Objectives and Targets

The objective for the project for SYL for this reporting period is a part of the ongoing overall objective which is to work with 63 young people from the boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Brent, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Harrow and Hounslow from 2008 - 2012. At the end of the last reporting period we had worked with a total of 90 participants and now have worked with a further 89 young people.

Borough	Target for entire funding period	Actual - for monitoring period
Bexley	9	9
Brent	5	-
Bromley	6	6
Camden	7	14
Croydon	8	34
Ealing	8	12
Harrow	9	6
Hounslow	10	8
Total	63	89

5 Summary of achievements (reason for non-achievement) against objectives listed in previous section

The project has achieved in many areas during this monitoring period in the areas of volunteer recruitment to the project, partnership development, project development, participant progress and involvement.

Firstly, the project has seen an increased interest from volunteers who want to support the clients who are referred to the project. One of the volunteers we took on this year was actually a parent of a service user who participated in the project in the last monitoring period. This shows that the project is able to make a positive impression on the families of the young people who take part in the project and are able to positively give back.

Partnership development has also increased and we have successfully made in-roads with organisations and areas which SOVA previously has no relationships with or presence in such as Hounslow and Harrow. Following a write up about the SYL project in a local Hounslow based newspaper the CEO of Connexions made contact with the SYL Project Manager to see how we could work together. We are currently running a project with Hounslow connexions to deliver work preparation workshops to young ex offenders and have been asked to deliver another session in Autumn 2010. In Harrow we are working with the Irish Travelling Community through the local YOT to deliver an art based workshop, in order to help towards building a good working relationship with this community we have also developed a relationship with ITMB (Irish Travelling Movement in Britain)

who are advising and educating the project on the customs and traditions of young people in this community and how to engage with them with projects which offer safe enjoyment instead of employment focussed workshops as they approach their personal careers from within their communities.

Regarding participant involvement, particularly in Hounslow we are working with some very hard to reach young men who, albeit with lots of encouragement, are attending the workshops and are progressing well.

Any current issues

NA

6 Volunteers (if used)

6.1 Work and Processes

For all of SYL's projects volunteers are selected from the London wide pool of SOVA volunteers from Bexley, Camden and Ealing. Adwoa attends local SOVA volunteer training sessions, social evenings or support groups to inform the volunteers about the Young London project, the benefits of the project and how they can get involved.

All volunteers are selected through SOVAs established volunteers interviewing, training and selection process. Once all checks and references have been completed and returned satisfactorily the volunteers may be selected to become involved with the Young London project.

Once the volunteers pass the interview successfully and an overall assessment is carried out they will be invited to become a Young London volunteer.

Recommendations of volunteers are also made by local SOVA project workers.

Volunteers duties include: attending sessions with groups of young people, supporting young people to reach their personal goals, to complete session records, to ensure health and safety guidelines are followed, to report any issues of concern to the Project Manager and to attend supervision with the Project Manager.

No additional training is required once volunteers have completed the standard SOVA training, however meetings are arranged with Adwoa and volunteers to go through the training programme and to inform the volunteers of any information they will need to know in order to carry out their tasks effectively.

Volunteers and sessional workers have supervisions with the Project Manager every 3 weeks. These are a combination of face-to-face meetings and

telephone based meetings where they discuss the progression of the project and any issues with the projects (the participants, planning of activities and expenses etc) and they will also have an opportunity to discuss the volunteers personal development and any training needs or requests for additional support as well as any other issues.

The Project Manager regularly visits the projects to assess the work being carried out and to provide additional support to the volunteers and sessional workers on site.

The Project Manager is always available for contact during working hours which includes the times when the projects take place which is usually between 9.30am - 9pm.

6.2 Statistics and Performance

We have had new 63 volunteer enquiries within the reporting period and 13 requests from SOVA trained volunteers. As the project does not train the volunteers for the project specifically we have no figures for this section.

We have used 10 volunteers over the reporting period

- 60% female
- 40% male
- 30% unemployed
- 80% from the BAME community
- 40% are from North London
- 20% are from South East London
- 40% are from South West London

The reasons why volunteers have given for volunteering is that firstly, it is an opportunity to help young people in a way that is different to the 1:1 mentoring support which is usually offered, you can use your personal experiences to make a bond with more than one young person at a time and it is an opportunity to travel across London and work with young people with different issues to the young people in your own area.

No training courses have been given

Volunteers have given 310 hours to volunteering during the reporting period.

Case study

Ramiz is a volunteer who was recommended by SOVA Ealing, Ramiz comes with experience of working with young people in prisons by providing support in by way of personal development and self actualisation helping them to make the transition from where they are to where they would like to

be. Ramiz has been very successful in positively engaging with a particular hard to reach individual in the Hounslow project who has been showing very strong signs in turning a corner, at least in his attitude. Usually very sullen, unmotivated and disinterested Ramiz has helped Sammi to begin to see his options in a more positive light and is continuing to help him on his journey.

Positive Quotes

“The project gives young people and volunteers a chance to make a positive difference”

“I have a chance to directly affect someones’ life and it makes me feel really good”

“I know where they’ve been and it’s hard but you can change”

7 Beneficiaries

7.1 Work and Processes

The beneficiaries are referred by statutory organisations or community groups. Our main funders, London Council’s had not restricted who we can work with providing that they fit the criteria.

For the music project (United As One) the participants came up with the topic that the track would be dealing with. They also wrote the lyrics, sang all the vocals, produced the music and directed the accompanying video for the track.

For the short film My name is Alex the participants produced storyboards, co-wrote the script, acted in, filmed, directed and edited the film. In addition to this the service users also organised the launch event for which they invited guests, wrote and delivered speeches and spoke with guests about their experiences.

Before the projects in Camden, Hounslow and Bromley took place focus groups were carried out with young people who were likely to participate in the anticipated SYL project. On all occasions at least 60% of the young people who participated in the focus groups have actually participated in the project which is fantastic for the project as we can be certain that we are providing a service which the client group would like to use.

7.2 Statistics and Performance

In this monitoring period:

- 75 Beneficiaries have been referred
- 75 have been accepted
- 14 have self referred
- 89 have participated
- 34 Males
- 55 Females
- 68% are from the BAME community
- 16% have convictions
- 93% are unemployed

So far we have had 7 withdrawals, 6 of those we due to their legal guardians (social workers) not being able complete their risk assessment and consent information. Another beneficiary enrolled into college and therefore no longer required the service.

Up to date we have 82 positive outcomes for this reporting period.

Case Studies

SYL has worked with many young people who have made positive changes in their lives since participating on the project. One young person by the name of Sammi, who is part of the Hounslow project, began with a very negative attitude towards group participation and his personal commitment to the project. Although he has a supportive family he lacks a strong and positive male role model in his life. However, now more than halfway through Sammi has expressed that he is now enjoying the project and can feel the progress he has made during his time on the project so far. This is largely down to one of our volunteers in particular who is very dedicated to Sammi and has spent a lot of time with him encouraging him and showing him how thinking differently can lead to different results.

Another positive story is from a young person by the name of Carrie who was involved in the Camden Personal Health Planner project. Carrie always had a very good attitude to the project and encouraged all the other participants to be positive and attend the sessions regularly. Carrie produced very good work on the project which is currently being published. The fact that all of the young people on the Camden project will be able to say that they are now published is a very good outcome for both the clients and SYL

as it spreads the name of SOVA through more schools and community groups in the borough of Camden.

“At first I couldn’t see how it would come together but it has worked out really well, the handbook draft looks really good”

“I feel proud of myself and all of us for coming every week and producing some very good work”

“I like the volunteers they are funny and they make us laugh, we want to do more work with you guys in the future”

8 Project development

We have partnered with the following organisations

- YMCA National
- Irish Travelling Movement in Britain
- British Museum
- FIPS – Croydon
- Turnaround Centre Croydon
- Potential
- London Action Trust
- Harrow YOT
- Hounslow Connexions
- VU Recordings
- Community Links Bromley
- Parentline Plus
- Men of Valour
- Zero DB
- ITV Fixers

Currently we have a project running in Bexley with six young people who have been referred by the Bexley Looked after Children Department. The project is also in partnership with ITV Fixers (an organisation who helps young people aged 16 – 25 years old to highlight issues which concern them in their own communities) who are helping the young people to create an advert on stereotypes of young people in care. The project, again working with SOVA trained volunteers, will assist the young people in clarifying their ideas, choosing a location to film in and accompanying the young people to travel to Winchester to meet with the ITV Fixers Creative Team.

In this situation SYL has helped ITV Fixers by introducing them to the young people and they use their expertise and their budget to create the activities within the sessions. SOVA trained volunteers attend all sessions to support the young people whilst they develop their skills whilst getting their ideas across.

Positive Quotes

"I've had a look and think the outline looks great/nice and variedYou've put together a really interesting and comprehensive programme" Catherine Olsen, Hounslow Connexions

"SYL is fun and young. The volunteers are all really enthusiastic and they help make the process easy and enjoyable" Coco Edwards, Vu Recordings

Objectives for Next Year

For the next monitoring period the project would like to secure additional funding to support the ideas of the participants, volunteers and staff. The restricted budget has meant that although the activities of the projects throughout London have increased the staffing has not. With additional funding, hopefully an additional member of staff will be recruited especially to manage the administrative duties.

Also, the Project Manager who is currently located in Croydon, is planning to move the project to the London head office to be more centrally located to all of the projects as well as provide an increased opportunity to work with the Development Director to move the project forward in a positive direction.

Regarding the beneficiaries targets, especially in the borough of **Brent** where we have yet to achieve our figures, we carry out focus groups in the borough and use our London Council's representative a resource to network further in the borough. The project will run another employment based project in **Hounslow** in Autumn of 2010 for Hounslow Connexions which will help us also to meet our target of working with 10 young people.

Following on from the art project we are running in partnership with the Harrow YOT for six young offenders as part of the Summer Uni programme, the project which we are planning to run with The British Museum in August of 2010 will also help us to work with more young people in **Brent** and **Harrow**. This project is aimed at increasing the number of young people who use the museum, therefore the young people will learn about the artefacts in the museum and learn how to relate to them, then hold tours and workshops themselves for other young people.

Conclusion

Overall the past year has been very much a period of building upon the findings which were gathered about the beneficiaries in the target areas in the first year. The project has become very popular for new and existing volunteers and the project aims to continue to partner with existing SOVA projects to provide more training and support event/ activities for volunteers who are seeking personal and career development. The participants are becoming a bit more varied and we are engaging more with the hard to reach individuals and are making a very positive impact.

The Project Manager has secured a position representing the voluntary sector on the Turnaround Centre Board created by Croydon Council to provide a integrated service approach to addressing the issue of anti social behaviour in the borough.

Last year many of the activities had a drama approach to them, this year the activities are more educational but still fun, allowing the participants to learn as well as teach others.