

The Ether Programme



An eight-session programme aimed towards black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young men involved with the youth justice system. This highly motivational and inspirational leadership course directly addresses issues around race and identity and perceptions of self, as well as self-esteem and confidence, attitude and behaviour and independent thinking. Sessions also include discussions around stereotypes, breaking barriers and perceptions of masculinity. This course is very effective in helping young people challenge their existing beliefs and thought patterns, and can be delivered to clusters and small groups of young people from the same area, estate or gang.

Session Overview

- 1. Introduction – what is leadership?*
- 2. Who Am I? – skills, qualities and characteristics*
- 3. Identity & Culture – culture, race, identity & family history*
- 4. Emotional Intelligence – moral compass, dilemmas, peer pressure*
- 5. The Power of Media – messages in media*
- 6. Ether – vision, imagination, creative/independent thinking*
- 7. SMART Planning – setting and achieving goals*
- 8. Reviews & Takeaways – recap & endings*

What are the aims and objectives of the project?

The aim of the programme is to increase the likelihood of positive life outcomes and reduce the likelihood of re-offending by improving a sense of empowerment amongst our beneficiaries. We achieve this aim by affecting two outcomes:

- 1. Increasing a sense of confidence and self-esteem;**
- 2. Enhancing personal and social development.**

What are the measurable outcomes, which you can affect, that contribute to the aim?

- **Confidence and Self-Esteem**
- **Enhancing personal and social development.**

A recent study by the Ministry of Justice indicated that young people who had more frequent contacts, were less likely to re-offend; and when a range of contacts relating to 'cognition & lifestyle' issues were grouped together, the results suggested a reduction in young people's proven re-offending [Wilson E (2013) Youth Justice Interventions – findings from the Juvenile Cohort Study (JCS) Ministry of Justice Analytical Series 2013 [13 Dec 2013].

Our project, which encompasses cognition and lifestyle issues via our range of activities, aims to achieve the following outcomes: 1. Increase confidence and self-esteem and 2. Enhance personal and social development. We believe that by addressing issues around race, culture and identity in the context of a group-work, leadership programme delivered by BME facilitators, we shall be able to achieve these outcomes and in doing so we shall achieve our over-arching outcome of improving the sense of empowerment amongst our beneficiaries. By improving a sense of empowerment we shall meet our aim of contributing to the advancement of positive life outcomes whilst simultaneously reducing the risk of re-offending by young people involved with the youth justice system.

What are the activities that contribute to the outcomes?

Group work programmes

'The Ether Programme' is an 8 session course (2 hours per session) targeted at young people from a BME background involved with the youth justice system aged 10-18. This programme is delivered to young people on court orders supervised by Youth Offending Teams. The programme addresses key themes of personal and social development, race, culture and identity, and by so doing aims to enhance and increase the level of confidence and self-esteem as well as other associated 'soft skills' possessed by the participants.

What assumptions have you made in determining your outcomes?

- Participants are willing to engage (we conduct a screening interview with each potential participant referred onto the programmes as an introduction into the course and seek some level of commitment from them to attend and engage. We then determine their suitability to attend the programme before accepting them onto the programme. This process means we tend to have reasonably good levels of engagement and completion by participants). Participants complete at least 6/8 sessions (75%) of each group work programme.

To what extent was evidence used in the design of your project?

A Framework of Outcomes for Young People by The Young Foundation (2012) contributed to the evidence base for which our project was designed. This extensive and highly informative document outlines a clear approach to outcomes for young people. It is based on work with focus groups (of young people and professionals), as well as a literature review, a survey of tool manufacturers, and a wide-ranging consultation – with government departments, social enterprises, voluntary and community sector organisations and local authority youth services. In essence it underlines the importance of developing social and emotional capabilities of young people (“soft skills”) and presents evidence of how development of such skills supports the achievement of positive life outcomes, including educational attainment, employment and health.

Further resources which greatly contributed to the design of the project was: MoJ “*Understanding Desistance from Crime*” (Rehabilitation Services Group/Professor Shadd Maruna – June 2010” and “*Introducing Desistance: A Guide For Voluntary, Community And Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector Organisations*” (Do It Justice, by Clinks 2013)

What is your evaluation plan?

We shall be using a widely used tool called 'Youth Star' which is one of a family of tools from the 'Outcomes Star' series – developed to support and measure change when working with young people. The Youth Star has been developed for young people in community-based youth work. It maps progress towards a future where they are actively engaged in ways that are meaningful to them and are positive. It is suitable for young people with a range of needs and starting points, including those identified as at risk of exclusion from education or involvement in criminal behaviour and those in need of additional support in the first steps towards employment.

The questionnaire style approach of the tool covers key areas which provide an ample evaluation model for us to measure both our outcomes of increasing levels of confidence and self-esteem and enhancing personal and social development.

For those participating in group work programmes we shall collect this data 1 week before project start date and again during last session of the project. The data shall be collected by either the Wipers facilitator or YOT Caseworker and shall be analysed by the Wipers Project Manager. More information can be found at <http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk>

The Ether Programme - Evaluation Plan

Outcome	Indicator	Data Source & you will collect this?	When will it be collected?	Who will collect this?	What proportion of people will you gather this from, and how will they be selected?
enhance personal and social development skills	Outcome star 'Youth Star' questionnaire	Youth Star questionnaire completed by participants	Baseline: 1 week before project start date. Endline: during last session of the project.	Wipers group work facilitator or YOT caseworker	All participants will complete this questionnaire. We expect a response rate of 90%.

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