



Thornton Lodge Action Group



KNIFE CRIME COMMUNITY FUND

01-Aug - 2018 to 31- Mar- 2019



Home Office



NIRVANA FITNESS

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The following evaluation report is part fulfilment of our contract with the Home Office Serious Violent Unit which allocated funds from the Knife Crime Community Fund.

The project set out to lower knife crime incidents in our community and divert young people aged 10-18 away from peer pressure and street culture which fed this issue. To achieve this, the project had two strands:

- 1: diversionary activities
- 2: educational workshops.

The project started in September 2019, branded as “Beyond the Blade”. It delivered weekly physical gym sessions, educational materials and “train the trainer” workshops over a 35-week period. Staff mainly worked on evening and weekends when young people were most likely to immerse themselves in gangs and knife crime.

Thornton Lodge Action Group wanted to use Gym activities as a “vehicle for change” in reducing knife related crime amongst young people. It created an environment which attracted young people; a local gym equipped with heavy weights, bench presses, cardio machines and punch bags.



Nirvana Gym: hired out as part of the Beyond the Blade project exclusively for young people

Our intervention and prevention activities engaged young people aged between 10 and 18 who were at risk or on the periphery of being involved in gang or knife crime. Between 1st September 2018 and 30th April 2019, a total of 95 young people engaged in the project. A Community Activator worked tirelessly at grassroot level, in key geographical knife crime hotspot areas to raise profile of the project.

All 95 young people participated in small bite size learning, taking key messages from the nationally acclaimed Streetwise programme. The programme used interactive media including arts, music, role play, and group work to demystify the appeal of street crime, develop young people's self-esteem and confidence and build skills in effective decision-making.

Participants who joined were given a membership form along with an Outcome Star form, see appendix. The Outcome Star was our tool to measure the impact of our intervention and for us to review the change in behaviour. The Outcome Star asked a series of questions at the start of the programme, these were then revisited at the end of the programme to see the distance travelled by the participant.



One of the modules from the Streetwise programme

100% of our young people indicated a higher number against each outcome which signified an increase in their knowledge understanding and behaviour towards knife and gun crime.

To encourage sign up to the programme, free gym bottles were offered. To ensure retention of participants and to minimise withdrawal of young people, loyalty cards were issued. This granted each participant an option of a free protein shake, energy drink, or bottled water after attending 4 consecutive sessions, see loyalty card.

An additional 12 young people aged 16+ participated in "Train the Trainer" workshops. These young people over the programme showed significant change in their behaviour towards crime. Having committed to the cause of reducing knife crime in our society, they set out to pass on some key messages they gained from the interactive workshops to younger generation in our community.



Graduates of the Train the Trainer workshops with Mo Sarfraz from Steetwise

One of the project successes was creating an environment where young people felt safe, physically and psychologically. This allowed strong relationship to foster over the life of the project where young people reported to “feel at ease” speaking to our coaches and facilitators. For coaches, this allowed them to develop human qualities, such as honesty, integrity, trust and resilience, in young people.

Allocating enough staffing to the programme was pivotal to the success of the project too. It allowed us to offer a supportive environment for young people. Young people were able to approach staff on a one to one basis where they felt uncomfortable raising questions in workshops or simply wishing to have a chat in confidence. This allowed us to respond to individual needs of many young people, offering encouragement, improving co-operation and improving learning outcomes.

This project would not have been successful without the support from partners and our local schools, who helped us engage directly with the most vulnerable and hard to reach young people. The excellent take up of our services coupled with positive change in behaviour vouched additional funds from local partners to support us from May 2019 to October 2019, as a short bridging grant until further funds are secured. They deemed closing the gym activities down as loss to young people, particularly as there is very little places left for young people to congregate following the closure of the local authority youth services.



Young people with the Principal of Moor End Academy, Kash Rafiq and Workshop coach Mo Sarfraz

In recent months, like any other towns and cities up and down the country our town has seen an upsurge in knife and gun crime. 257 incidents of possession of weapons were reported between the period May 2018 and April 2019. Source: https://www.police.uk/west-yorkshire/KDT_HUD/crime/stats/

Going forward, Thornton Lodge Action Group will continue to work with local partners to explore how we can collectively bring more resources and support in combatting this ill disease penetrating our community.

In closing, we would like to thank the Home Office for the funding. This funding has allowed us to test our project and speak to participants and parents first hand. In a stronger position, Thornton Lodge Action Group are now able to upscale this model targeting wider geographical areas in our community.

Case Study

For the purpose of this case study, and to protect the young person identify the name is fictitious. The case study reflects a 14-year-old boy.

Nico is a 14-year-old boy from the local community, Thornton Lodge. He attended every Streetwise Workshop at the Nivarna Gym where he was able to socialise with other young people and engage in workshops designed to educate him about the dangers of gang and knife crime. Nico said before he attended the workshops his mindset was “thinking in a different way”. Nico stated that it was cool to “be a gangsta” and that sometimes you have to deal with certain situations on the streets in a “gangsta” way. However; I worked very closely with Nico and focused on getting him to think outside the box. It was a long slow process and Nico has

been equipped with the skills needed to think differently and behave in a manner that is not going to present a risk to himself and others. The challenge now is for Nico to use the positive skills



he has learnt and live a crime free life. ways to think

I have written a short statement from Nico which can be seen below.

***“The Streetwise sessions have been an eye opener. Kids nowadays are very smart and you have to be aware of this. The streets are not a safe place and we have to protect ourselves. I used to think it was cool to carry weapons but after seeing the graphic images of knife wounds and learning from Mo I think differently now. Life ain’t no game, you only live once. I now realise my life is important and I need to be around to live it to the full. I’m going to think again when I am in certain situations and take a step back. I hope other kids will follow.*”**

My Outcomes Star

Name

I have a good understanding of the consequences of knife crime and gang culture?

I can avoid negative influences easily?

I have a good understanding of the reason why young people turn to knife crime and join gangs?

I have a good understanding of the consequences of drug dealing and taking drugs?

I am good at keeping safe and being positive?

I have a good understanding of how to keep calm and resolve conflict in a non violent manner?

I know what to do if my friend was carrying a knife or a weapon?

I have a good understanding of what the law says about carrying knives and committing crime?

	Client signature	Date	Staff signature	Date
At start of course				
At end of course				

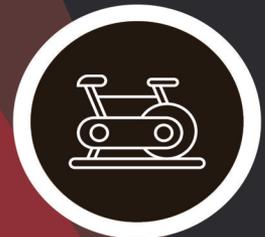
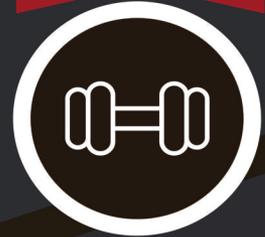


Keep your
mind,
body &
soul
active

FREE

GYM SESSION

EVERY SATURDAY 4 - 6 pm



FREE
Gym Bottle

**Beyond the blade: Working together
in reducing knife Crime**

13 - 19 yr olds

Cardio & Weights

Access to Boxing

Qualified Staff

No Membership + No Contracts

Nirvana Gym, Unit 22, Perseverance Mills,

Lockwood Scar, Huddersfield HD4 6BW

Contact 07871 938174

*Suitable clothing and footwear is required



Home Office



NIRVANA FITNESS



BEYOND THE BLADE



Working together in reducing knife crime

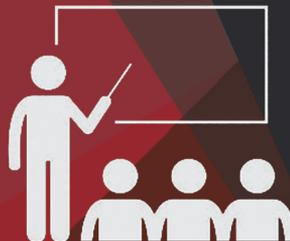
Recruiting now for potential trainers

Free workshops in the nationally acclaimed Streetwise programme

- Do you wish to reduce knife crime in the community?
- Do you have a good rapport with young people?
- Do you wish to deliver a key message around dangers & consequences of knife crime?
- Do you wish to add this experience to your CV and Career?

Over 10 weeks experienced practitioners will support you in delivering interactive workshops in:

- 1: Bite the Bullet - weapons / crime prevention
- 2: Doing time - prison awareness programme
- 3: Positive paths - identifying alternatives to crime
- 4: Dealers - drugs education programme
- 5: Street gangs - education programme



To register call **07871 938174** or email ibrar@tactiongroup.org.uk

*FREE Gift For Each Trainer



Home Office



LOYALTY CARD

Saturday 4pm to 6pm



Thornton Lodge Action Group

Nirvana Gym, Unit 22, Perseverance Mills,
Lockwood Scar, Huddersfield HD4 6BW

Tel: 07871 938174



LOYALTY CARD

NIRVANA GYM



NIRVANA GYM
LOYALTY CARD

Membership No.

Name

Date Of Issue

Issued By

Stamps cannot be backdated. Lost cards will incur a £2.50 charge

