

Report on the final year of three-year Tudor Trust funding to April 2011 Community Resolve's senior youth conflict worker

Over the past three years, Jayson Morrison, our senior youth conflict worker, has reached an astonishing number of young people and adults in Bristol. He has worked with:

- Primary school children aged 5-11 (400+)
- Secondary school pupils aged 11-17 (6000+)
- Young unemployed and marginalized youth on the streets aged 16-25 (600+)
- Young offenders aged 16-25 (250+)
- Adults (1000+)

He has done this through a great variety of delivery approaches, including

- workshops and whole school assemblies;
- targeted groupwork and 1-1 mentoring for those at risk of offending / already in youth justice;
- outreach and street support
- weapons, gangs and self development workshops with young offenders
- training in conflict skills, understanding and management for adults working with young people.

His impact on the city has been noted across key agencies – *'I have the utmost respect for Jayson'* said one senior manager in Bristol City Council Youth Services in May 2011 – and he continues to influence both face-to-face youthwork and citywide strategy around most hard-to-reach young people. He was a leading voice at an information day for city councillors on youth street crime and associated gang issues (January 2011), bringing a group of six practitioners and young people to present to some 60 senior managers from statutory agencies, the council and police. He was also instrumental in collecting much of the data that informed our report on youth gangs for the city – see the pdf *'It's all about the here and now'*, attached to this report.

He is currently the lead worker at our Fridays@Mill project, a bold and innovative initiative to draw the young street drug dealers off the streets of central Bristol and get them thinking more positively. This is a age group that has long been ignored by the city and police – *'let's just write these ones off and work with the next generation'*, said one community policeman at a local strategy meeting in March 2011 – but after months of careful outreach engagement, they are now engaging with our team all day on Fridays in increasing numbers (see 6-month Fridays@Mill report, attached). As Jayson recently said: *'this is the work I want to do, I've always wanted to do'* – and it has taken six years for the organization and the project to develop to a point where it can do so in a sustainable, multi-agency fashion.

Over the next few pages, we outline the outreach and associated project work delivered by Jayson and those who he has brought into the project, which gives a flavour of the wide-ranging impact he has and his team have had in a complex part of town.

Street-based teams

From Mar-Sep 09, Community Resolve ran a successful pilot of street-based work based on conflict resolution approaches. Our team explored how young people and adults share public spaces in identified anti-social behavior (ASB) hotspots. By working between young people and adults, we aimed to shift conflict dynamics as well as giving alienated young people a voice. This pilot was then funded for a further year – 2010-11 – until YCAP funding was withdrawn in April 2011 by the current government.



It was clear from the pilot that very few young people would be on the streets during the winter months, so we divided the year into two types of activity:

Outreach work April–Oct 2010 Following consultation with citywide partners and statutory agencies, the outreach team focused on specific areas of tension for up to 10 weeks at a time. They held conversations with young people, residents, VCS and statutory agency workers, shopkeepers and small businesses.

Targeted follow-on projects, Nov 2010-Mar 2011

Outreach work

Hillfields and St George *Numbers of young people worked with over 10 weeks - 187*

We were deployed into this area as there had been tensions in the community for some time due to the actions of groups of young people out on the streets, including race hate crime. In the autumn of 2009 Shevon Wilson, aged 17, was fatally stabbed in St George.

In Hillfields, protracted cuts to youth provision had left young people feeling that there is little there for them. Many travelled to other areas to access provision - in Kingsway, at the Old School in Kingswood, and at 'Made for Ever' in South Gloucestershire. It became clear to the team that 10 weeks was only long enough to signpost young people to positive activities that were already taking place, but that it was not enough time to develop lasting relationships. The need for outreach workers and more youth provision was particularly evident after Shevon Wilson's death, which impacted both young people and the wider community.



Southmead *Numbers of young people worked with – 156*

We were deployed into this area as there had been tensions in the community for some time due to the actions of groups of young people out on the streets, drinking and being involved in ASB. The Panorama programme on TV in March 2010 showed actual footage of race hate attacks committed by young people from the area.

Villiers Road/Stapleton Road, Easton

Numbers of young people worked with - 394

We worked in Easton between June-October 2010 because of a rise in tensions between young people on opposite sides of the M32. While we were working with residents, traders and young people, a shooting and then the fatal stabbing of Abdi Mahmood (July 2010) took place on Stapleton Road.

Targeted follow-on projects

Learning from our experiences in the 2009 pilot – that such short term interventions are useful for collecting views and ideas but don't leave a lasting legacy - we used information gathered on the streets to design a linked programme of early intervention, preventative and support work in the Easton area. This included a new provision at the Mill Youth Club for young drug dealers from Stapleton Road (Fridays@Mill – see pdf report, attached), and a cross-motorway relationship-building schools photography project.

“For me now it's craziness being on road. I used to do it, but then I grew up a bit and I realised that I had 200-400 sheets that day in my pocket, but when it was gone I would have nothing and then I had to go do it all again, and nothing to show for it. It was just 'liquid assets'. I changed. When they are hitting 30 and they have nothing to show for all that time, no house, no car, no girlfriend, where do they go then?”

*Mixed race male, 18yrs,
April 2011, Fridays@Mill*

'My New Friends' Photography Project

This 6-week project was devised by Community Resolve to start a long process of challenging entrenched negative views about the 'other' held by families from Easton and St Pauls. The project aimed to challenge the imaginary idea of territory and boundaries, and to highlight the similarities and positive elements of both communities, across the M32 divide. Initial interviews with Year 6 pupils at Cabot Primary School (in St Pauls) and Millpond Primary School (in Easton) highlighted the challenges, with children asserting that people in the other community were dangerous, would give them poisoned sweets, were horrible, were in gangs.

Our conflict workers ran four sessions with children in their last year at each school, introducing them to the use of cameras, and then bringing them together to explore the negative perceptions of their areas and cultures. Working in the same group over several weeks, children from both schools explored the areas together, taking each other to their favourite places and encouraging friendship and new relationships.

One key aim of the project was to also take the learning back into the children's families. To bring the parents from both communities together, we ran a shared exhibition launch at St Werburghs Centre, and asked parents from both schools to come and see their child's work. We catered for parents of all 43 children which took part, and were surprised and disappointed when only 12 parents arrived. However, this provided key learning for us in terms of working with schools, and ensuring they understand the importance of reaching out to their wider community.

