

# 03 PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

## PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people were the reason we existed. We were passionate about the impact our partners' work could have on their lives. So over the four years we observed with interest their different approaches and the results they generated. We accumulated copious amounts of learning about what works and what doesn't work, too much to share here. What we found most interesting as we reflected on the 41 organisations we supported was that five ingredients were key in creating an outstanding youth programme, mixed together by a talented team of people.



### 1 A hook

We found that organisations who engage young people in something they enjoy tend to have a greater impact on them. If the activity is something that they would choose to do in their spare time, or that they would love to have the opportunity to try if they could, then half the battle is won.

The young participants are much more likely to turn up to programme and keep turning up. This gives the people behind the programme a better chance to build a relationship with them so they can then benefit them further through things like education, training and mentorship, which might not engage them sufficiently standing alone. Sometimes our partners had to convince teachers and families that a fun activity could have a serious impact.



Our partner **Fight for Peace** use boxing, martial arts and fitness to engage some of the hardest to reach young people in the UK.

Where other interventions have failed, Fight for Peace is successful at engaging these young people because they want to be there, learn how to box and get fit. Once they've built up a relationship, Fight for Peace can then start to support them to improve their education or employment prospects.

### 2 Peer to peer learning

Most of us have seen or experienced school assemblies where an 'inspiring' speaker has been brought in to talk to the students. Perhaps it's about careers. The speaker is a 50 year old man who's career in The City has spanned over three decades. He's got a lot of wisdom to impart but people aren't listening. Why? Because they can't relate to him. Bring on a speaker who's been to their school, just left last year and is talking about what their first job is like, and it's a different story.



By being able to relate to each other, young people are best placed to engage and influence other young people. So we observed that organisations with a model based on young people supporting their peers have a much stronger impact.

Two of our partners are a testament to this. UK start-up **Franklin Scholars** has Year 10 students tutor Year 7 students as they experience the difficult transition to secondary school. While **Balloon Kenya** has successful young Kenyan entrepreneurs who've graduated from their entrepreneurship programme train and mentor new young participants. Both are achieving outstanding results.

## PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

### 3 Stability

We observed that it's crucial to provide young people, particularly those who have experienced trauma, with stability. Young people benefit most from consistent, on-going support provided by one key worker acting as their point of contact on all matters. This establishes trust and enables them to build confidence. If youth workers change regularly, relationships become temporary and trust is impossible to build.

We learnt that it's important not to spread resources too thinly. If support to a young person is provided for a short time and then taken away, it can cause more damage than good. Similarly, it's crucial to ensure that young people continue to be supported beyond the lifetime of the programme, involving trusted partners that can provide follow on support. This will increase the chances of young people continuing to thrive, rather than feeling abandoned.

It's also important to involve other important people in the young person's life, such as their parents and carers. The more they believe the programme is helping the child, the more they will encourage them to attend.

Likewise, in school-based programmes it's crucial to build a strong relationship with the school to ensure their continued support, get feedback on the students' progress and make improvements. That's why it's so important that the programme fits into the school timetable.

"BY BEING ABLE TO RELATE TO EACH OTHER, YOUNG PEOPLE ARE BEST PLACED TO ENGAGE AND INFLUENCE OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE"

### 4 An end product

Sometimes it can be hard for a young person to see the impact of a programme on their life, particularly if the focus is around building character traits or soft skills, things that aren't as tangible as perhaps gaining a qualification or getting a job. But we found that when a programme culminates in an end product, such as an event they're participating in or project they're running, the impact is palpable. By capturing how far they've come, an end product can give young people confidence and motivation to develop even further.



Perhaps no organisation demonstrates this better than **The Big House**, which works with young people who have been through the UK's care system, providing a platform for them to participate in the making of theatre and to have their voices heard. Towards the end of the programme, the young people perform a play that is curated from their life stories to a public audience over several weeks. The play showcases to the young people and others in such a crisp way how far they've travelled, building confidence, skills and bonded as a team along the way.

### 5 Depth

The four ingredients above will only have their desired effect if the programme addresses the root cause that is stopping a young person from flourishing. We observed that programmes achieving transformative change were those that worked with young people individually and tailored their work to address the underlying issues that were preventing them from thriving. This is particularly the case when working with young people with psychological issues. It makes for a more costly programme but a significantly more impactful one.

WERE OUR EXPERIENCES OF **PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE** HELPFUL?  
THERE'S PLENTY MORE FROM WHERE THAT CAME FROM.

INCLUDING INSIGHTS ON...



**BUILDING A VENTURE**



**LEADERSHIP**



**SUPPORTING NON-PROFITS**



**THE WORLD OF FUNDERS**



**FUNDRAISING**



**COMMUNICATIONS**



**WORKING WITH COMPANIES**

