

Youth at Risk's Track Record 1992 to 2008

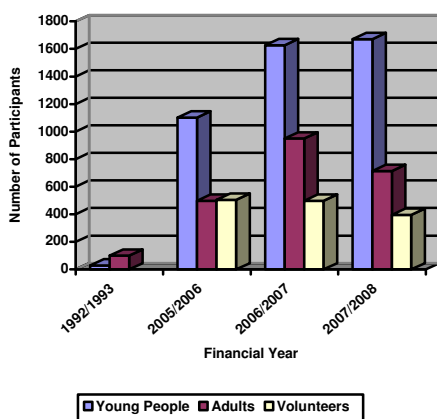
Introduction

Youth at Risk has been delivering transformational programmes for young people and the professionals who support them within communities, schools, prisons, long term unemployment programmes and local authorities for 16 years. Our track record is one of being powerfully innovative, enabling change to occur for individuals, groups and communities, and most importantly delivering successful programmes that have demonstrable impact.

How many people do we work with?

Between the launch of Youth at Risk in 1992 and the end of our most recent financial year (June 2008) we have worked with in excess of **8,850** young people and **8,900** adults.

Figure 1: Participant Numbers for Youth at Risk Programmes from 1992/1993 to 2007/2008



This began with one programme a year, of approximately 30 young people and 100 adults, to **1671** young people, **397** volunteers and **715** professionals in the last financial year. This is a **48%** increase in the number of young people we have worked with and a **44%** increase of adult participants compared to two years ago (see Figure 1).

In the last financial year we worked on **37** programmes, including **11** new initiatives.

Measuring Quality

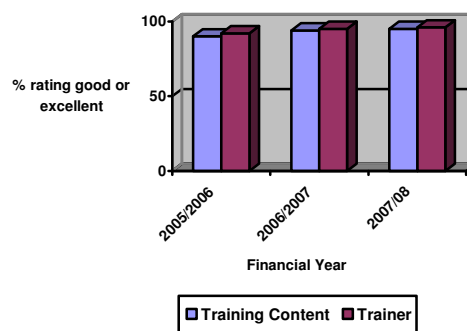
From July 2007 to June 2008 our evaluation showed us that:

95% of participants who were asked rated our training content as excellent or good.

96% of participants who were asked said the quality of our trainers is excellent or good.

Participant feedback shows our programmes consistently deliver to a high standard and we increase this quality mark each year (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Youth at Risk Participant Feedback on Content of Training and Quality of Trainers 2005/2006 to 2007/2008



Who are our Clients?

We have delivered our **Coaching for Communities** programme for **22** clients (mainly Local Authorities), including 4 internationally, culminating in over **40** of these projects being run.

Additionally in the last 4 years we have created **13** bespoke community transformation programmes for Local Authority clients, funded through a combination of the Big Lottery, charitable trusts and local government. Several of our programmes are based on utilising 'five star' experiences such as classical ballet (as was demonstrated in our programme **Ballet Changed My Life; Ballet Hoo!** televised by Channel 4). These combine our personal development and coaching with the opportunity for young people to try and test their new skills through a discipline – be it the arts, sport or business enterprise. These programmes have enabled our transformations to reach even more young people, leaving a lasting legacy of self esteem,

motivation, skills and focus for young people to reach and sustain their potential. Our most recent five star programme is **Field of Dreams** – working with Saracens Rugby Football Club to offer young people in Luton transformational opportunities through quality training in rugby in addition to our personal development and coaching.

Since our education programmes – **Coaching for Success** - started in 1999, we have worked with over **60** schools and colleges, and have secured 3 major Department for Children Schools and Families contracts in this time to deliver this type of work. We always have a waiting list of schools requiring funding. This year, we have expended our education work into universities, with our Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills funded **Inspiring Student Leaders Project**. This pilot programme is offering undergraduate students at three institutions an opportunity to develop their leadership, personal, social and emotional skills, and their connections to campus and community through participating in our personal development training, having access to a corporate volunteer coach and to develop a community-based project.

Since their start in 1999 our **Coaching for Employment** programmes have worked with **4** Local Authority clients, 2 of these on a major scale, delivering programmes for up to 9 years that offer skills to support people into sustainable employment.

Through our criminal justice programmes – **Coaching for Release**, we have worked in **7** young offenders' institutes / secure training centres with local government and corporate sponsorship, including the generous support of KPMG. Through these programmes we have been able to support young people to develop social, emotional and resilience skills that help them to keep on track upon release and maximise opportunities for development within the institution. We also enhance the skills of professionals within YOIs to support young people in developing their resilience.

Distinct from training adults within our various youth programmes we also deliver training for adults: specifically to youth professionals through our **Coaching for Professionals** programmes, to parents and guardians and other community supporters – in order to impact on their ability to make a difference with young people and within their communities.

Over the last 2 years we have delivered these stand alone trainings for **13** clients, including Local Authorities and other charities.

Where have we worked?

Between 1992 and June 2008 we have worked in the following areas:

Greater London: Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Brent, Bromley, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Edgware, Enfield, Haringey, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Sutton, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Wandsworth.

North West: Greater Manchester, Knowsley, Lancashire, Liverpool, Salford, Sefton.

North East: Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, Sunderland.

Yorkshire and Humber: Doncaster, Leeds, Sheffield.

West Midlands: Birmingham, Brinsford, Burton-on-Trent, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall, Warwickshire, Wolverhampton.

East Midlands: Grantham, Leicester and Leicestershire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

East: Basildon, Bedford, Clacton-on-Sea, Chelmsford, Colchester, Luton, Southend-on-Sea, Watford.

South East: Farnborough, Medway, Portland, Portsmouth, Slough, Southampton.

South West: Bournemouth, Bristol.

Wales: Flintshire.

Scotland: Isle of Skye, Polmont.

Northern Ireland: Belfast.

International: Australia, Belgium, Cayman Islands, Holland, Kosovo, Sweden.

About Youth at Risk's Finances

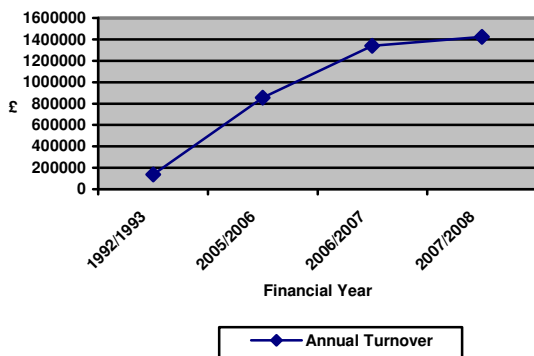
In the 2007 to 2008 financial year, our turnover was just over £1,423,500 compared to £139,000 in our first full year of business (1992 to 1993). This represents a growth of just over **924%** since 1992/93 and a **66%** increase since 2005/06 (see Figure 3).

Our Outcomes

Achieving our 'Basic' Outcomes: Raising Social, Emotional and Resilience Skills.....

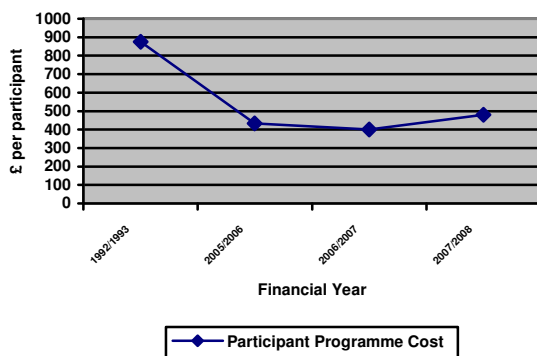
"I have learnt how to communicate so much better with all different kinds of people and how to stick to my word....And when hard times do cross your path I can tell myself to keep going and that will help me in my future, I'm sure!"

Figure 3: Youth at Risk's Annual Turnover 1992/1993, 2005/2006, 2006/2007 and 2007/08



The average cost of providing a programme for a participant in 2007 to 2008 was just **£480** compared to an estimated £875.58ⁱ in our first full year of business (see Figure 4). This shows that whilst growing the organisation, we have reduced the relative overheads and kept increasing the proportion of our income that directly benefits participants. The costs per programme participant this year were a slight increase from the costs in the last 2 years (see Figure 4), which reflects our drive to work more intensively with harder to reach and more disaffected young people, together with our work to improve our quality assurance processes.

Figure 4: Youth at Risk's Average Programme Cost per Participant 1992/1993, 2005/06, 2006/2007 and 2007/08



We believe that holistically developing young peoples' social, emotional and resilience skills will impact on other outcomes highlighted within current social policy agendas, such as educational achievement, sustained employment, pro-social relationship building and behaviour. Often, the development of social, emotional and resilience skills, such as high self esteem, high aspirations for the future, a sense of control over internal actions, being able to handle negative experiences effectively, having a committed family adult, having access to a committed adult outside of the family, resisting involvement in anti-social networks, are seen as 'soft outcomes' within many programmes. We see them as our key 'basic' programme outcomes essential to tackling issues at their root cause.

Dartington Social Research Unit's evaluation of Youth at Risk's **Coaching for Communities (CfC) programme in Coventry** clearly found that:

".... improvements occurred largely in areas specifically targeted by CfC, notably social and anti-social behaviour, family and social relationships, and physical and psychological health (including drug and alcohol misuse). There was also an indication.... that improvements were related to dose, that is the more of CfC received by the child the better the outcome."ⁱⁱⁱ

Our programmes change self perception and steer decisions and actions in a way that helps young people to take responsibility for themselves and their future.

IPSOS MORI has highlighted our **Ballet Hoo!** Programme as an example of good practice in developing 'adult to adult' relationships with young people - to encourage them to develop

positive attitudes, giving them the power to make decisions and judgements and enabling them to undertake constructive goal setting.^{iv}

“The coaching training provided by Youth at Risk has allowed our students to investigate different ways of thinking and to consider a whole new approach to resolving issues. In the well planned, safe and supportive environment, students were encouraged to openly and honestly share their goals with the rest of the group. They were challenged in a positive way to consider both their strengths and weaknesses in light of their future goals. Students developed confidence as they worked productively with other members of the group to learn and model what a coaching relationship is... The nature of the training really encourages students to think and question. Consequently, the philosophical aspects of the course can prove an academic and mental challenge to even the brightest student.”^v

Achieving ‘Ultimate Outcomes’

As part of our programme development, we agree with our clients what the ultimate outcomes for young people, adults and communities will be. Below, we have outlined examples of how our programmes have achieved these.

Improving Educational Achievement.....

“The children have articulated the most fantastic achievements, personally I’ve learned to focus on the positive and look for opportunities & possibilities where previously there appeared to be none and has taught me how to deal with individual pupils on different levels. Pupils are more confident, have higher self-esteem and are more focused in lessons. Feedback from teachers suggests that the participants are more active in their lessons and relationships are better.”^{vi}

In Leaps & Bounds (**Ballet Hoo!**), a community-based project combining Youth at Risk’s powerful transformation training with the professional discipline of classical Ballet, over 150 disaffected young people from across Birmingham and the Black Country re-engaged with their potential and their goals to achieve a number of impressive outcomes, including:

- **70%** of young people completed the life goals they set at the beginning of the project;

- **48** young people engaged with a BTEC qualification in performing arts. 38 gained certificate and 10 diploma level, which, for some, was the first and only qualification they had achieved;
- Sandwell recruited the most disadvantaged cohort of young people. Of their cohort **68%** are now involved in full-time education.

“The programme helped me achieve a lot and I can clearly see me improving in terms of my attitude and dedication.”^{vii}

Our Coaching for Success work for **London Challenge** and the 14 to 19 reform agenda demonstrates our ability to engage with young people to make more of the educational opportunities presented to them, raising their attainment and engagement with educational provision. Over the three years of the programme from July 2005 to June 2008 in our **London Challenge** programme:^{viii}

- **59%** of pupils’ expected grades improved since participating in the programme;
- **66%** of pupils’ behaviour/attitude improved since participating in the programme;
- **50%** of pupils’ attendance/punctuality improved since participating in the programme;
- **65%** of pupils’ relationships with teachers improved since participating in the programme.

In 2007/08 **92%** of pupils rated their results from the programme as good or excellent.

“Funded through London Challenge, Abbotsfield School has had a successful working partnership with Youth at Risk for a total of three years and are currently planning Coaching for Success input for the coming academic year. The school recently came out of Special Measures and has now been judged ‘good’ in all categories. It has been part of our strategy to develop close relationships with other agencies and Youth at Risk has played a part in our journey towards improvement, helping our pupils improve both their motivation to succeed and their relationships within the school community. We’ve been very fortunate to have had first class trainers from Youth at Risk working with our Year 10 pupils and are grateful for the support we’ve had from the numerous volunteer coaches who have mentored and made a commitment to our pupils.”^{ix}

Enhancing Employability.....

Our work in Merseyside shows how our Coaching for Employment programmes provide those with a history of unemployment a new approach to work so they break self-defeating cycles.

We have worked with both **Knowsley** Borough Council and **Liverpool** City Council to attract more young people into employment and business and enable them to learn how to maintain employment through developing themselves and their approach to working life. In Liverpool this has included a particular focus on providing a transition route from education to employment for disabled young adults and attracting people from Asian, Yemeni and Somali communities to particular occupational areas.

From a random sample of young people and adults who engaged with our Coaching for Employment programmes in our 2007/2008 **Liverpool City Council programme**, 81% of participants assessed themselves as improving in seeing new possibilities and opportunities, 71% improved in self confidence, accepting support, and learning new skills.

Addressing Youth Crime and Justice.....

Evaluating our **Enterprise Gateway Partnership** working with young men in a Youth Offenders Institution, Lancaster University's Applied Social Science Unit for Research (2007) highlighted that Youth at Risk has, "*considerabl[e]... experience... at motivating and engaging the most difficult to reach young people.*"^x

The report found that through the training, young men showed subtle changes in their behaviour and attitudes,^{xi} including being:

- more confident and having increased self esteem;
- able to concentrate for longer periods; able to maintain greater focus and engagement during 1:1 tasks and discussions; less distracted by other things going on; more able to control themselves in the face of peer distraction;
- able to maintain boundaries for increasingly longer periods;
- able to consider 'life goals' for the first time;

- able to show increased motivation and willingness to try something new to generate new ways of behaving;
- able to ask for help;
- more positive about group and team work and independent working;
- able to utilise space for movement to process information; able to use increased practical participation; able to express emotions through body movement.^{xii}

Furthermore, through the mentoring, breakthroughs for the young men included:

- keeping on the straight and narrow;
- applying to access further education;
- talking over family issues in search of resolution;
- working back in family business;
- wanting to return to live with mum and dad;
- attending all appointments.^{xiii}

'**Wrosne**' – a recent programme based on the Wrens Nest and Priory estates in Dudley has been targeted at increasing community cohesion and impacting on some of the most alienated young people within those communities. Since the project began in June 2007 the police have reported a significant drop in criminal activity on the Wrens Nest Estate. In the year prior to the programme commencing (2006 / 2007) the reported figures were in excess of 100 offences per month and the trend was that this was rising. Since the commencement of the 'Wrosne' programme these have dropped and are currently at 60 – 80 per month. Sgt Holder, a local police officer has expressed her view that the project is a significant reason why there has been such a dramatic drop.

Tackling Prejudice and Conflict.....

Our work in Northern Ireland, Kosovo and with the Windsor Fellowship demonstrate our ability to work cross culturally and with groups who are politically, culturally and religiously divided to create a commitment to working and living together.

Our **Kosovo Conflict Resolution programme** worked with representatives from both the Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbian communities at both community and political levels. As a result of this programme these two factions are working together on pilot projects to create community cohesion. An article in the New York Times reported:

"[The project] wanted to challenge the participants to see one another not as "terrorist" or "oppressor," but as human beings, Ms. McGuire said. To a surprising degree, the effort worked. Xhavit Haliti, a founding member of the Kosovo Liberation Army, attended the encounter and found himself won over. "I would recommend it for all the party leaders," he said. By the end of the week, he said, he and his Serbian counterparts were going out to restaurants together."

An independent evaluation of the **West Belfast Coaching for Communities** project by Oxford University concluded:

"The West Belfast Youth at Risk pilot programme has demonstrated that it is possible for even the most alienated and disaffected young people to radically change the direction of their lives and begin to make a positive contribution to their community. The young people who participated in the programme were believed to be beyond help. Intervention by statutory agencies and the local community had made no impact on their anti-social behaviour prior to the Youth at Risk programme."

Engaging Communities & Professionals.....

Excellent, respectful, encouraging, positive, understanding and pushing your thoughts outside the 'box' you create for yourself. Facilitating the possibilities for me.^{xiv}

Youth at Risk has learnt over our 16-year history that change processes must involve the support structures around a young person in order to create sustainable change and to enable young people and their communities to develop together.

Our work with communities, such as in **Bournemouth, Coventry and Knowsley** shows our ability to regenerate communities economic and educational prospects in a sustainable manner.

Our work with professionals within **Southend** shows our ability to transform working practices across Children's and Young Peoples' Services in a holistic manner, such that professionals have new insights into supporting their young people and developing creative and constructive relationships.

Southend have been the first Local Authority to commit to providing a change programme for every member of a service. We have trained over 125 members of staff of Specialist Children's Services, including the Head of Service and this year we are commencing a community transformation programme in one local neighbourhood. In a recent Joint Area Review, nearly all staff the inspectors met spoke about the training and the benefits they had gained both personally and for the service. The inspectors commented upon the very positive impact, and how it appeared to have helped in establishing a positive culture and way forward. As a result of this work we have already started a programme working directly with Looked After young people in Southend.

"The programme is a very powerful tool for change for the young people and the coaches involved. It is a very life affirming experience and has a massive potential to change the lives and aspirations of those involved."^{xv}

During 2007/2008, we were commissioned by Northern Ireland's **Eastern Drugs and Alcohol Coordination Team** to enhance the skills of youth professionals tackling drug and alcohol problems from across the area.

Following our programme, **all** staff said they could see new ways to provide deeper support for young people they work with, new ways to achieve breakthroughs with young people, felt confident at coaching effectively and were able to support young people through mistakes. **96%** felt more confident in holding young people to account and **92%** felt more confident in communicating in challenging situations

I found the training a useful tool which I can use in both my personal and professional life. I believe I can benefit others by putting this into practice and impact on the lives of the staff and young people I work with.^{xvi}

The external evaluation of our **Enterprise Gateway Partnership** programme found that the programme also brought about positive change in the prison officers, staff, education, programme partners and mentors participating in the programme, through:

- improved understanding about supporting young people and ways of doing so;

- analysing training styles and the challenges of planning and implementing a new training programme in a prison; and
- an appreciation of the importance of team work.^{xvii}

"It was fun and exciting. I learned new skills and new choices and found ways to move towards my goals ... I loved it and it has helped me overcome my fears."^{xviii}

Need More Information?

For more information about Youth at Risk's approach, please www.youthatrisk.org.uk, or contact Peter Warren, Head of Marketing at: peter@youthatrisk.org.uk.

For more information about Youth at Risk's impact, please see www.youthatrisk.org.uk/evaluation, or contact Esther Gillespie, Development Manager at: esther@youthatrisk.org.uk.

i For 1992/93, programme costs per participant have been calculated by dividing Youth at Risk's total expenditure by the number of programme participants. For 2005/06 and 2006/07 the programme costs per participant have been calculated by adding together charitable activities expenditure on programmes and support plus the cost of raising funds and dividing this figure by the number of programme participants. Please note this is a change in how we have calculated programme costs per participant in previous years (where we have taken turnover as the figure). This change is as a result of our ongoing evaluation review and reflects our drive to ensure our figures are transparent and in line with sector practice.

ii Young participant, Ballet Hoo! Programme evaluation, 2006. See www.youthatrisk.org.uk.

iii Berry, V., Axford, N., Little, M., and Cusick, G.R., 2007, An Evaluation of Youth at Risk's Coaching for Communities Programme, Dartington Social Research Unit, pp.9-10

iv IPSOS MORI, 2007, Young People and British Identity, on behalf of the Camelot Foundation

v Evaluation of Youth at Risk's London Challenge Programme, 2008, Simon Payne, Teacher, Longford Community School. See www.youthatrisk.org.uk.

vi Evaluation of Youth at Risk's London Challenge Programme, 2008, Audrey Morris, staff co-ordinator, Bethnal Green Technology College

vii Year 10 pupil, Bethnal Green Technology College, London Challenge, 2007/2008

viii Note: not all pupils needed to improve in all areas.

ix Patricia Kelly, Assistant Headteacher, Abbotsfield School for Boys, London Challenge, 2007/2008

x Lancaster University's Applied Social Science Unit for Research (2007) Evaluation of the Enterprise Gateway Partnership, working with young men in Lancaster Farms Youth Offenders Institution. See www.youthatrisk.org.uk.

xi The evaluators could not confidently attribute all impact just to this programme as participants were also undertaking other activities and there was no control group. However, the behaviours listed are those changes they observed during the training.

xii Wilson & Simmill-Binning, *ibid.*, pp.2-3, 55-56, 58.

xiii Wilson & Simmill-Binning, *ibid.*, pp.55-56.

xiv Youth Professional from Youth at Risk's Warwickshire Coaching for Professionals Programme

xv Performance Coach, Crofton School, London Challenge, 2007/2008

xvi EDACT youth professional for Youth at Risk's Coaching for Professionals Programme, Feb – March 2008

xvii Wilson & Simmill-Binning, *ibid.*, pp.2, 19-26.

xviii Year 10 pupil, Kingsdale School, London Challenge, 2007/2008