

LEGACY

The Croydon Children's Fund

Reflections On Working With Children From BME Groups

November 2007

Croydon Children's Fund

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Projects/Services which have received funding from The Croydon Children's Fund

THEME	PROJECTS	
	STATUTORY	VOLUNTARY
YOUTH CRIME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP), Youth Offending Team (YOT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior Youth Inclusion Project (JYIP), Croydon Youth Development Trust (CYDT) Croydon Young People's Project (CYPP), SOVA RUOK, Victim Support
OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ PLAY/ PREVENTATIVE WORK		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valley Park TOC H – Peppermint Centre Together in Waddon Croydon Community Bus
WITH BME CHILDREN		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beat the Street, Croydon Youth Development Trust (CYDT)
PARTICIPATION		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Croydon Xpress, Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA)
IN SCHOOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching Out, Borough of Croydon (Education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place2be Voluntary Reading Help
WORKING WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Therapy, Primary Care Trust (PCT) (Group A) ADHD Development Worker, Borough of Croydon (Ed Phyc) Willow – Bereavement, Primary Care Trust (PCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garwood Foundation, Rutherford School Croydon Mencap, (Benefits programme)
PARENTING		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parentline Plus (PLP) PATCH Project at Croydon People's Housing Association (CPHA)

Notes:

- Many of the projects/services cross over these themes, but this gives some indication of their primary functions
- All of the projects/services above were funded from the outset in 2003/04 until 2007/08 unless otherwise indicated below
- Beat the Street, Parentline Plus and Voluntary Reading Help were funded from 2003/04 until 05/06
- Place2be was funded from 2003/04 until 06/07
- RUOK received a one off payment in 2004/05 and is being funded in 2007/08

Key Messages From Children’s Fund Projects & Evaluators:

- Once a general service has been established it should then be evaluated to assess whether BME groups are accessing it and whether modifications are needed. Long term funding would be needed to enable general projects to do this.
- There needs to be more training on how to work with BME children and their families in a way that is inclusive yet sensitive.
- Where they are under-represented BME staff and volunteers should be encouraged to apply for positions by ensuring advertising is appropriate and put in the right places. This also applies to the under-representation of BME staff in schools.
- Any events and activities run should be assessed for their accessibility and relevance to people from different BME groups, for example some parents may not have English as a first language whereas their children may, material about the event should include images of people of different ethnicity and advertising should be in appropriate places.
- There needs to be increased BME awareness trainings and support in schools, especially considering the high numbers of exclusions particularly for black boys.
- Raise awareness of supplementary education projects, many attached to faith and church groups as well as other out-of-school activities for children and young people that run activities in a way that is sensitive to BME groups.
- The lack of BME representation on panels and partnerships, such as on the Children’s Trust executive and the CYP Strategic Partnership is noticeable and more effort should be made to get better representation. When considering improving access to support and better representation on panels different issues may need to be considered, such as language, dress and venue.
- The active involvement of parents needs to be encouraged using incentives and culturally appropriate activities.
- There needs to be more sustainable funding for project that are shown to work successfully with BME children and their families.
- Participation in the BME Forum is seen to be helpful by those projects involved and should be encouraged.



Together in Waddon: Dancing

Star Examples From Children's Fund Projects

★ Beat The Street

The key aim of Beat the Street Plus was to improve self-esteem and educational attainment of BME children and to support their transition into secondary school. This was achieved by 'in school' and 'out of school' activity with an intention to change the school environment for children in a positive way. The project has not been able to sustain funding after the discontinuation of funding from the Croydon Children's Fund although some of the work has been continued by the Junior Youth Inclusion Project (JYIP) that is also housed in the Croydon Youth Development Project (CYDP).

The children really liked the workers as they were good fun", they enjoyed the project and thought it had a friendly atmosphere. The activities they liked best were going on outings and using the music studio. One boy said: "There's lots of fun activities and I'm less likely to hang out on the streets". The children would like to have Beat the Street Plus every day, have more staff, outings and use of the music studio.

What difference the project has made to children

Before	After
Quite annoyed, critical, not outgoing.	Quite friendly, helpful, funny, outgoing and will try anything. I have more friends, better opinions. More confident as a person. (Girl 11-13)
I was very quiet and shy - did not want to do things.	I am loved and I know lots of people. (Boy 11-13)
I was moany, quiet and shy, I didn't want to mix with anyone.	More tolerant, not shy, sometimes chatty and friendly. (Girl 11-13)
I was quite cheeky, didn't care about anything & didn't do what I was told.	Act differently - am more mature, into myself, more confident, outgoing and happy. I am also more popular now. (Girl 11-13)
I was on the way to being a juvenile delinquent.	I have turned around. (Boy 11-13)

Children generally said they were more outgoing, confident, happy & calm; many were friendlier and had more friends. The boys focused mostly on the fun they had and being less bored.

★ Reaching Out

Everybody is welcome at the lunchtime clubs that Reaching Out hold, and individual support work is also carried out with children from different BME groups including Indian and Pakistan Asian, Black African-Caribbean and Eastern European. The PALS (Parents As Learning Support) volunteers help the project as they have the language skills and sensitivity to different cultures. The project also runs a bilingual reading group for Tamil speakers with the PALS.

★ Junior Youth Inclusion Project

In the broader stakeholders' evaluation of this project, The Head Teacher and the SENCO of Kingsley Primary School identified the Black lead worker as an excellent and positive role model for the children. This made it acceptable for boys who thought other projects were 'uncool', to go to JYIP. School staff said that JYIP works with small numbers of children but they are the most difficult children and they support their learning. The YOT manager felt that it was an opportunity to work intensively with children and young people, helping to maintain children in education who might otherwise be excluded. Their close partnership with schools was therefore important to maintain. The project works with children of mixed ethnicity although mainly Black British and mixed race AfroCaribbean.



Reaching Out: Working in school with diversity

★ ADHD Development Worker

In order to be inclusive when producing materials about ADHD, children and adults of different ethnicities are represented. This can help to break down some of the barriers that many BME families seem to have about accessing mental health services generally.

Workers need to be aware of the influence of 'shared-family' on a child with ADHD and cultural issues need to be taken into account in finding the most appropriate support. The project links with other organisations that work with ethnic minorities, for example the Black and Asian Foster Carers Association, in order to break down barriers. In planning a fun-day for families, the project would also, for example, invite Zuriya, an African theatre company to do storytelling and drumming. In the football club that has been set up for young people many of the staff are from ethnic minorities, offering positive role models and, in addition to this, there are clear discipline policies – making it clear that racist remarks are unacceptable.

★ Youth Inclusion Support Panel

YISP workers record the ethnicity of the children that they work with in the initial assessment form. They will then take this into account when putting together a tailored support package, for example they may consider the ethnicity of a mentor working with the child and their family, and whether to employ translation services depending on the language spoken at home.

★ TOC H, Valley Park

TOC H work with predominantly Black African-Caribbean, Asian and White children. They ensure that all the children feel that they are treated the same, but consider each activity to ensure that it is sensitive to people of different ethnicities. For example, they have 'bring a dish' days where children learn to cook different types of food originating from different cultures and hairdressing days that cater for all types of hair. Young people are encouraged to share their own ideas and make decisions as to what activities should take place in the centre and therefore take an active role.

Through the provision of a range of activities during term time and holidays, TOC H staff feel that they have reduced the levels of vandalism and graffiti in the area, and that the levels of hostility and aggression between families has drastically reduced.

★ Willow

The Willow team discussed how they work with BME children and their families.

The primary aim of Willow's work is to build children's resilience in grief. This is done by taking into account their culture, ethnicity and religious belief and may be done using any of the following:

- The work involves the use of story, offering the opportunity for each child to tell their unique story - sometimes we tell our stories and sometimes the stories tell us.
- We use instruments and puppets from around the world.
- We use stories from around the world from all cultures.
- Opportunities to step into someone else's shoes through drama and role play.
- Furthermore in order to ensure that our service is inclusive.
- We have developed links with different religious groups within Croydon and visited them to understand how they approach death and support their families and communities.
- We have attending specific cross cultural training eg 'Cross cultural palliative care' that was delivered by a Native American.

★ Patch Project (Parents And Their Children In Harmony), CPHA

This project aims to deliver a culturally appropriate package of support to Black and Minority Ethnic parents and their children to support their transition period from childhood to adolescence. The PATCH principles aim to maintain a harmonious balance between the influences that parents and families have over their children and that of the peers or cliques. Courses for parents and children are mainly aimed at residents of NW Croydon, and are run in Broadgreen. The project encourages parents to share major concerns and problems they are having in their lives so that the issues brought-up are no longer seen as 'silly or wrong' but natural, communal and workable.



Croydon Xpress: Understanding a diversity of views

Tips For Project Workers And Managers

The following analysis was carried out by project workers from a range of Projects funded by the Croydon Children's Fund about what helps and hinders working with children and their families from Black and Ethnic Minorities.

What Hinders Working With Bme Children And Their Families?

- Lack of sustainable funding to support groups that are focussing on BME issues and a lack of resources means that projects can not always respond to differing needs of groups and individuals
- Lack of interpreters and funding for interpretation work
- Lack of diversity on some of the teams of staff
- Many Steering Groups/Partnerships do not have broad/ diverse representation
- Many BME families feel disengaged from statutory services, for example there is stigma attached to mental health services by parents from different ethnicities
- Lack of awareness/ knowledge amongst service providers about different cultural beliefs and issues

What Helps?

- There is a BME forum in Croydon
- Many of Croydon's voluntary sector organisations recognise the importance of engaging with BME communities
- Many of the Children's Fund projects have a good record of including and working positively with BME children
- Where there is access to council's translation services
- Where there are sufficient resources to offer some one to one and small group support
- Increased awareness of BME children and family needs, including cultural awareness
- Where a diversity of children and their families of different ethnicities are included in different materials developed for different issues
- Where staff teams can be representative of some of the children and families that they are trying to reach

Acknowledgements:

This document was written by Vicky Johnson with Robert Nurick, the local evaluators for the Croydon Children's Fund and was based on information from the full evaluation of the Croydon Children's Fund, available from Croydon Voluntary Action, and a workshop run with the following projects:

ADHD Development Worker, Children And Young People's Project, Croydon Xpress, Parentline Plus, TOC H, Valley Park, Place2be, Reaching Out, RUOK, Willow, Youth Inclusion Support Panel

In addition, information was included from:
Beat The Street, Junior Youth Inclusion Project, Together In Waddon

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children's fund

What is the Children's Fund?

The Croydon Children's Fund programme was introduced in 2003. The fund was primarily set up to develop services for children at risk of social exclusion in all local areas, aiming to provide better increased co-ordinated preventive services. Funding is targeted at children and young people aged 5-13 years old and also their families.

The fund is part of the Government's strategy to tackle disadvantage and inequality arising from child poverty and social exclusion, through addressing national priorities including improving school attendance and attainment, improving health (including mental health) and reducing crime and anti social behaviour.

A key element of the programme is that services are locally determined according to local need and planned in consultation with children and families from the outset. In Croydon a comprehensive mapping and consultation exercise was undertaken to find out the views of children, young people and their families and this was used in the development of the initial three-year strategy for the Croydon Children's Fund.

This report was commissioned by the Croydon Children's Fund,
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