

Black Development Agency

REACH Event Report

Raising Aspirations & Attainment of Black Boys & Young Black Men



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1. Introduction

1.1 CONTRACTUAL CONTEXT OF THE EVENT

The purpose of this report is to inform the sponsors BTEG and the sub contractor BSWN of the REACH event undertaken by BDA. To support the work for this event BDA commissioned to an external project manager, the author of this report.

1.2 NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

The new REACH programme, which was launched nationally by Hazel Blears in December 2008 in response to an Independent report “**on raising the aspirations and attainment of Black boys and young Black men**” published by Department for Communities and Local Government.

1.3 NATIONAL ROLE MODELS

The REACH programme is designed to support and inspire Black boys and young Black men to raise their aspirations, attainment and achievement. The Reach programme has National positive role models who also took part in the event. The REACH National role models go into schools and youth projects to talk about their personal journeys. They encourage young people to set their sights high and will offer advice and support.

2. Methodology

2.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Black Development Agency in Partnership with Black South West Network & Black Training Enterprise Group held an event to develop the community engagement strand of the REACH program.

2.2 UTILISING EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Black Development Agency has over the years gathered local intelligence from a grass roots and developed networks and relationships with many youth and community groups via its capacity building role.

2.3 OUTREACH & CONSULTATIONS

It was decided to approach youth and community workers who already have existing relationships with Black boys and young Black men. Within limited time, difficult operating resource constraints; outreach and consultations targeting key stakeholders was undertaken.

2.4 INCENTIVES & GETTING 'BUY IN' FOR THE EVENT

The event gave opportunities to local Black boys and young Black men to showcase themselves as artists and role models sharing their experiences. Incentives such as vouchers for attendance and prizes for Business and entrepreneurial ideas were also built into the event to give it some financial worth and value for participation in the event.

2.5 SUPPORT FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Much support was gained from the already stretched Youth and Community workers/volunteers and young people; despite reservations that more time and process with the young people participating in the preparation and build up for the event was needed. This was deemed as best practice and future events can become even more successful.

3. Event

3.1 PURPOSE OF THE EVENT

The purpose of the event was to afford an opportunity for the mentoring aims and objectives of the Reach Program to be experienced through an engaging workshop- styled seminar, with an emphasis on the recipients interacting and sharing their stories with the role models.

3.2 VENUE

The event took place on Saturday 20th June 2009 at 2pm to 5pm at the Centre from Employment and Enterprise Development (CEED) premises 97-107 Wilder Street, Ujima House, St Paul's, Bristol BS2 8QU.

3.3 THE AGENDA

- 2.20 pm Introductions – overview of the day Rana Dildar Singh (BDA)
- 2.30 pm Pain Child (Dwain Henry) Poetry local artist from I AM ENTERTAINMENT
- 2.20 pm Delia Edwards BTEG Introduction Reach programme
- 2.30 pm National Role models Speaker Junior Crawford Brown (Probation Officer).
- 2.45 pm National Role models Speaker Alex Beresford (Local TV Presenter)
- 3.00 pm We need to talk (Break outs – workshops)
 - Dreams, ambitions, success and achievements
 - Barriers we may face
 - Suggestions for solutions
- 3.50 pm Local Rapper POET SALSA EDWARDS
- 4.00pm Tea refreshments break (selection of three key we take forward)
- 4. 15pm What did we discover – feedback to main group from Role Models
 - The dreams ambitions success and achievements
 - The barriers we need to overcome
 - Suggestions for solutions
- 4. 45. Luke I am Entertainment musical production by local artists
- 4.50 Competition time
- 4. 55 Event evaluation closing comments and way forward

4. Evaluation

4.1 ATTENDANCE OF EVENT

From voucher registrations 49 young persons were paid and further 30 had agreed to be invoiced via their youth and community worker. This makes the total of young persons at the event 79. This figure is deemed the event successful in terms of quantity but the quality of work also done on the day indicates success. The lead Development Worker and author of this report was constantly throughout the day gathering information and feedback from the young people and other stakeholders.

4.2 FACILITATORS (National Role Models)

The Facilitator's stories and practical working with the young people was effective as it seemed to resonate with the young people; some young people even shared their own experiences and disappointments with the facilitators and within their groups. It was apparent from observing the workshops that the facilitators were building rapport and trust with the audience.

4.3 YOUNG PEOPLE FEELING INSPIRED

This was an opportunity to meet with talented and inspiring black boys and black young men between the ages of 14 and 24. The event also provided participants with opportunities to develop new connections and links with other young people as well as youth and community workers. Networking was a high point through-out this event! One example is that a development worker was approached by some young people 'bubbling' with excitement about the possibility of developing a social enterprise idea for a music/entertainment and production project; he was then given information and contacts to develop this idea.

4.4 WORKSHOPS FLIP CHART INFORMATION

Group 1 DELIA BTEG

ASPIRATIONS

- Car licence – by next year 2010
- Start Uni by next year 2010
- Drivers licence in the next 10 months 2010
- Car Mechanic by next year
- Achieve 11 GCSE's (grade A to B's) by 2010
- Start A levels by next September at College Green
- Change behaviour in school this September
- Achieve better grades in school
- Finish Masters degree

- Human Rights Lawyer
- Further studies by 2011
- Achieve a medal in tennis

ISSUES BARRIERS

- Peer pressure
- Yourself
- Lack of self confidence
- Laziness
- Culture
- Procrastination
- Family – lack of support
- Self Belief
- Money
- Race
- Technology

SOLUTIONS TO BARRIERS

- Be smart
- Set Smart goals/targets
- Planning
- Family support
- Lifestyle
- Work/money
- Research
- Not being too proud
- Studying
- Encouragement
- Inspiration /determination
- Believing in yourself

Group 2 ALEX BERESFORD

ASPIRATIONS

- Manager of a company
- University student
- Business Manager
- Doctor
- Lawyer
- Help others Outreach worker
- Role model
- Own business
- Travel the world
- Start a family

- Skys the limit
- Learn a new language
- GSE's
- A levels
- Mangers
- Buy a car
- Having a job
- Higher Maths set
- Finishing school

ISSUES/BARRIERS

- Race /Racism
- Peer pressure
- Self Esteem
- Culture different backgrounds
- Language
- Social skills
- School and teachers
- Job interviews
- Prejudice

SOLUTIONS TO BARRIERS

- Unity
- Parents
- Find the root of the problem
- Find a role model
- Mentors for the children and parents
- More Black teachers
- More Black History lessons
- Awareness
- Have a better understanding
- Visual role models

Group 3 JUNIOR SAUNDERS

ASPIRATIONS

- Electrician
- Engineer
- Teacher
- Doctor /medicine
- Managing Director (working in media)
- Good person (Film Director, Chief Executive Officer or Stage Manager)
- Good mother running Self Employed Clothing Business

- Good Father, husband and role model
- Lawyer
- Accountant
- GP/Surgeon
- Politician/Doctor
- Footballer/Electronics – good behaviour

ISSUES/BARRIERS

- Recession reduction of good jobs
- Racism and colour – people's assumptions prejudice about a Black man/Asian Woman
- Language – English not first language
- Lack of self belief
- Friends, peer pressure
- Social life
- No qualifications not recognised in UK
- Money (lack of money)
- Lack of support from family
- Culture – beliefs, dress code, religion (preconceived ideas and lack of understanding from society).
- Lack of motivation and drive
- Family life – children /caring responsibilities.

SOLUTIONS TO BARRIERS

- Increase qualifications work experience
- Demonstrating the personal value of the individual
- Learn English- go to classes- integrate into community
- Build confidence – extra training, raise own self esteem
- Choices – making the right choices, leave your friends, get outside support for your you and your family
- Stop and or reduce partying, prioritise your activities.

4.5 EXTERNAL INDEPENT EVALUATION

The BDA worker and author of this report worked closely with Jonathan Miller of ETHNOS an externally contracted Consultant who undertook a more thorough and in depth evaluation process working across all stakeholders of this event.

5. Recommendations

5.1 SELF HELP & EMPOWERMENT

Further consultation and communications to develop locality support across sectors by mapping local services/linkages available.

5.2 LOCAL RESOURCES

Once the spark has been ignited young people, parents' family and communities need to be able to offer "On going buddying and mentoring working with local role models. This could be a localised support group or network of activists dealing and providing information on localised issues.

5.3 SPECIFIC RESOURCES

To be supported by having specifically targeted funds and resources for local buddying mentoring volunteer programmes to feed into national support programmes such as the REACH project and other relevant bodies/structures .

5.4 LINK LOCAL TO NATIONAL

Support the development of national coordinating learning body/umbrella so as share best practice in this area.