

Out of Reach

A Merseyside Dance Initiative practical evaluation project on the impact of dance as a tool of social inclusion

COMMUNITY *It helped me bloom* **PHYSICAL**

it's not just for girls, boys can dance as well

Partnership **SOCIAL INCLUSION**

You see boys dancing on TV so why can't we do it?

EMPOWERMENT *Confidence*

IMPACT **Participation**

Training **YOU DON'T TEND TO NOTICE IT, BECAUSE ITS QUITE ENJOYABLE, BUT EXERCISE IS ALWAYS A PLUS**

meeting new people **Self Esteem**





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A Merseyside Dance Initiative (MDI) practical evaluation project on the impact of dance as a tool of social interaction

FINAL REPORT

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Dr Denise Peerbhoy, Health Psychologist¹, has provided guidance on quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods, and has been responsible for analysis and interpretation of this report. Alicia Smith, Project Co-ordinator, has contributed to the compiling of this report working in collaboration with Dr Denise Peerbhoy. She provided specific information on the 'Boys Only' project, and co-ordinated practical aspects of the **Out of Reach** programme and evaluation. Jacqueline Birchall, Project Assistant has contributed to the **Out of Reach** programme and evaluation working in collaboration with Alicia Smith.

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All freelance artists, organisations and theatres.

This list is not exhaustive but for those we may have missed we apologise, and take this opportunity to thank you all.



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Comment

Comment about the evaluation process by the principle author: Dr Denise Peerbhoy

In an interview² with Dr Christine Putland, a senior lecturer from Flinders University, Australia, Alicia and I confirmed verbally that the collaboration we had formed in order to conduct this evaluation, was in many ways a spontaneous adventure. I had previously been involved in evaluation and research of large-scale research projects in health settings, and had no formal experience of evaluating an arts-based project. My first contact with Merseyside Dance Initiative was through participating in African dance classes in the community. It was here that I met Alicia when she came to teach one of the classes. After several conversations with Alicia it became apparent that I may be able to assist with evaluation of the **Out of Reach** project. I had a meeting with Alicia and the director of MDI where I gained a greater understanding of what **Out of Reach** was all about, and what information they were collecting related to the project. We discussed possible ways in which I could provide them with evaluation advice and guidance. My first task was to sort through piles of information that had basically been put in a filing cabinet: the fruits of this task were born out in the first year report³ and formed the basis for further evaluation.

My experience of working with MDI is that this arts-based organisation had collected a fair amount of data, without realising the potential that it had for celebrating their success and dissemination to a wider audience. Alicia, the project co-ordinator and I feel that this collaboration worked well because it enabled us to use individual skills and to learn from each other about areas we are unsure. In effect, the lack of knowledge that we each have about one another's area of expertise, fuelled the necessity to ask questions, and more questions of each other about what we were doing, and why we are doing it. This has been extremely important in the evaluation process because of its impact on our work, which we now know is based on achieving maximum flexibility, reflexivity and creativity. In essence, the collaboration between an external evaluator (*myself*) and an internal evaluator (*Alicia*) worked well because it enabled us to find a balance in terms of what was important and what represented the whole picture, and to share that with you. In the words of Dr Putland, a visiting senior lecturer from Flinders University Australia, specialising in arts/health ventures.

“ . . . a lot of the literature about evaluations talks about the advantages and disadvantages of having an internal or an external evaluator . . . the advantage of having an internal evaluator is that they really understand the programme and really understand what it's meant to be doing, and therefore can know what to look for and understand what they see. Whereas the advantage of an external evaluator is often that they are – the term that's used, whether it's true or not – more objective. They have more of an ability to stand back and really be critical and see what's working and what's not working and how things could be different and so on, because they're slightly more removed. The partnership you're describing actually appears on the surface that it ought to be able to bring the best of those two worlds together” (Putland, 2002 from transcript)

² Transcript available on request from Dr Denise Peerbhoy, Centre for Health, Liverpool John Moores University or Merseyside Dance Initiative

³ First Year Report available from MDI



Executive Summary

This evaluation follows research documented in the first year **Out of Reach** report whose principal finding was that Dance had an impact on several dimensions of quality of life and wellbeing. A key focus of this evaluation is the impact of health, wellbeing and social interaction for socially excluded groups participating in the **Out of Reach** Community dance programme. A qualitative analysis, consisting of semi-structured interviews with participants of the programme, school staff, the MDI team, and freelance dance workers collectively provide evidence of the social and educational benefits achieved through dance. Hence, this evaluation forms the second part of an exercise in accountability with the first year report documenting what **Out of Reach** was doing and this one providing more extensive 'soft', and additional 'hard' data to support and elaborate on the findings of the first year report.

Viewpoints from participants of the **Out of Reach** programme, school staff, MDI team are highlighted in order to document the development of **Out of Reach**. These provide information on service perception and experience. A consensus viewpoint about service perception and experience is seen across evaluation participants.

Several intermediate outcomes associated with participation in **Out of Reach** are highlighted including increased self-esteem, confidence, and social cohesion. These findings were demonstrated via semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. Unexpectedly, 'hard' data (documenting subjective wellbeing and satisfaction with life), using established and validated quality of life measures, failed to underscore any major changes in quality of life ratings for the majority of groups involved in the programme, emphasising the different sensitivities of 'soft' and 'hard' data methods.

Findings are linked to current policy and debate in arts and social exclusion, existing evidence looking at the impact of arts on health and wellbeing, and ways in which to evaluate arts projects..



Introduction

*"The dance was the initial
'firework' on being aware of that
letting something out of you, in
your mind and in your soul, and
in your physical state."*

(Out of Reach participant)



Introduction

This report follows on from the previous **Out of Reach**'s community social inclusion dance programme in Merseyside. It is a celebration of the successful continuation of the project, and its adherence to stated principles of partnership.⁴ It explores models of good practice.

The main aim of this report is to document the impact of **Out of Reach** over three years for a number of stakeholders. These stakeholders include: dance leaders, participants, school staff and parents, and organisation's funders.

The main objectives of the evaluation undertaken for this report are to:

- Document the impact of dance as a tool for social interaction
- To assess the impact of dance on quality of life and wellbeing
- To document the development of individuals who have taken part in projects
- To explore the role of the dance leader and their association with good practice
- To evaluate partnership principles in relation to practice



Evaluation of Out of Reach

The First Year Report established that dance is a medium through which individuals gain positive emotional and physical benefits, thus it is a form of creative expression for improving general quality of life and well being of individuals. Findings of an improved quality of life were based on a qualitative evaluation of participants' feedback after workshops and dance sessions. Participants included people directly involved in dance activity and others in a position to rate the benefits of dance. Hence, Quality of Life as a concept was formed from responses, and was an outcome that **Out of Reach** did not initially set out to investigate.

The report follows the development of **Out of Reach** since its beginning in September 1999. It looks at the way that different projects have developed and takes a deeper look at the progress made by key individuals across diverse groups. Development of individuals is tracked, from the beginning of **Out of Reach** to the date of this report, through various mediums, which include interviews, video and photos of workshops and performances. It is only by using such diverse methods that the richness and true findings of the project can be documented.

The concept of improved quality of life was a useful means by which to take evaluation in the **Out of Reach** programme forward. It was decided by the **Out of Reach** team and an independent researcher, Dr Denise Peerbhoy (who has been involved in assessing of quality of life in various settings) that the use of a tool for measuring subjective quality of life experience would be one of the most appropriate methods to use with all groups involved in the **Out of Reach** programme. The main reason for this being its simplicity. The well-established Face Scale (*Andrews & Withley, 1976*) was used to record dance participants emotions before and after dance.⁵

Importantly this report also considers one of the mechanisms for its success. Of course there are numerous people who have and are still contributing to the projects on a practical, administrative, technical, creative and artistic level; these individuals are all to be praised for their inputs. However, this report also praises the excellence of the dance leaders, and the stream of

⁴ There are 9 principles of partnership as documented in **Out of Reach**'s First Year Report.

⁵ Andrews and Withley's Face Scale. Refer to Appendix 1.x

abilities they have in order to promote, organise and sustain a successful community programme. All programmes are highly participatory and involve intense collaboration and patience of all parties. The dance leader is the figure at the heart of all dance sessions in the sense that she/he is the central cog for making the spokes of the wheel turn in order to reach a necessary movement and energy. **Out of Reach** recognised, in the early stages of the programme, the significance of personal attributes of the dance leader for the success of the programme. Another area of focus is the 'Boys Only' dance group, and various case studies of the **Out of Reach** groups. The **Out of Reach** programme has worked with many people, and it was considered necessary to document the experiences of them. Information could not be obtained from every person involved in the programme but a representative, selected sample was drawn upon in order to do this.



This section documents key issues in **Out of Reach** partnerships, and provides examples of how these principles have unfolded in practice. It focuses in particular on consultation/participation, evaluation, community development and ownership, and lastly, training and establishing jobs.

Consultation

In the initial stages **Out of Reach** targeted potential partners; it had a well planned strategy (See Appendix 1). The targeting process initially involved working in partnership with other organisations with a similar focus. This assessment took the form of meeting key members of the organisation and providing a brief of the principles and work of **Out of Reach**. **Out of Reach** also asked any potential partner, a series of questions about their organisation in order to establish if a partnership would be interested in working with **Out of Reach**. Where any potential partnership was seen as plausible a pilot initiative would be run by **Out of Reach**. This involved **Out of Reach** providing a few taster sessions with members of the organisation and looking at feasible ways, within the social, cultural and professional context of the organisation in which to take the project forward.

In relation to key organisations that **Out of Reach** has

worked with, examples of the consultation process is provided. In the case of the Bail Hostel, key staff and residents were met and informed about the nature of **Out of Reach**. In the case of the Toxteth Youth Group, this was developed through MDI and other community arts agencies, and continues to grow. The majority of people forming this group are from the local community. Lastly, Croxteth Youth Dance formed a partnership with **Out of Reach**, who supported a play-worker and the young people who had already initiated the development of the dance group. Support continued for the development of the play-worker and staff through the Dance Leaders in the community course, which provided increased self-sustaining opportunity.

Projects had different needs depending on their stage of development; **Out of Reach** responded to these needs, whilst at the same time encouraging the natural independence of groups. For instance with some groups it was necessary to assist with basic aspects such as meeting participants and getting them on/off the bus. Conversely, other groups were more independent in that it had established play workers and strong parent involvement to assist with organisation of events, transportation and costume making.

Evaluation

Out of Reach was set up with a research agenda which involved assessing the effects of dance. Evaluation would assess if, and to what extent, **Out of Reach** was meeting its overall aim and objectives. Evaluation methods have been diverse including verbal feedback and discussion, simple questionnaire feedback, video and photo-voice from individuals directly involved in projects. Evaluation was important in allowing **Out of Reach** to recognise and build on the value of their work. **Out of Reach** have disseminated information about themselves in national dance magazines as well as throughout regional, local and national arts organisations. This evaluation has been undertaken by **Out of Reach** for three reasons:

- to document participants feelings and experiences about the projects that they are involved in
- to listen carefully to those thoughts and feelings and reflect on them
- where necessary to change existing practice in accordance with all partnerships wishes.

Out of Reach constantly self-evaluates; those involved discussed projects between themselves, the MDI team, participants and artists. Strengths and weaknesses of projects, and possible ways to improve them are a key aspect of the **Out of Reach** agenda. **Out of Reach**

have developed their evaluation over time, concentrating in the first year on feedback from participants, whilst progressing in the second and final year to using established quality of life scales, and in-depth interviews with participants from their groups and school staff members from partnership organisations. **Out of Reach** are aware of evaluation process - those involved reflected on their initial year one findings when considering their final year evaluation.⁶ They aim to provide in-depth evaluation of their diverse service, which evidences findings as opposed to paying 'lip-service' to them.

Community ownership

Out of Reach strongly believe that the process of being involved in projects creates a sense of project ownership. Ownership unfolds when a group chooses a name for itself, and when their sense of pride shines through at performances. Ownership also manifests with group developments, for example, Croxteth Youth Dance became aware of their ability to be self-sufficient due to several individuals within that group becoming trained dance leaders via a dance leaders course coordinated by **Out of Reach**. This has also been the case for the Wirral Mind group with one member becoming a dance leader.

Training and establishing jobs

In terms of the community, the whole idea of sustainability and looking to the future is underpinned by the creation and development of partnerships. **Out of Reach** addressed this by running a dance leaders in the community course. This course consists of ten, three-hour sessions weekly, plus weekends and coursework. Other ways of addressing sustainability are creation of partnerships which allow access to other agencies and other organisations. Awareness of the life span of **Out of Reach** has led to the provision of, and access to comprehensive dance programmes which are available throughout MDI. In the interests of sustainability it was hoped that personal development, amongst participants, from engaging with **Out of Reach** would lead to further development of the project. Further, it was hoped that choice, contribution to the process, taking the lead etc. would all contribute to empowerment. The project also offered the opportunity to track participants' progress and signpost them to further areas of development, such as dance college and volunteer opportunities linked to performance projects.

Out of Reach has formed many partnerships, one of which is with Education Action Zones (EAZ) to support

dance in local schools. Both the teachers and the school are supported through the partnership. All stakeholders are involved as much as possible. Typically, in the initial stages the dance worker makes sure that the teacher/s have some concept of why they are there. Dance is introduced gradually with a key person visiting schools and providing a taster dance session. In the first instance a dance leader would work with physical education coordinators or dance teachers, and an inservice training day would take place where all teachers, mentors, parents etc. would come together to experience an activity session. All participants would be given handouts documenting information about **Out of Reach**, and its partners. This was then followed by offering and introducing regular dance activity to groups.

⁶ **Out of Reach**, Year 1.



Methodology and Findings

*“I get to do a lot of exercise and
I get to meet other people, and I
get to perform and I really enjoy
performing, and its fun being in
an actual dance group.”*

(Out of Reach participant)

The methods used to gather data include: quality of life scales, interviews, letters, video, and photography.

Although not explicitly outlined, one aim of **Out of Reach** is to provide tools and resources for people to improve their quality of life (QoL). Even though there is no real agreement on what the term quality of life means, the concept of quality of life is often synonymous with health & wellbeing (Post, de Witte, Shrijvers, 1999). In this evaluation, health and quality of life are measured by subjective perceptions of health and quality of life from service users' perspectives. Health-related quality of life (HRQL) is distinct from general quality of life, as it is conceptualised by those aspects of life quality or function that are affected by one's health. This evaluation is concerned with subjective perceptions around both types of QoL. Social wellbeing, although debatable whether it contributes directly to health quality of life, is also viewed as an important factor in QoL. Subjective wellbeing and happiness has two dimensions: emotional and cognitive. The former is concerned with how good a person feels and the latter with their satisfaction with life (Argyle, 1987). For the purpose of this evaluation both are important features in perception of quality of life.

Information used to track development was derived from four sources. Firstly, responses to established quality of life instruments were recorded as an attempt to provide a systematic assessment of subjective well being, as well as to understand the practicalities of administering such a tool during community dance sessions. Secondly, personal interviews were conducted with individuals that have participated in dance, and others that may be affected by their involvement in dance, for example parents, teachers, carers. The aim of the interviews was to provide an opportunity for participants to express as freely as possible any emotions, thoughts, ideas about dance that they have engaged in. The past, present and future were explored.

Three additional methods used to track development of **Out of Reach's** work included: video footage of groups during sessions and during interview, letters from partner organisations, and photographs.

Scales used.

The Face Scale (Andrews & Withey 1976) and Cantrils Ladder (Cantril, 1965 - see Appendix 2) were administered to Wirral Mind, Croxteth and Toxteth Youth group, and Knowsley Boyz participants. Participants were asked to indicate the way they felt about their life (Face scale) and how satisfied they were with their life (Cantrils Ladder), before and after dance sessions. The

dance leader taking the session would ask participants to complete the Face Scale. Over the ten weeks sessions held for groups, 'smileys' (as they were described by participants) were completed over the three collection times. In the majority of cases 'smileys' were completed by the same participants who returned session after session however, this was not uniform with some new members completing 'smileys' at second and third collection times. Due to changes in group attendance over time, a comparative analysis of change over time was not conducted and a general trend analysis approach to data was taken.

Interviews conducted.

The **Out of Reach** team, dance leaders and a senior researcher interviewed selected individuals from the dance groups. Such interviews provide case studies to celebrate the impact of dance for the diverse groups that **Out of Reach** has worked with. Conversations between interviewers and interviewees was recorded on audiotape. This was transcribed and analysed by a senior researcher. In total 7 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Some of these were individual, whereas for the Boys study one interview was done for several boys (See Appendix 3)

The evaluation of **Out of Reach** has arisen from a collaboration between a senior researcher (DP)⁷ and the **Out of Reach** team⁸. The role of the senior researcher can be summarised as follows:

1. To provide evaluation advice and recommendations to the **Out of Reach** team.
2. To conduct interviews with specific key stakeholders (participants, dance leaders)
3. To be responsible for producing a written report with the **Out of Reach** team

⁷ DP is a senior research fellow at Liverpool John Moores University.

⁸ AS is the **Out of Reach** project Coordinator; JB is project assistant.



Case Study A.

This case study follows JC, who began working with **Out of Reach** at Wirral Mind as part of the Fountain Project; JC had not taken part in any community dance programmes before and mainly danced at home. He was a prominent and active member of the group, always enthusiastic, a good team player and confident leader. JC became the spokesperson of the group.

The impact of the sessions inspired JC to start his own creative dance sessions at the Fountain Project. He continued with both sessions and gained a lot of confidence in himself and trust in dance workers and people. JC was introduced to his first professional dance performance at The Bluecoat - both JC and another member of the group went along to the performance and it meant a lot to them. It was their first experience of watching a professional company perform live at a venue. It was also an expression of trust that they felt comfortable to come out of their own environment and into another that they were totally unfamiliar with. Because of their unfamiliarity with such events, they were unsure, at times, whether it was the right time to clap or not.

A number of times it was suggested to JC that he had the ability to take part in the dance leaders in the community (DLiC) course. At first he was apprehensive but after taking some time to consider the course, he decided that he would take part. JC's social development and confidence increased during the dance leaders course. He developed the confidence and skills to deliver and communicate dance ideas with a new found self-assurance, and was committed to the course, attending all sessions/performances etc. He has worked as a dance leader running group sessions for the Wirral Mind Service, and would like to branch out to the community in the future.

Case Study B.

NT has been part of the youth group for a number of years, and has been involved in all **Out of Reach** projects to various extents, as a performer or part of workshops. She is a confident and talented member of the group. She has grown and developed many skills in that time.

Case Study C.

KC is the director of Croxteth Child Development services. Her involvement has been through her direct contact with young people and empowering them within the **Out of Reach** programme. She has also participated in the **Out of Reach** dance leaders course, which has provided her with additional skills and understanding as a dance leader.

Case Study D.

JB is a member of the Knowsley Boyz youth group who decided to participate in the group when he saw one of the **Out of Reach** Boys Only group's performances that inspired him to be part of the group.

Interviews with dance leaders who worked on the **Out of Reach** programme (and were part of the Merseyside Dance Initiative team) also share thoughts and experiences about the programme.

Case Study E.

Staff from various schools collectively represent case studies E.

Case Study F.

Alongside the MDI and **Out of Reach** team, a number of freelance artists worked in support of the delivery of the **Out of Reach** programme. These individuals are collectively named case study F and are represented by dance leader AS, MC, BQ, KC, and the MDI team.



"Boys Only" is one of the many projects Merseyside Dance Initiative set up via **Out of Reach** to develop the profile of boys and dance. "Boys Only" began life in 2000 in the Speke and Garston areas. **Out of Reach** saw the potential in the Boys, after working in the schools on another project. A strategy was put in place for recruitment. **Out of Reach** began recruitment from Garston Church of England and Stockton Wood Schools, with support from Arts in Regeneration. Groups were recruited from both schools and worked towards a performance piece which Arts in Regeneration was coordinating called "Words on the Bridge". The Knowsley Boyz group also performed. The groups worked in their own school and school heads granted curriculum time for

this in school hours. This project generated interest for the "Boys Only" groups and also had a greater impact because the young people were working towards an end product. The "Boys Only" dance project has five satellites: Speke, Garston, Wirral, Knowsley and Dingle. The work completed so far has been documented in the **Out of Reach** first year report, and this document and video follows the boys through class work, rehearsals, and performances, documenting the Boys' and teachers' comments. By using this form of evaluation, carefully planned questions were asked which were closely linked to the findings of the year one report (the continuation and development which then informed the findings here).

The groups were formed through a successful recruitment programme. **Out of Reach** worked in schools where the boys had the opportunity to participate in the project as part of the school timetable, and an after-school club. The boys worked towards performances, which took them out of their own environment and introduced them to other youth groups and spaces. **Out of Reach** worked in partnership with various agencies and professional artists such as Dingle Toxteth Granby Education Action Zone, Speke and Garston Education Action Zone, and closely with the schools, staff and mentors.

'Boys Only' addressed enabling boys to experience dance in and outside their own environment. **Out of Reach** worked with year 5, year 6 and year 7 students. Reiterating findings from following the first year. **Out of Reach** asked: "Why do you come here to dance?", boys replied with several answers:

"To have fun and learn different dance moves", because it was "lively", or they were "very interested"

It was clear that the boys enjoyed having freedom to be creative in dance pursuits, and respected the fact that the dance teachers allowed this to happen. For instance in response to the question: "What do you think of your dance teachers?" one individual replied:

"They let you make up your own stuff which is kind of exciting"

Evidence that the young people would like to pursue this further as a career is shown in the video (Boys Only 2002), through the viewpoints of the young people. When asked the question "would you like to do dance as a job?" one young person indicated that they were interested in teaching. Another boy, in response to the question: "Why do you come here to dance?", saw dance as a commodity which would be of benefit in an arts-based 'performance' career.

*"I'd like to teach people, kids younger than myself"
"When we're older ...we want to become pop stars and*

all that, and if we do a dance and all that - now that we've come here (referring to Out of Reach) we'll be able to dance"

As a gender issue, comments were raised that the boys are anxious to avoid association with anything that can be perceived as effeminate. Jacqui Birchall, **Out of Reach** project assistant, comments on this in the **Out of Reach** first year report when recruiting for Knowsley Boyz saying: "At times there was an initial response that dance wasn't for boys, but in most cases they had never experienced a dance/movement session." However, three years on the group has grown in numbers and continues to thrive. The boys involved in the "Boys Only " have no perceived notions that dance is effeminate, they are proud of their classes and when asked the question: "Some people think dancing is just for girls. What do you think?" Their comments were,

"Boys and girls can dance, it's just not for girls, boys can dance as well, you see boys dancing on TV so why can't we do it?"

The boys involved have continued their interest with the project. They find role models through the teachers, and because of the continuity of teachers they develop a good relationship and build trust with them. They also have the opportunity to work with companies, perform themselves and see other boys dancing. It is important to catch young people at an early age. When asked the question "What is the best part of being a member of the dance group?" one of the responses is:

"Doing the shows, getting to meet new people, who are different groups or are sometimes taught by the same teacher."

Some of the Boys implied that in order to be a dancer of eminence it would be necessary to begin dancing at a very young age. For example in response to the question: "Do you wish you'd started dance at a younger age/earlier?" the following responses were elicited:

"Yes because I'd seen more dance moves if I'd still carried on"

"And it would help you from being younger, carry on (dancing) and become a great dancer"

The use of video-voice has proven to be a useful tool in which we see and experience both visually and aurally the progression of the Boys Only groups and their teachers' comments. We are able to be spectators and gain an insight to what the groups think about the project, We see them perform and hear them talk about their experiences of the project instead of providing an anecdotal account which is a common method for reporting project success. These tangible aspects give weight to this evaluation.

Below in **Table 1**. Teachers' comments about the Boys Only project

Table 1. School staff – service perception & experience of Out of Reach: “Boys Only”

Do the children mention anything about the dance classes to you?

'They certainly do, yes all of the dance classes that we've been involved in over the past few months have generated a lot of enthusiasm from the kids, They've loved it and they've been full of excitement about it all - every time I bump into kids they want to tell me about the dance classes and they are really proud about their involvement in things like - there was something at the Neptune theatre and there was one at the Unity (performances). They loved all of that.'(PS)

'Yeah they do, they say they enjoy them a lot. Particularly these ones with Polly because she's using very modern music with them and they really do enjoy that. And I know they enjoy performing because last time we did a show, when the lights came up in the auditorium they all nearly fell over because they were so gob-smacked.'(NW)

Do you see any change in the children - socially or anything else that might be linked to the dancing?

'Yes, there's one person in particular who had never done that well in school, right the way through, had always been relatively disaffected without being badly behaved - now that person has changed completely as a direct result of this involvement - because this is the only thing that has caught his/her imagination and it's really made a huge difference in terms of motivation, attitude to the school, self-esteem - and all of that's rubbed off onto other things. So this person's academic success has just zoomed up in six months.' (PS)

'I don't think I really know. I mean those boys in particular are quite boisterous anyway, and if you watch the sessions they're boisterous in the sessions, and they're still like that.' (NW)

'Yes, a couple of them have demonstrated more confidence - things like that. I think it's been particularly good for one of the lads, who I have noticed a change definitely in the way of confidence. His social skills with other member of his group, his form - he's definitely come out of himself a lot. Really, really good.'(LK)

So what do you think generally about the dance project?

'I am really enthusiastic about it. Having seen the difference it makes to kids, I really want to continue this, and cooperate as much as possible with MDI and with other organisations to see just how much dance we can incorporate and encourage the kids to get involved in. '(PS)

'I think its a really good idea particularly in an area like this because the type of boys that are involved are the type that wouldn't particularly say that they were involved in dance in front of other boys, but because they're allowed to do it after school, away from all the others it gives them confidence and they feel happier about it.' (NW)

'I think it's brilliant. I think I landed on me feet really when Colin Foley, the drama guy introduced me to Clemmy and says could Clemmy do anything for you in the way of dance. And it was like, yes brilliant because I 'm not a dance specialist myself. I'm trained in PE. and dance but you wouldn't necessarily think it. I do teach dance but very basic so its always really a pleasure to have somebody in who knows what they're doing, and the kids really respect her as well. Because they come in these people and its just like Wow - the kids they think it's great.' (LK)

Would you personally like to become more involved in the teaching, or your staff - and how can you see that happening?

'I think some of the staff would be very keen to get involved in the teaching. Often with teaching its a question of confidence, and if they have more to do with the MDI instructors then they'll see for themselves just what needs to be done, just how you encourage this with kids - and I am confident that we've got two or three teachers who would become involved who would become very good - as long as you don't include me.' (PS)

In summary, "Boys Only" did not set out to be as successful as it has become; a strategy was put into place to deliver and provide access to more boys dancing. This process has taken a lot of work, planning and liaising with various staff which has been key to its success. Also being able to run a programme over the three years has enabled **Out of Reach** to monitor and sustain the project. Most of the success has to go to the commitment of the boys involved, their enthusiasm and their attitude to being involved in the dance groups, which is reflected in this report and video case studies (see "Boys Only" video).

Out of Reach shows that by being given an opportunity to dance, something boys would not normally do or even think of doing, has contributed to changing the views of boys, teachers and parents and the wider community about dance in general and its effectiveness. The video reflects those outcomes: a sense of worth and community, enthusiasm and changed attitudes towards dance and boys dancing. This is also measured by teacher's comments ("Boys Only" video 2002) when asked the question "Do you see any change in the children - socially or anything else that might be linked to the dancing?" Response from Mr Pete Stephen's from St Silas talks about how a particular student, who was a low achiever and relatively disaffected, had changed completely as a direct result of being part of the "Boys Only" project. He talks about the psychological and social benefits and how this has reflected in other areas of school work. Liz Knight also comments on this and how she has seen changes in confidence and social skills. **Out of Reach** has contributed to demystifying the stigma, of boys dancing in Merseyside, it has stopped it being something which is thought of as unusual, by bringing it into the mainstream and not being selective, showing positive discrimination.



Approximately ten million individuals, between the ages of eight to twenty six, dance every week. Some dance activity will take place in schools, some in private studios, whilst for others dance is accessed through one off or regular community dance programmes (First Leisure, 2000).

Focusing on community dance, research has found that dance "reaches people from three to ninety three, that it engages people of all abilities and from every cultural

background, history and tradition" (Foundation for Community Dance, 2000).

In community dance, individuals see, experience and feel dancing at its best. They often work directly with artists in their expression of ideas and creativity. Material from interviews conducted with several dance leaders is documented here in order to provide some perspective on what being a dance leader is all about. Dance leaders describe the many qualities they feel are necessary to be a dance leader. Overall, these comprise specific personality, social and organisational traits as well as practical skills. It is ironic that during interviews, dance leaders mentioned very little about their technical and professional skills and when they did it was when they were outlining other necessary dance leader skills. Recollection of experiences from projects for individual dance leaders are included.

Awareness and communication

The successful dance leader has many communication styles. The variety of groups **Out of Reach** dance leaders work with necessitates flexible communication. It is evident from dance leaders' responses that an awareness of those they are working with is important in such flexibility. AS describes the significance of being sensitive to individual needs and life circumstances. KC, Croxteth Child Development Manager confirms these views. With reference to the younger groups that **Out of Reach** caters for, MC centres on a need for a kind of 'youth-culture' awareness as a means of strengthening the bond between the teacher and the participant.

"Sometimes you have to keep guard - its just part of being in the real world. Sometimes you have to change your approaches and be sensitive to people's needs. Sometimes in order to confront issues you have to pander to people's needs. It's about knowing when to adapt and change... Some of these people are quite vulnerable, they're not confident and have a lot of baggage - the only way that they can deal with it is by being aggressive. You have to tolerate this and see where they are coming from, and remember that they are here because they want to be here but at the same time that a lot of individuals in these groups are not used to people being nice to them." (AS).

"I think a dance leader particularly with the kids that we work with here....not all are angels.... is that they've got to have an awareness of some of the issues that the kids have got. It's not just all about dance, you've got to have an understanding of where the kids are coming from as well so I think that one is the main thing" (KC)

“You need to have an understanding of the youth of today. You need to know what they like, what they want, and that’s half your battle. It’s so easy for them to be on the streets. To keep them off the streets, and come to a regular class, at certain ages, when they peak in adolescence, and all the rest of it, you’ve got to be aware of where life’s going with them today - social issues, everything. What music they like, what dance styles are out right now. That’s all part of keeping them with you. I’d say I use that a lot. I get on with them, have this personality with them.” (MC)

In many cases being flexible means demonstrating a high-tolerance for difficult and, in some cases, challenging behaviour. None of the dance leaders here mentioned anything about correcting difficult or awkward behaviour. One saw it as something that could be anticipated with recurring dance sessions, and as something they would incorporate and accept in their work. (This illustrates the contrasting work strategies of dance teachers). With such flexibility and tolerance the dance leader is sometimes perceived as an ‘easy-target’ however, the dance leader can exert discipline and authority as well as being flexible and tolerant.

“I’ve learnt from experience... I’ve gone into groups before, and been very easy going to laid back, and they just thought ‘easy target’! It’s backfired, and gone a bit awry.” (BQ)

One way in which the dance leader can get some of the above mentioned skills is through specific work-experience. AS cites how her previous experience as a Youth Worker has been beneficial for her role as a dance leader. She singles out trust as an important quality to establish in her working relationship with dance participants.

“My youth work background provided me with the opportunity to become good at communicating and working with people from different situations and different groups. I developed many skills. It is difficult to get the right people to go and deliver the work. However, when all new people come on board I will introduce them. This is particularly important for mental health groups where everyone in the group has got to gain your trust. Sometimes it’s in the best interests of the group to work with one person.” (AS)

Interestingly, in a discussion with the MDI team, one member of the group emphasised that although she recognised the need for ‘youth worker’ type skills because of the nature of the ‘socially excluded’ groups she came into contact with, she did not believe that it was her personal responsibility to deliver on that level. However, understood the benefit that such expertise would bring

in supporting the work as a whole. She acknowledged that for her to choose to work in that way she would need further training, however this was not a way of working that she personally wished to choose, but realised additional support was available if needed. As a dancer she did not want to be a youth worker.

“.... I think we do need to be thinking about the fact that we are beginning to open up the types of channels that we are working in. I think we are going to be needing more of this training for all staff to actually be able to deliver on that level. And I think sometimes we perceive that we have those skills regardless, but I think if we are to develop lots of different links with organisations such as Health Action Zones who have an input in deprived areas. In these areas there are predominantly young people who have got behavioural problems... because of their environment, because of finance, because of family stress or whatever. We’re just going in there as the happy go lucky dance worker...but you need to be a youth worker too. ...Because I’ll be honest, I don’t want to be a youth worker.” (Member of MDI team)

The MDI team also highlighted the negotiating and articulating qualities needed to be a dance leader, whilst reiterating many of the traits and skills pointed out by other dance leaders interviewed as part of the **Out of Reach** evaluation.

BQ emphasises how she adopts certain communication strategies in demanding situations without jeopardising her relationship with participants. She advocates the need to pre-empt any potential difficulties by being proactive in the management of them. In the following BQ provides specific examples of how her awareness of a situation has influenced the way that she communicates with an individual or group of individuals.

“There’s one particular individual who comes regularly, every single week, but often seems reluctant to be there, but will still come back. I think she enjoys doing things. She enjoys having the contact with people, and enjoys talking to people. It has got to the stage where I’ve had to stop classes before, because she’s just been so open about talking to people. I’ve been quite chatty with her before the class, and after the session.” (BQ)

“Basically, you can plan, and plan, but until you get to the sessions and see what peoples’ capabilities are...you need a back up plan. If someone says, ‘I can’t do that,’ they’ll try anyway, and try and cover up the fact they can’t do it. You need to be aware, and look around the group and assess people. Often, before people come to you and say ‘I can’t do that,’ just be open and say ‘If anyone has difficulties doing

this, try this' - give them a few ideas. Find something that feels comfortable for you, so you're not excluding anyone. You're just finding a way of making it that comfortable for each person. Basically, if someone is there, whether or not they mention they've got a difficulty, the worst thing to do is just to ignore it. Don't ignore it, just address it and be open." (BQ)

Practical skills

Out of Reach dance leaders demonstrated their practical nature in the way that they incorporated suggested evaluation practice into their daily working activity. Not only did they work out a system for administering 'Smileys' but as BQ asserts, well before 'smileys' she was adept at personal self-evaluation of her work. She found that the self-evaluating strategy she was using was engaging participants and encouraging them to be more involved with the dance process.

"I try to set aside time, either during, or at the end of every session, just five minutes to have a quick chat, you know 'How did you feel about that,' or 'Did you like it?' I have had people quite reluctant in the past, but there seems to be more and more tripping over themselves to say I thought this, or I thought that, or this worked, or I'd like to do this next week.' A lot more vocal, and willing to try things out." (BQ)

"Every session, I try to get as much feedback from them as possible, as to how they're feeling about the work they're doing. Things they'd like to do more of in the future, things they've not enjoyed particularly, if they've not been comfortable with a particular routine, or task that I have set them. I have to say, over all, it tends to be quite positive feedback. You can judge by facial expressions, and also whether they turn up. With the nature of the kind of centre it is, you're not going to get them there every single week - we have highs and lows. There are a number of people who have attended pretty regularly, since the beginning really. Then there's others who come in, and drop out as they feel." (BQ)

Energetic

BQ speaks of the need to present as an enthusiastic individual at all times.

"I suppose, one of the hardest things - something I mentioned before actually - is having to be constantly, publicly enthusiastic. It's not one of those jobs where you can go and sit in an office, and if you're feeling tired, just fall asleep at the desk. You've got to be there, going, you know!" (BQ)

In response to the question "what do you think makes a good dance teacher?" participants interviewed also

provided numerous insights into what they thought constituted the role. Their responses were not so dissimilar to dance leaders.

Being honest, friendly and relaxed

It was stated by participants that simple factors such as welcoming gestures and words, and being 'yourself' were important attributes for the dance leader.

"I think it's being happy, and talking to people. Little things like saying 'Hello' and 'How are you'. Being nice to people really, and being relaxed with them, and being yourself with them. That helps people feel a lot more comfortable with you, from my point of view. Because they're so relaxed and friendly, I feel more comfortable with them." (NT)

It is also evident that participants appreciate 'quick-thinking' skills and spontaneity of dance teachers. JB indicated that this was important, whilst NT highlighted that this is what happens in practice.

"By the experience and skills, being able to cope with children, and know what to next, not thinking for the next ten minutes, and going erm erm, just knowing what to do straight away next." (JB)

For JC, being as natural as possible is an important feature of being a dance leader

"it's not worth being false with an activity like that. You just do what's natural to you, and that's how it came across" (JC)

Further on in the interview JC spoke of dancing in class the way he did at home, and that acting as a 'seed' for the way he chooses to dance now, even after formal training. For JC the need to balance personal needs with participants' needs is significant for both his and participants' self-development; this 'juggling' is central to the way in which JC teaches and interacts with others. As JC states, although one of his personal aims was to produce a dance routine he was also aware that this was not what his clients wanted or that he felt it would be possible to accomplish given that members had learning difficulties and physical impairments. JC was aware of creating 'balance' for himself and those he was working with. JC's personal interest in 'free expression' dance activity seems to work well in his given work context.

"My form of dancing is more creative, uplifting. Like free expression sort of dance, really. I'm not the type of person where it's got to be perfect. Due to the nature of Wirral Mind, and the clientsyou can't be like that. The activity - the objective - was just to motivate people in order to take part in a dance activity, in order to experience... You know, just to take their minds for one and a half hours, and to alleviate any thoughts or stress that they may have,

and feel the beauty of it.. We did routines, but it wasn't the structured routines, which I experienced on the dance leadership course.....It was difficult in a way, because some people wouldn't do it, and some others would. I had to be careful there to include everybody. You've got to relate things to the nature of people.....Yeah, it is difficult, but I suppose if I go in with and objective myself, and know the clients, there's ways of working round it. I can just go in and think... The one thing I go in with is like - this is an hour and a half, or whatever, and I'm going to get something out of it. I think you've got to have that, first, Then you're not disappointed with anything, are you?" (JC)

JC as a person clearly shows a desire to grow and learn from his work, and we are given the impression that his work acts as a vehicle for a personal journey in which personal interests and passions are lived. JC believes that it is important to be creative ("an innovator") and to develop as much as possible through work as this will reflect on the self, on output and inspiration passed to others.

"I suppose for me, personally, the dance has taught me that it's wonderful to let something out of you, and to feel the energy of the body. In my training now, I sort of jumped to taking a relaxation class, as part of stress management. The dance was the initial 'firework', on being aware of that letting something out of you, in your mind, and in your soul, and in your physical state, or whatever...You've got to bring new things into the session. You've got to be an innovator. I think that's important. That's something that I always strived for, because I would benefit from it. I think if you benefit from something, it doesn't become boring, so you're going to present that in a better manner, because it's new to you." (JC)

In summary, both participants and dance leaders outline several attributes of a good dance leader. Dance leaders focus on communication and awareness, realising the need to be sharp but not too disciplined with the socially excluded groups they are working with. They indicate the need to strike a balance between tolerance and discipline, as a means of generating a trusting relationships with those they work with. Practical skills and personality are considered necessary by teachers and participants with the ability to present as enthusiastic and honest in order to create a relaxed learning environment as valuable characteristics of the dance leader.

Merseyside Dance Initiative's views on being a dance leader (MDI)

Table 2 documents the following qualities thought to be required to be a dance leader by the MDI team. There was no ranking of the stated attributes.

Table 2. 'What do you think it takes to be a dance leader?'

PRACTICAL	COMMUNICATION	PERSONALITY
First Aider	Negotiator	Fun
Experience	Professional	Confident
Youth Worker	Communicator	Accommodating
Versatile	Understand	Energetic
Relationship with group	Being articulate	Enthusiastic
Well-planned	Knowledgeable	Calm
Resourceful	Be clear	Approachable
Reading people/situations		



"I get to do a lot of exercise and I get to meet other people, and I get to perform and I really enjoy performing, and its fun being in an actual dance group." (JB)

Participation in **Out of Reach** was associated with many things for those individuals who were interviewed, as is exemplified by JB's comment above. These ranged from: meeting people, having fun, being involved in a creative process in a stimulating environment encouraging freedom and creativity. Also, from a personal development perspective individuals spoke of a growth in expression, confidence and self-esteem. The views and opinions of 4 participants below are significant because they show participants to benefit from dance activity and also because they are supportive of the initial **Out of Reach** remit which claims:

"Out of Reach offers opportunities to dance on many levels, responding to the needs and wants of its participants. The project can function within participants' own environment, or provide opportunities to meet in new environments. Participants are encouraged to share thoughts, ideas, and new skills through a series of planned sessions." (Fact Sheet, MDI)

Balancing fun with learning and exercise

According to NT a good dance class is about balancing fun with learning and exercise. **Out of Reach** has provided a framework where she can experience both.

"There's the part where you can enjoy yourself, just having a good time, and getting on with people,

having a laugh. Then there's the actual learning aspect of it. There's things that you learn and you can't quite get - you need to work at them a bit more. Then - I'm quite into exercise - there's that feeling of having had a really good work out. You need to combine all these three things in one, for a really good dance class. I always seem to enjoy myself, and feel like I've had a really good dance class every time.” (NT)

Meeting other people

All participants of **Out of Reach** said that being part of the programme enabled them to meet and make friends with others, often those living in close proximity to them. This bringing together of people through participation in the arts is one way of promoting social cohesion. As Matarroso states, making friends may be an ordinary outcome of participating in the arts but ‘...is no less powerful an agent of social cohesion for being largely unseen’ (Matarroso, 2000). NT, one of the participants interviewed, informs us how dance has acted as a vehicle for promoting social cohesion in her life. She speaks of increased contact at an individual and community level. JB specifically adheres to the idea of geographical localities when referring to community dance

“It’s fun, getting to meet new people, working on something, like a hobby, a skill that is something you enjoy. It’s affordable, it gets you involved in so many different things, it’s not just dancing, but so many other different projects, and working with other people.” (NT)

“A lot of people who go to the dance class live so close, and so near, and around where I live, and you think you never really would have known them if you didn’t go. I think it is like - I don’t want to sound corny - being part of a family, do you know what I mean? Being part of the group, and it’s just nice to be part of something like that.” (NT)

“That people around of the area are allowed to join a dance group, near were they live and get to know what common dance is.” (JB)

In general all those interviewed commented on the sociable aspect of the dance sessions not only in terms of making more contacts with people in their immediate community but (with performance arrangements) the opportunity to meet and form relationships with individuals outside their community.

One of the participants mentioned that they had learned dance and met people from other cultures, which she found an interesting and useful learning opportunity.

“We do a lot of work exploring different kinds of dance styles. It’s something that I wouldn’t do all the time. It’s just nice to be able to try out different dance styles. It also gives you an insight into different cultures, which I find really interesting. You can draw on the experience, when you’re working on a project, from a workshop, and say ‘I remember that,’ and use it in what you’re doing now.” (NT)

“For a few years we’ve had people come over on kind of an exchange, so people have come over from Spain, and the Ukraine. Just to work with them and meet them- it’s nice.” (NT)

Learning and involvement

NT comments on the way in which she has been involved in the creative process of putting together a dance routine. She points out the freedom and choice she has encountered with **Out of Reach** during dance sessions, which she feels has not been present at other dance venues. This freedom and choice is aptly cased in a structured framework which assists in learning and sharing of all those taking part in sessions, and is important in social and educational development.

“I’ve been to a lot of other dance groups, and I’ve never really stuck at it, because it always seems to be a really controlled environment - everyone always telling you what to do. Plus, I think cost and stuff. They charge a lot to go, and also you have to pay for costumes and transport. A lot of it is provided with this programme, and it’s better that way, not just for me, but for other people that want to get involved.” (NT)

“...getting used to using your own ideas with other peoples’, and working closely with other people. I think it’s better that constantly being told what to do, and the way to do it. Everyone likes to have their own freedom, so I think it’s good in that way.” (NT)

“We do get a lot of say in what we do. Before we start any dance piece, usually we’ll sit around as a group, and talk a couple of minutes about what song, or what type of music we’d like to do. It depends on what the project is for, where it’s going to be performed, that sort of thing. We do get a lot of say in the kind of music, and the kind of dance that we do. We get a lot of say in the dance when we’re actually working with the teacher, but a lot of the time, we split off into small groups within the dance group, where we get time to make up our own section, or work with each other on a separate routine.” (NT)

Importantly, **Out of Reach** was perceived to offer a service catering for different levels of ability, which did not exclude anyone.

“Over the years, we’ve had a lot of new people come who’ve never danced before - they seemed to be all right, and didn’t have a problem with it. I don’t think it would matter if you’d never danced before.” (NT)

Personal Development Catalyst

Confidence ‘booster’

As one aspect of the evaluation was to enhance confidence and self-esteem, participants were asked indirect questions eliciting such information. On being asked if being involved in **Out of Reach** had made any difference to her as a person, NT commented on an increased confidence, despite pronouncing that she has always been confident. She describes the whole event as an unconscious process that can possibly help in other areas of life. It is clear that a key aspect of this confidence comes from meeting new people. JB although he does not directly talk about confidence, it is clear that he has become a more confident person.

“In general, it’s a whole confidence thing. Although, you don’t notice it at the time, I think having the courage to get up on the stage and do the performance, and all that kind of thing. It’s always good to boost your confidence. It’s all about meeting people. I’ve made so many friends since I’ve been there, and you get involved in so many different things.” (NT)

“Yes I am more creative in moves now, and erm when ever I get the chance to I can show off my moves what I have learnt over the last year and half or so.” (JB)

Growth and self-expression

For a couple of participants interviewed dance was extremely important as a tool for facilitating self-expression. Being able to express the self was perceived not only as enjoyable but a way of releasing ‘something’ essential as a human being.

“It’s actually something that I enjoy so much. It is a way for me, personally, to express myself. It sounds really corny when I say it!” (NT)

“I think the most important is to let something out of you. As humans, we’ve all got to do that. I think exploring movement and dance is a great way to let something out of you..... It’s helped me bloom. A lot of stuff has come out of it, with my experience, with MDI, definitely.” (JC)

Human/person-centred approach

It is also clear that a perceived ‘human approach’ of dance leaders, as experienced by one member on the **Out of Reach** programme, is important in the development of a trusting relationship which although was not specifically

related to increased learning was conducive to a relaxed and non-pressurised environment; an environment which was compared favourably to the school one.

The first dance teacher that I had, was Alicia, and she taught me for about seven years. I got really close to her as she was teaching me. ..it’s a very open relationship - not like a teacher in school who puts pressure on you - just let you do what you want to do, but in a controlled environment. I think it’s just really relaxed, and it’s better that way. The dance teacher we’ve got now is the same. She gets on with everybody really well, and talks to everybody a lot, rather than just being the teacher and talking about dance. She talks to people about other things as well (NT).

Misperceptions and limited knowledge of Out of Reach

In response to the question asking what family and friends thought about doing dance classes it was interesting to see that although community dance was supported by parents and friends, it was viewed ‘cautiously’ by others who had not been involved with it on any level. A certain snobbishness by others to the way in which **Out of Reach** is conducted was expressed by NT. JB implied that many people are interested in dancing but do not know where they can do it. This commented perhaps suggests a lack of publicity about **Out of Reach**, in terms of the project and the services that it offers.

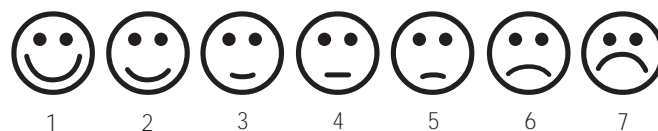
“People in school - because I go to a private school, and everyone’s, sort of, rich! I remember a few of them were interested in dance, and they wanted to start somewhere, and they didn’t know where to go. I told them a bit about my dancing, and they said it sounded really good. I told them about some of the shows that we’d done in the past, and they were all really interested. They said ‘Where is it,’ and I said ‘It’s in the library’, they were like ‘It’s in the library?’ and I was like ‘Yeah, it’s in the library.’ There seemed to be a bit of a problem about it being in the library! Then it was ‘How much was it?’ and I said ‘Thirty pence.’ And they’re like ‘Thirty pence in the library?!’ I was like ‘Yeah’. They seemed to think there was something wrong with it, because it was thirty pence in the library. A few months later I was taking time off school because I had a show in the millennium dome, and when I told them, they were like ‘Wow - that’s really good’. I thought, you could have been in it too, if you hadn’t been so snotty about it! They all go to these really expensive dance schools, where you have to pay a fortune. one of my friends has been at a dance school for about two years, and she hasn’t even done one show yet. I know they don’t enjoy it there, so think it’s better.” (NT).

“Erm I think they think that they would like to join but they never get the opportunity to exactly know where to go.” (JB)

In summary, **Out of Reach** provides a forum in which individuals can participate and be involved in many aspects of the dance process. Unmistakably **Out of Reach** offered an opportunity for them to have fun, to meet and work with others from the same community, and communities further afield. To learn about other cultures, and meet/work with individuals from these cultures. It can be said that **Out of Reach** offers an ‘alternative’ education, allowing individuals to have more say, involvement than they are use to in a more formal education systems. It is also important in facilitating personal development. Participants without a doubt have enjoyed a seemingly ‘valueless’ experience with **Out of Reach**. For example, when JB was asked: *Is there anything about the Out of Reach projects that you would like to change?*, his reply was

“No not really it’s just perfect, if I had it I’d run it the same way. I would like it to be the same way.” (JB)

Figure 1 ‘Smiley Face’ scale



Scores in relation to ‘smiley face’ responses

Table 3. A-J

A Knowsley Boys (Before dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	31	29.5	50.0	50.0
	2	18	17.1	29.0	79.0
	3	11	10.5	17.7	96.8
	6	1	1.0	1.6	98.4
	7	1	1.0	1.6	100.0
	Total	62	59.0	100.0	

B Knowsley Boys (After dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	46	43.8	74.2	74.2
	2	12	11.4	19.4	3.5
	3	2	1.9	3.2	96.8
	4	2	1.9	3.2	100.0
	Total	62	59.0	100.0	

C Toxteth Youth (Before dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	57	54.3	55.3	55.3
	2	32	30.5	31.1	86.4
	3	12	11.4	11.7	98.1
	4	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
	7	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	103	98.1	100.0	

D Toxteth Youth (After dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	55	52.4	57.3	57.3
	2	27	25.7	28.1	85.4
	3	11	10.5	11.5	96.9
	4	1	1.0	1.0	97.9
	7	2	1.9	2.1	100.0
	Total	96	91.4	100.0	



Quality of Life.

‘306 ‘Smiley faces’ were completed by participants. Number of questionnaires filled in before ‘b’ and after ‘a’ are indicated (Wirral Mind = 29b, 25a , Croxteth Youth group = 45b, 36a, Toxteth Youth group = 103b, 96a, Knowsley Boys = 62b, 62a See Appendix 4 for raw figures). Findings showed that dance had a positive impact on subjective feeling of well-being with many participants showing slightly improved happiness after participating in a dance workshop. However, it is clear that dance was not creating a major ‘shift’ in subjective well-being across the groups. **Scores in relation to ‘smiley face’ responses can be seen in Table 3. A-to J.** They show scores before and after taking part in dance workshops.

E Croxteth Youth (Before dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	23	21.9	51.1	51.1
	2	16	15.2	35.6	86.7
	3	4	3.8	8.9	95.6
	5	1	1.0	2.2	97.8
	6	1	1.0	2.2	100.0
	Total	45	42.9	100.0	

F Croxteth Youth (After dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	19	18.1	52.8	52.8
	2	13	12.4	36.1	88.9
	3	4	3.8	11.1	100.0
	Total	36	34.3	100.0	

G Wirral Mind (Before dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	5.7	20.7	20.7
	2	8	7.6	27.6	48.3
	3	10	9.5	34.5	82.8
	4	2	1.9	6.9	89.7
	5	3	2.9	10.3	100.0
	Total	29	27.6	100.0	

H Wirral Mind After (After dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	7.6	32.0	32.0
	2	7	6.7	28.0	60.0
	3	6	5.7	24.0	84.0
	4	2	1.9	8.0	92.0
	6	1	1.0	4.0	96.0
	7	1	1.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	25	23.8	100.0	

I Walton Prison (Before dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	10	9.5	40.0	40.0
	2	11	10.5	44.0	84.0
	3	3	2.9	12.0	96.0
	5	1	1.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	25	23.8	100.0	

J Walton Prison ((After dance session)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	1	1.0	4.0	4.0
	1	19	18.1	76.0	80.0
	2	4	3.8	16.0	96.0
	3	1	1.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	25	23.8	100.0	

In terms of the other side of subjective wellbeing and happiness - the cognitive side - which emphasises how satisfied an individual is with life, participants showed similar responses to that of emotional well being. Refer to Appendix 6 for raw scores.



Participants

Smiley faces appeared to be an appropriate tool to use as part of **Out of Reach** evaluation. They were fun and, as indicated by participants' responses were a measure of satisfaction with the dance sessions.

“Yes, I thought they were fun, I thought they were really good, it showed us what we thought of the actual dance group and if we enjoyed it or not, I think we had smiley face” (JB)

It is clear that participants respond well to this personal evaluation, and use the time given over for this in a constructive manner. NT (dance participant) shows support for the dance leaders routine self-evaluation and comments that it makes her feel as though the needs and desires of participants like herself are being considered.

“...every so often, we get a questionnaire asking us about the way we feel about the way things are run in the performance company - every different aspect. I do feel it's good, because they really do take what we want into consideration. I've never had that with any other dance company. They never really spoke to you, or asked for your opinion on things, with a view to change it, if you have a problem with it, which most of the time we don't, so that's good. (NT)

Dance leaders

MC expresses how she enjoyed the use of 'the smileys', and was in favour of the pre and post dance session use of them.

“Ohhhhh!!! Fabulous! Well, we use them! It was like, how were they feeling before doing the class, to how they were feeling afterwards. I thought they really worked well. There was some really positive stuff. In one youth centre, which was using them, they were feeling quite low coming into the class. Afterwards, they were feeling much better, happier. I think they worked really well, giving them out at the beginning, and then again at the end.”(MC).

MC provides a comprehensive account of self-evaluation strategies that she has built-up over time, raising the notion that she feels it takes more than one person to obtain an effective self-evaluation process. She indirectly, implies that, whilst she can act as an information gatherer, as an individual dance leader she cannot take that much responsibility in evaluation.

“Usually I get the information. I do my information. I give it to MDI. We get together every so often, where I'll be able to have a little chat with them, and say “I feel like this is what they're saying to me, is there anything we can do?” Whether it gets done - because I mention certain issues, and whatever else goes down. I'm sure they (MDI) must get all the evaluations and think ‘Yep, we'll do this, this, and this.”(MC)

Part of self-evaluation is being aware of possible improvements that could be made to the service. MC feels that in order to encourage more boys to take up dance, that it may be helpful to integrate them with girls more, and to introduce male role models in the form of dance teachers. MC feels strongly that one of the best ways forward is to introduce dance in schools at an early age.

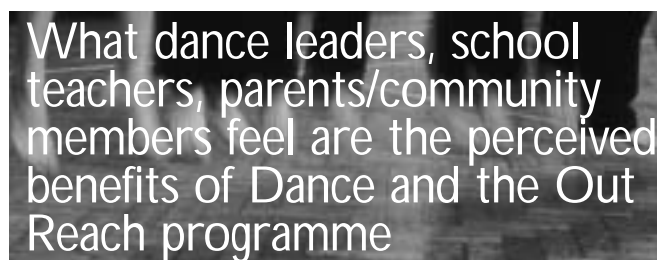
“In certain youth centres,... one incident I went to, it was a girls only day. The boys weren't invited to take part, but they were hanging about outside, which was distracting some of the girls. Maybe if people had invited them in, to watch, just given them the sense that it's not just for girls. In another youth centre, the boys were doing one thing in one room, and it was just the girls. I think for future, boys - I think it's down to having more men teachers as well, to act as role models for them . There are major issues, where the lads are concerned.” (MC)

“I think, within the schools, it's a really good way of getting the lads involved, because the classes are mixed. If they're starting from a young age, they're probably not going to see anything as 'bad'. Going into schools is so 'bad. There was one school I went

into while I was studying. We just had a few girls and one lad, who really wanted to do it - but secondary level, peer pressure - plus, they weren't allowed to do it in that school. I think getting it into schools at a young age is a good way to go with it.” (MC)

Summary

Completion of “smiley faces” was not perceived to be an arduous task by participants or dance leaders. In fact, participants valued the chance to give some feedback on how they felt about the session, and dance leaders felt that the Smiley faces were an appropriate tool to give students pre and post sessions. However, it was clear from some comments that engagement in evaluation would be limited to information collection and passing on to others. In terms of self-evaluation, one leader was keen to highlight discriminative practice against boys, which was unnecessary and easily changed.



What dance leaders, school teachers, parents/community members feel are the perceived benefits of Dance and the Out Reach programme

Enjoyment

MC describes enjoyment as one of the key benefits of being involved in **Out of Reach**. She comments that although participants look forward to doing a performance in the future, they do not approach the programme with a means to an end attitude. Indeed, factors such as meeting people and making friends are a large part of the **Out of Reach** experience. When MC was asked “What do you think the children feel about the dance, in the things they say and do?”, she recounted several behaviour markers of pleasure and satisfaction by participants.

“I know they enjoy the dance classes. ...we're not doing a project as such, we're just doing dance classes, and they'll come along for enjoyment. They all love performing, everyone wants to do something at the end. But they are aware that they come along, and they're just there to do a dance class. There will be something at the end of it, but it could be a while before there is. I think they just enjoy coming to the class, as well. They get to meet up, and make friends, and enjoy seeing people they haven't seen for a while.... The classes are getting bigger as well.” (MC)

“A few comments I’ve had off a group of them I’ve had recently, they mentioned they were really enjoying the class. They went into school, and they were doing dance, and they used some of the dance we’d done in the performance at school, which showed they enjoyed it. Other comments - they practice whenever possible, they practice the routines I set them.” (MC.)

Health benefits

Although perhaps not realised by participants, MC believes that participants of **Out of Reach** gain in terms of their health.

“Using up energy - it’s a health energy. They’re coming along to do exercise. They probably don’t realise it, but they are. It’s obviously a health issue as well. You go and do sports, and you know you’re going to keep fit. When you come to dance, I don’t think a lot of them think they’re coming to keep fit - they just come to have fun. But it’s a form of exercise.” (MC)

Personal development

KC, Manager of Croxteth Child Development Service, speaks of the personal development she has witnessed for many children involved in **Out of Reach**. She particularly focuses on increased confidence. MC also feels that her students have also increased confidence. Both KC and MC mention how this shines through in performances. MC also believes that exposure to performances also helps to instil a certain amount of confidence in youngsters.

“From listening and talking to the children, a lot of the children that we initially worked with were quite shy. I think one of the main benefits that I’ve seen over the past four years with those children has been the great increase in their confidence, and obviously their dance skills and physical. Especially when they are going out to do shows and things like that just, the difference in them, from when they first started to the end has been brilliant.” (KC)

“confidence - to boost the confidence of some of them, especially once they get to perform, and they get to show each other work from the classes.....They get to see different people performing. I think it gives them the attitude to say ‘Yeah. I want to be good when I’m on stage, too, because they’re seeing all the other groups performing.’ (MC)

Improved social skills of some of the **Out of Reach** participant were witnessed by various individuals interviewed. Group work during dance sessions was felt by one to be a key factor in promoting the development of social skills.

I think a big part as well with the confidence thing I’ve witnessed as well is working together and their social skills and their development there. Because the dance is very much about the group, and working together in that group, so I’ve seen a lot of development in group skills as well. (KC)

Interest and enthusiasm

“the majority of feedback has come from after the performances so there’s three different things really. One is the attendance of parents and carers that go to the shows and watching them watching their own performing. It’s overwhelming when the performances finish, because I always get masses of like “oh it’s brilliant and aren’t they coming on, and the difference now.” The second type of feedback is from the children and young people their attendance I mean that is a form of feedback to me. Those kids that were with us like three years ago are still with us. You know we’ve got older ones now that have gone on and come back again. Our organisation also do our own evaluations ...we always get really positive feedback from the children from that. The only thing that does come back is that they always ask for more of it, so that’s a positive it is from them. And we also get really good feedback from the community that, there’s quite a lot of people that live in this community that are board members as trustees for our organisation and we always get really good feedback from them because it’s opportunities that these kids have never do and never have a chance to do.” (KC)

As highlighted above, interest and enthusiasm for the **Out of Reach** programme has been shown through attendance records, organisational members comments, and evaluation feedback.

KC also informs of the eagerness that many of the children have shown to continue dancing. Their passion manifests in a desire to continue with dance session or to actually train as a dance leader themselves.

“Yeah, because now what we’ve got is a group of young people who started four years ago here who are all sort of coming towards leaving school now. They’ve actually just recently been in to see me and asked if they could, if there was any way that we could get a dance teacher to continue their dance with them. But also, they are really interested in the dance leadership course. So again for the kids in this community, they live in this community, so again that’s going to have that affect on younger children and other people because then they will be doing that.” (KC)

An opportunity (free, training, meeting others, share and learn from each other learn about other cultures,)

For many, **Out of Reach** provided an opportunity for many people to engage in dance, an activity that they would otherwise not be able to afford. Croxteth Child Development Coordinator, KC, is keen to point this out. KC also highlights how **Out of Reach** provided an opportunity for many individuals to engage in dance and dance training, as well as learn about other cultures. MC expresses the spin-offs that older children benefit from in working with younger children on the **Out of Reach** programme, pointing out that the skills they develop through this may be useful for personal future advancement in dance.

“...the finance is a key issue... some children’s families can afford, but it’s a small proportion of the kids that we are working for and if we went out and hired a dance teacher, to do that then we know, I know for a fact that most of them kids wouldn’t be coming.” (KC)

“.....so it’s definitely had a catalyst effect because now there’s other people and the staff as well have got involved in other dance for personal reasons and also with the children and young people but the main thing that the leadership course was a lot of the theory behind it and how you can incorporate the different types of culture in through dance and how important that is and interesting”(KC)

“I think, when they worked with the younger ones, they were, sort of, the leaders. I think in the whole, at the end, they might want to become dance leaders. All this interaction with the other ones, showing them certain things, how they’re supposed to act when they’re away on these showcases... I think it’s just helping themselves as individuals, in the long run.” (MC)

Multiple benefits associated with First Year Report

In following up responses to the **Out of Reach** First Year report it was clear that areas of benefit identified in the report (which were social, psychological and physical in nature) resonated well with different partner organisations. For example, managers of a day centre delivering services for individuals with learning disabilities not only stated this directly, but also showed much enthusiasm for future involvement with **Out of Reach**.

“We believed all the positive outcomes described in the report on pages 7, 8, 9, 10 definitely applied to the people in our centre who took part”

“If you wish us to become involved in any future projects we are very confident that a number of individuals from this centre would welcome the chance”

Others organisations, such as Elms School, highlighted the fact that **Out of Reach** had provided a valuable opportunity for otherwise socially excluded groups to be involved in dance activity. This organisation also expressed that they believed dance had an important place in the school Curriculum.

“Children at The Elms have a varied and ‘special need, ranging from Downs Syndrome to total ‘Global decay’, and would or may not have had the opportunity of taking part in any dance workshops or productions. In this respect the Out of Reach project was indeed meeting the needs of this ‘deprived’ group”

“It is certainly a medium by which the children in The Elms will hopefully be able to continue as part of their Individual Education Plans, the sheer impact of dance on their health and future well being”

Wirral Mind organisation highlighted the therapeutic and social interaction value of **Out of Reach** for their service users.

“The complexity of movement and coordination was good for concentration and the ability to transcend anxieties and offer respite from mental worries. The bonding together of the group and the positive ambiance of the group was uplifting to group members.”

(See Appendix 7 a-d for individual letters from partner organisations.)

Summary

Participants of **Out of Reach** experience are perceived by dance leaders, some teachers, parents and partner organisations to benefit both physically and psychologically from the programme. For instance they enjoy the exercise, get pleasure from performances and show growth in confidence, self-esteem, social skills and educational success. Passion and enthusiasm for **Out of Reach** is shown across different factions of the community.



Out of Reach: health and the arts

The Arts Health Diamond model depicted in Figure 2. (CAHHM - Centre for Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine, University of Durham) is utilised here to contextualise the work of **Out of Reach**. This model has been utilised for evaluation purposes by the centre (Smith, 2001). Information provided here is the outcome of an interview between the external evaluator and the Merseyside Dance Initiative team (MDI)⁹.

MDI feel that they represented the community arts/health perspective. This was because they identify and work with different types of community:

“because we work and identify different types of communities to work with so it’s not just about young people, it could be about professional artists as a community and it’s trying to I think target as many different types of people as possible through dance.”

From working with communities and using art, MDI believed that they often had an impact at the level of the individual.

“working with the communities and using the art form dance with...individuals who may then go on to do other things...especially through the Out of Reach there’s a definite development of peoples journey that they’ve made with us, and out of certain groups there are individuals who have actually come through and shone through.”

Hence, as an organisation MDI perceived a strong link between community, art and individual dimensions of the community/arts health diamond. To a lesser extent MDI connected with the health service. They see this evaluation as a precursor to making greater links with the health service. MDI also recognise that health is impacted upon by various, activities, events and situations

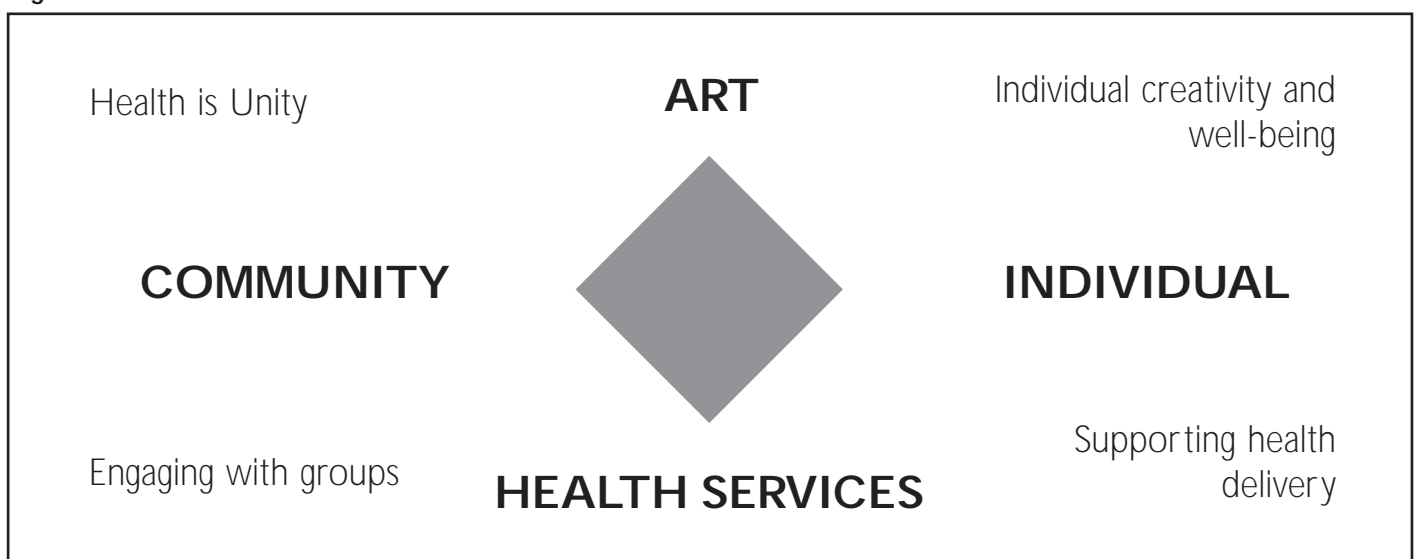
“MDI is driven by dance and obviously that’s our key reason for being. We do touch on aspects of health, of being an individual and being a community member. However, we haven’t really gone down the route fully with the health service or with the health implications but I think again if that’s going to be one of the outcomes that we want to explore then we will do so.”

One member of the team emphasises the value of arts-based activity in terms of valuing the individual, and also creating an arena of awareness which encourages individuals to value others.

“It’s not just working with different groups it’s about providing them with different diverse opportunities - taking them to see work by other nationalities or looking at dance and disability and having somebody watch a disabled artist. So it’s not just about valuing them, but it’s also about allowing them to value other people’s diversity as well.”

A sense of ownership of Out of Reach work by participants is perceived as a marker of success by the MDI team. One team member refers to this sense of ownership in the Croxteth youth group that has developed slowly over the duration of the Out of Reach project. The transition between operating as an individual as opposed to group level is pointed out. Here a link between local control and personal development is seen. Other concrete outcomes relating to local control are

Figure 2. The Arts Health Diamond



⁹MDI interview/transcript/video at MDI

highlighted by another member of the team also. Another member provides specific examples of local control taking place by describing development for certain individuals.

“...giving them the opportunity to get involved in the dance leaders course and training courses and enabling them to be able to have a little more support and say in what they do themselves as a group of people. I suppose local control in something that’s quite new really in the project - it has taken 3 years. There are individuals who 3 years ago would not have thought of coming out of their own environment, their community, to come into working with the project or as an individual. They’d think of coming as a group – wouldn’t come as an individual - it takes that long to develop that and embed that local control in somebody. You would have had to bus them down...to physically go and get them to bring them into a space. It’s really noticeable to see individuals of groups that pick up their feet and all of a sudden they are there, but it takes that long. Speke and Garston and Croxteth, we’ve got individuals who wouldn’t even go to Speke who now will come into the city centre.”

“...it’s a three year project - but we’ve been thinking from the very beginning ..that, if we’re not here to deliver it, that there is that embedded local control. That at least that people know that MDI exist as an agency that they can come to for support in other ways, but also that they know how to run their own dance youth group, or know that to book a ticket and come and see a show, or to know that there is a dance festival or something. So even though Out of Reach may not exist after three years, there’s always been that thought process that something will exist whatever that is.”

“there’s one particular girl who’s gone on to further education now, at Liverpool Community College, and she’s now going back into her community to teach dance, and she’s only 17/18. There’s two more who are leaving now to go to further education within the arts, so that type of partnership, and what you’ve left in that area is something that won’t be forgotten, they will always continue.

In terms of partnerships, an adaptive and flexible framework with different groups is viewed as one of the successes of **Out of Reach**. One member of the team implies a need to find a balance between aesthetics, creativity and personal development in working with groups. Also, the issue of building-up a sense of trust is seen as very important in partnerships.

“I think it is quite hard to come in sometimes, because dance is actually driven by discipline predominantly.

Yes it’s a lot of fun, it can be exciting, but for most of us we’ve been trained in dance in a very disciplined. It’s quite difficult going into some of these situations because you do have to let a lot of that go in order to get to the point where you can just say actually it is just a bit of fun, lets go in with that. You’re expectation is not to make a dancer; you’re expectation is not to make sure that they all go on to other training, it is about trying to find that balance really that creative energy, when working with some of the groups because they are very, very different and have very different needs.”

“I think is about working with partners and building up the trust, which sometimes was very, very difficult.”

In terms of sustainability, the MDI team recognise that as a small organisation they can only implement and develop projects to a certain extent, but need assistance in terms of sustainability of projects. One team member puts this message across eloquently when she speaks about a way forward for dance; she focuses on targetting organisations at national/local level and states mechanisms to inform such organisations about the achievements of projects such as long-term projects, research etc.

“They are not interested in whether it exists or not (referring to funding bodies). I think its about embedding it into policy and strategy from the local authorities perspective, or a health authorities perspective or and educational authorities perspective. It is about having that security and knowledge that those with the greater infrastructure such as local authorities are able to have a check list, a bench mark of what needs to be achieved through the arts, that’s not there yet. I think it’s our job as much as it is about getting in and doing practical sessions. It’s about us lobbying and advocating for dance at a much higher level than we are now, in order to get the acknowledgement of the work that we do, hence this type of project, hence the need for research, hence the need for stacks of paper.”

Although, it is clear that the team understand the necessity for evaluation in order to assist development and sustainability of projects, they state that although much learning can come out of evaluation, in reality, conducting evaluation can be time consuming, demanding, and challenging. One member refers to the collaboration between the external evaluator and the team and the difficulty of being a dance artist and evaluator simultaneously, whilst others draw attention to

the evaluation tool used as one assessment of quality of Life questioning the validity of responses gained for some groups.

“Very difficult and it’s been a learning process again with yourself (referring to external evaluator) being part of the whole thing. You know it’s in partnership you can’t do both, you either deliver a dance session or it becomes an evaluation session. I think just on the paper issue (referring to Smiley faces) it was a bit unbelievable and also you wouldn’t get a definite positive reading. To begin with you would because they’d had a little think about it. It depends what groups they are, and after a certain extent they just tick whatever. But the prison group actually thought really hard over theirs, and like it really meant a lot from the beginning of the session like, and the end of the session.”

“Yeah I think the more they saw them the more they thought tick, tick hand it back and I think that in the end it wasn’t really a true measure of how they were actually feeling before or after the session. The initial responses were probably the truer ones.”

“The things that we’ve done differently I suppose is things like setting up a forum meeting where people come together and talk about what they want to see happening based on things that have gone on prior. We’ve done things like big pieces of paper through a session where people can go as and when they feel like a write down thoughts.”

In summary, snippets from the interview with the MDI team provide evidence to suggest that projects such as **Out of Reach** function primarily at the arts, individual and community level. However, interview material also suggests an increased awareness being given to the value of accessing health service partnerships in terms of development and sustainability of projects. The MDI team illustrate how being involved in projects encourages personal development and local control over time. In terms of evaluation, the team pinpoint the challenge of evaluation practice, and how the use of some measures may be more appropriate for some groups than others.



Discussion

“... collectively there was agreement amongst participants, dance leaders, school teachers and partner organisations that those involved in Out of Reach showed signs of personal development in several areas.”

This evaluation explored the views and opinions of four key stakeholders in the **Out of Reach** project: participants, dance leaders, school teachers and the Merseyside Dance Initiative (MDI) team. Findings of the different perceptions and experiences of these stakeholders are summarised in Tables 4 and 5. In order to gain a greater insight into **Out of Reach**, this evaluation put forward five specific objectives for assessment. To recapitulate from the introduction these included: documenting the impact of dance as a tool for social interaction, assessing the impact of dance on quality of life and wellbeing, documenting the development of individuals who have taken part in projects, exploring the role of the dance leader and their association with good practice, and evaluating partnership principles in relation to practice. These objectives are used in order to provide accountability of the programme and document of **Out of Reach** process and outcome. This is necessary for dissemination purposes and utility regarding future funding of projects. These two outcomes were outlined in the initial **Out of Reach** proposal (see strategy document, Appendix 1)

Out of Reach, has enabled MDI to reassess evaluation as part of its professional practice, it is a means of understanding service users' satisfaction with their service and a tool for facilitating good practice. Evaluation has shown **Out of Reach** to have an impact at individual and organisational level. On an individual level, concrete indicators of success have been demonstrated by further dance training with the dance leaders course and being more directly involved in community life. Case studies and reports from the organisation highlight 'less tangible' benefits associated with **Out of Reach**, such as it being a trajectory for creative exploration and personal development and gaining a deeper understanding of dance.

At an organisational level, evaluation of **Out of Reach** facilitated action research. A healthy collaboration between an external evaluator and themselves was formed. Several dance practitioners have taken responsibility for collecting and understanding information about the evaluation. One member, namely the project coordinator, took part in the analysis of this information. Indeed, the collaboration between the external evaluator and project coordinator apart from being essential to the success of this evaluation, resulted in a learning experience for both parties. It was not part of this evaluation to document information about the collaboration however, it can be said that the learning experience resulting from it for both parties is considerable and will be useful for future arts/health collaborations.

Having evaluation as part of the **Out of Reach** agendas, encouraged MDI to make links with academic organisations who have, in turn, facilitated international contact and publicity. This contact has given MDI new ideas for evaluating projects, generating publicity for its organisation in order to increase awareness about the programme and to elicit further funding. The evaluation has included partner organisations, and it is clear from schools' and other organisations' responses and other organisations that strong partnerships have been formed between themselves and **Out of Reach**. Indeed, there has been direct expression from partner organisations of utmost positive regard, and wishes for links to continue. In terms of sustainability, there is increasing awareness by **Out of Reach** and MDI of the need for others to become involved in the evaluation process in order for projects to be part of an unquestionable government policy which is assigned appropriate funding.

Diane Amans referred to SMART objectives in community dance evaluation. Although she made specific reference to setting objectives in relation to disabled people she works with, the idea of SMART objectives is useful here (Amans, 2002). Set objectives were monitored through a series of interviews and quantitative measures. Objectives were specific in the sense that they targeted specific groups, for instance dance leaders, participants etc. In terms of measurement, different groups of questions were designed for different groups. All objectives were appropriate and achievable as demonstrated by evaluation evidence, and provided a balanced and realistic account of the **Out of Reach** programme. The set evaluation objectives were well-timed objectives as they were formed in the final year of the **Out of Reach** programme, and therefore allow three years worth of progress to be documented.

There have been many incentives focussing on regeneration, neighbourhood renewal, or whatever name is used to describe funded interventions in areas of economic deprivation. This evaluation shows that dance can play a serious part in regeneration strategy. Indeed evidence collated about **Out of Reach** project demonstrates that there is a need for people-centred development strategies. In terms of social and economic regeneration the big question is what impact does this individual development have at a community level (Kay, 2000). Some of the responses suggested that dance had an impact at community level, with individuals emphasising that they felt 'part of a family', had met people from the area, and people from other communities. As found by Matarasso (2001) in evaluation of arts-based regeneration activity, a definite social regeneration with the **Out of Reach** programme was witnessed.

The success of **Out of Reach** can be categorised according to: the types of projects instigated, the relationship between service users and service providers, and the involvement of participants in dance sessions. The strong consensus viewpoint between dance leaders and participants on what it takes to be a dance leader and the individual's experience of the service, shows that there is a shared understanding about what has made **Out of Reach** successful. Indeed, collectively there was agreement amongst participants, dance leaders, school teachers and partner organisations that those involved in **Out of Reach** showed signs of personal development in several areas.

It was realised in the early stages of experimenting with more systematic evaluation techniques that it would be too time-consuming for dance leaders to co-ordinate the completion of 'smileys' and more in-depth mood questionnaires during every session. It was decided, by the dance leaders, that only 'smileys' would be completed and that this would be done so intermittently rather than during each session.

It is clear from our findings that in general the subjective well-being of 'at risk' or, as termed here, socially excluded groups was initially, in the majority of instances, good if not extremely high. This is paradoxical given that the literature on these groups suggests that subjective well-being is likely to be low. It might be argued that participants' responses reflect a need to provide socially desirable traits, or a lack of any frame of reference by which to understand their state of happiness.

Whatever the reason, it is interesting that the majority of participants across the Croxteth & Toxteth Youth groups, as well as the Boys groups showed similar patterns of responses before and after dance sessions. Participants in the Croxteth & Toxteth Youth, as well as the Boys groups were generally extremely happy or very happy before classes with these states continuing after the class, and where possible, sometimes improving. More variation in response was noticed for the Wirral Mind and Walton Prison group. For these groups although a number of participants did report being extremely or very happy before class, it was more common for participants to indicate that they were 'quite happy', and in general show more signs of unhappiness than the other groups. Throughout the MDI team interview, comments were made about the validity of some of the youth group participants and their '*tick, tick hand it back*' responses, whereas it was suggested that other groups such as Wirral Mind and Walton Prison were generally more reflective in their responses. Hence, whether responses reflect feelings about quality of life or level of commitment to form filling is debatable.

With reference to Boys Only and other groups involved with **Out of Reach**, literature on dance activity by Brinson (primarily a dance scholar, but also a sociologist) refers to the social, community-engaging, educational properties associated with dance (Brinson, 1991). Responses gained from some of the dance participants pay homage to dance literature stating that male dancers often discover dancing later on in life. Ramsay Burt in his book 'The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexuality's', (in his introduction) comments on how during the last hundred and fifty years dance has not been considered an appropriate activity for men to engage in (Burt 1995). He goes on to say that due to prejudice against male dancers that a large proportion of men who have pursued careers in modern dance, and to a lesser extent ballet, have often not discovered dancing until they were in their teens or early twenties (Burt 1995). This is a matter of access, in which the **Out of Reach** 'Boys Only' addressed enabling boys to experience dance in and outside their own environment. **Out of Reach** worked with year 5, year 6 and year 7 students and evidence that the young people would like to pursue this further as a career is shown in the video (Boys Only 2002).

Evidence in this report and video highlights the enthusiasm that young boys have for engaging in dance. This finding contrasts with literature on stereotypical notions of dance held by men. For instance, Glasstone (1980) in discussing gender issues says "Many people have an idea there is something effeminate about male dancing. This varies from vague notions about men looking silly in tights, or feelings that it's somehow, soft for men to dance to a conviction that most male dancers are homosexuals" (Glasstone 1980). Others have commented on the association between male dancers and homosexuality (Burt, 1995). More recently, the Aiming High report (1998 -1999) also brought up findings and comments of dance having a negative appeal to boys, "Dance was not attractive to boys, as it is at odds with peer group pressure to affirm their masculinity (Aiming High 98 -99). Although at the start of **Out of Reach** some of the boys did express concern that dance was not for them, three years on the group has grown in numbers and continues to thrive.

Often what leads men to start dance training is the discovery of their potential; this is frequently brought about by seeing an inspirational performance by another male dancer (Burt 1995). This is true of the 'Boys only'. The boys involved have continued their interest with the project, they find role models in the teachers, and through the continuity of teachers they develop a good relationship and build trust with them. They have opportunity to work with companies and also perform

and see other boys dancing. It is important to catch young people at an earlier age, which hopefully develops into transition to further development.

Subjective accounts from the 'Boys Only' video clearly showed several benefits associated with dance activity. Both participants and school teachers expressed positive views about the **Out of Reach** programme. In summary, interviews showed that being involved in dance had the potential to influence career choice, to change stereotyped views of who should dance, and to meet others and be involved in performance. Teachers confirmed the joy and enthusiasm the Boys had for dance, and commented on the educational spin-offs and personal development that dance encouraged in pupils. Although not all school teachers were enthusiastic about the prospect of teaching dance themselves they welcomed and encouraged dance activity in their school.

Similar to an intensive summer dance programme, which has been recently been evaluated through case study analysis (Green, 2002) **Out of Reach** was not only received enthusiastically by participants, but proved to have other benefits. **Out of Reach** provides an arena in which individuals can take an active-role in learning whilst also having fun, alongside facilitating (individual) participation, belonging and ownership. Hence, **Out of Reach** performances were not viewed (by dancers and participants alike) as a means to an end but were clearly part of a greater learning process, in which dance experience/choreography focused around the issues and concerns of participants. Indeed, dance leaders' accounts about their strategies during dance sessions imply a strong pedagogical approach to their work.

The case study analysis shows a strong relationship about the meaning and value of dance between dance leaders and participants. The dance leaders have an "empowering" strategy which is respected by participants, and both groups acknowledge the importance of 'creative buzz' in their work.

In terms of partnership principles in relation to practice, **Out of Reach** has unmistakably shown formal, multi-purpose and long-term alliances with community organisations of individuals and groups to achieve common goals, thus demonstrating its strong capacity to form partnerships that work (Butterfoss et al. 1993). School staff, participants and members from other organisations were praising of the **Out of Reach** service emphasising its consultative, participatory and involving role. Signs of disempowerment from all partners and individuals involved with **Out of Reach** were non-existent.

Evaluation strategy

This evaluation of the innovative practice of **Out of Reach** takes a best practice approach in that it is concerned with identification of positive examples of success and unexpected/unanticipated outcomes (Perrin 2002). This is also very much an evaluation for accountability because it provides evidence of the work of **Out of Reach** through case study and interviews with various groups which can be judged according to its merit and/or worth (Russell, 1998). This evaluation purposefully used a combination of qualitative and quantitative data allowing respectively for anecdotal, sometimes called, 'soft data', and more 'robust' measurement of impact and outcome related to the **Out of Reach** programme it should therefore be viewed as a 'robust' evaluation (Galloway, 1995). This evaluation shows limited links between 'hard' and 'soft' quality of life data. However, both data sets tell an interesting story and can be placed together in order to gain a greater understanding of any potential impact or outcome of dance on quality of life.

In this evaluation, 'hard' data although not negative shows little value in demonstrating the benefits associated with dance activity. Alternately, it might be suggested that the response to more established, well-validated measures reflects the complexity of the quality of life concept. Hence, taken together 'hard' and 'soft' measures suggest that although little difference in quality of life measures is associated with dance activity, individuals can still experience positive social, personal and emotional growth in connection with dance activity.

This finding is ironic given that the quality of life tools used for this evaluation could be claimed, in the empirical world, to be more 'robust' than observations and case studies. Indeed, such tools may be more 'robust' but that, as is shown here, does not preclude them from being insensitive to detecting effects from interventions. So, although there has been much talk of a lack of 'hard evidence' in arts-based evaluation (PAT 10, 1999), perhaps the lesson to be learned is that diverse sources of "hard evidence" are needed for evaluation in order to gain a more eclectic and balanced understanding of any influencing arts-based interventions. This will be important in the future for reducing error judgements concerning the effectiveness and benefits of arts-based programmes.

Although **Out of Reach** had a clear strategy at its inception, it was beyond the remit of this evaluation to explore all areas stated in the strategy. Consequently, there are areas of the strategy that have not been covered. For example, **Out of Reach** wanted to assess

possible effects of dance on medication dependency. Admittedly, even if a direct question related to medication use had been placed in the interview questions, lack of evidence may have surfaced due the extremely small amount of interviews conducted. Hence, if this topic was to be looked into, it may be applicable to use straightforward survey-based questions to all those taking part in the dance workshops. Obviously, the question may be more relevant for some groups than others. Also, as stated in the strategy document, parents were to be involved in the evaluation. Although many parents gave praising feedback about **Out of Reach**, and one or two wrote a thank you note, it would be useful to explore parents viewpoints about dance activity in a deeper and less passive way.

Future Recommendations

- To continue to use the existing **Out of Reach** model as one method in arts-based regeneration. The existing strategy works well and responses from several stakeholders suggests that on the whole, it represents a model of good practice.
- These findings reflect the positive relationship of dance on many dimensions of quality of life. However, the lack of any shift in subjective well being suggests that dance is just one factor in the quality of life equation. For the purposes of this report, dance leaders, participants, and school staff document the impact of dance activity. However, it might be useful in future evaluation to obtain feedback from parents about any influences of dance, if any, to understand more fully the potential impact of dance.
- The Merseyside Dance Initiative team suggests that it would be good to pay more attention to the health of the individual in their work, and work directly with health agencies to influence health and wellbeing. Hence, MDI considers partnerships with health agencies and educational departments, as necessary to its development and sustainability. One collaborative aim for the future is to work on proposals for further funding. It is suggested that the Arts Council of England, and Departments of Health and Culture and Media and Sport be approached, with proposals for future evaluation specifically focusing on health impacts and outcome of future projects.
- Although the **Out of Reach** programme, from the start, had a clear strategy for its three year duration, and the project coordinator stated that they would 'monitor all groups with the use of various evaluation', the aims and objectives highlighted for the **Out of**

Reach evaluation can primarily be attributed to the judgement of an external evaluator. Although this does not detract from the achievements of the **Out of Reach** programme, it might be a useful learning and development exercise for the managers of future projects, to collaborate to a greater extent in outlining evaluation aims and objectives at the start of a project.

- To evaluate future research using both 'hard' and 'soft' indices. This will be important for providing a balanced evaluation.
- Dissemination of information in formal and informal settings so as to increase awareness and knowledge about **Out of Reach**.
- Allocation of a proper evaluation budget to any future evaluation. Approximately 1% of the **Out of Reach** budget was committed to the formal recording of evaluation. This did not adequately cover time allocated to the evaluation. Ideally, the evaluation budget should amount to 10% of the budget.
- To provide some form of evaluation training to arts-based organisations who may need advice/guidance from an external evaluator. Additional resources, for instance, people to gather data may also be needed.
- Given that young people have a strong voice and opinion about dance, and how they would like it to develop in the future, it might be suggested that this be used to inform policy-decisions. Acknowledgement of young people's views and opinions regarding dance in the School Curriculum would demonstrate true public participation in policy-decisions. Recent work with children has shown that this is feasible (Speak, 2000).
- Future of **Out of Reach** should not be questioned. Socially excluded groups should be allowed to benefit from arts-based regeneration activity. Consequently, organisations such as MDI should continue to build on partnerships, and to work with local authority organisations in health and education sectors to assist in the development of successful funding bids.

Conclusion

Overall this evaluation highlights many positive outcomes associated with **Out of Reach** and provides valuable evidence for arts-based activity in regeneration for socially excluded groups, which has been the focus of recent policy. In many ways this evaluation condones 'joined-up' policy initiatives advocated by New Labour which recognise links between social exclusion and health (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998). A number of findings here support ideas about local regeneration that have been put forward by another organisation (ACME: Hill &

Moriarty, 2001). **Out of Reach** has assisted with challenging stereotypes, building local control and personal development, evaluating and celebrating regional work, and using creative processes to engage the local community. In summary, **Out of Reach** has had an impact at an individual and organisational level, and has hopes to have some influence on policy and strategy. This evaluation highlights that not all socially excluded groups are unhappy, in fact the opposite appears to be the case. To date, although there has been a great deal of measurement of socially excluded groups in terms of factors such as employment, housing, and specific health states (which often emphasise the negative side of social exclusion), there has been little evaluation in arts-based activity on the subjective wellbeing. Although the concept of social inclusion is viewed to be a 'fuzzy' one (Jeremyn, 2001) it is hoped that findings from this report contribute

to a greater understanding of the concept. As others have highlighted it is important to realise the extent to which links between health and activities such as dance (used with socially excluded groups in many regeneration initiatives) translate into policy interventions (Moran & Simpkin, 2000).

Reflecting on this evaluation, it could be said that there has been an attempt to categorise and code information about the **Out of Reach** Initiative, common in more traditional forms of evaluation. For future evaluations it would be challenging to use the creative arts themselves as part of a community dance evaluation, as this would allow for the involvement of participants, and utilise the process of creation itself as a means to express opinions and ideas. This would provide a more personalised "creative" evaluation.

Table 4. Perceptions and Experience of Out of Reach by participants and dance leaders

	SERVICE PERCEPTION	SERVICE EXPERIENCE
PARTICIPANTS	<p>Positive Learning Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allows creative expression and freedom (not like school) ● Relaxed ● Good teachers ● Fair and including <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better than private ● Inexpensive ● Not experienced elsewhere <p>Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More performances 	<p>Feelings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fun/exciting/healthy <p>Personal development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting new friends - communities cultures ● New social experience - working with others & performance ● Creative expression - own ideas ● Confidence (dance and general) ● Building trust relationships ● Challenging learning experience
DANCE LEADERS	<p>Clear Aims & Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get people to enjoy dance ● To select movement and awareness of body ● Build up trust relationships ● Build up social skills ● Broadening views and experience ● Introduce popular styles of dance ● Encourage healthy exercise (unintentional) <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Limited funding 	<p>Personal Development for participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spin-off-performances ● Proud ● Learning experience ● Therapeutic-personal development (psychosocial & physical problems) ● Dance leaders course ● Increased expressiveness ● Balancing needs of themselves with those of participants ● Improved social skills ● Increased confidence ● Learning/sharing <p>Dance leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time, effort, unmaterialistic ● Flexible, 'quick-thinking' ● Approachable DANCE ! ● Enthusiasm ● Deal with difficult situations ● Understand youth culture ● Strict ● Naturalness ● Personal development + personal expression ● Organisation <p>Self-evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practice - a) requesting feedback b)non-verbal checks c)monitoring ● Constraints - experience, training and time, limited contact with staff

Table 5. Perceptions and Experience of Out of Reach by Merseyside Dance Initiative and school teachers

SERVICE PERCEPTION		SERVICE EXPERIENCE
MERSEYSIDE DANCE INITIATIVE (MDI) TEAM	<p>What they do/offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target socially excluded groups • Community Art at an individual level • Diverse collaborative partnerships • Health/individual community context • Personnel development Catalyst (others & themselves) • Learning <p>Evolving service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability? • Service provision • Support agency <p>Evaluation culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluating • Commitment 	<p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with diverse groups (primary focus on art, individual, community) • Growing health context of work <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of training/skills/resources • Positive response to evaluation in general • Validity of 'smiley faces' questioned for some groups • Youth worker attributes needed • Struggle with sustainability of service
SCHOOL TEACHERS	<p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brilliant, positive, healthy • Promotes dance in schools <p>Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed emotions about who should deliver • Fun/excitement/learning facilitator 	<p>Personal Development Catalyst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional career development • Academic/behavioural performance of children



Appendices

“MDI is driven by dance and obviously that’s our key reason for being.”



Appendix 1

Strategy for MDI Out of Reach

What are we doing?

Justifying the existence of project

Justifying why it is funded.

The project is delivering, creating opportunity for groups to use dance as the tool.

Why?

MDI have identified gaps in provision.

The project will provide opportunity, it will help groups, and individuals realise their potential and experience dance.

The project will create a written document to say that dance can really make a difference to the people that **Out of Reach** will be reaching out to.

Who is the evidence for?

The client groups that MDI target.

The institutions, organisations.

The workers of the client groups, key workers, medical profession.

How are MDI going to do this?

By monitoring all groups

Looking for change

What forms of monitoring?

Questionnaires, evaluations of the class, feedback from the group, background information, and logbooks.

Monitoring the organisations involvement.

Internal review of informal manner of the project by someone outside the organisation.

Revisit the project after a year to see if what we say we are doing has been done or the enthusiasms has been changed.

What changes do we want to see using dance as the tool?

Changes in attitude, clients, workers

Vocational changes

Body awareness

Confidence

Lack of dependency on medication

Better outlook on life

Self-esteem

Fitness

Happier

Changes in self-expression

Out of Reach will use dance as the media to express oneself, channelling energy into something positive, giving all groups involved the need to belong and take part and know that the sessions are for them to take part in.

Out of Reach will aim to generate income whenever possible, but will work with groups initially for free, working towards partnerships and financial support for future projects.

Out of Reach will be able to realise the potential and know that dance can make a difference, it will not be about delivering a dance workshop, but will know that each group has specific needs that need to be addressed, providing opportunities practical and verbally.

Out of Reach

Will:

Develop groups identified.

Monitor all groups with the use of various evaluation.

Target groups as case studies.

Use other people to measure change, i.e. organisations, key workers, youth workers, individuals.

Develop training opportunities.

Provide performance opportunities for groups involved.

Encourage opportunities to see performances.

Monitor the effect Jump 2000 Feet has on **Out of Reach**, and how effective this route is.

Invite someone from outside the organisation to informally review the project after a year.

Revisit the project after a year of existence.

Use dance as the tool, but will value the experience and the effects this will bring to client groups involved.

Provide written document for all involved in **Out of Reach**.

Enable groups developed to look towards existing after the project ends.

Form new partnerships.

Create new opportunities.

Vision over the next three years.

Toxteth youth group.

Year one: Meet regularly once a week, opportunities for performance, and workshops, develop ownership and young people start to lead sessions, provide training, split group into two age groups and one of members to start to take class with the younger members. Offer dance workshop to parents to generate interest and understanding of group.

Year two: Develop funding for group, identify other members to deliver class, invite different dance practitioners to work with the group. Create adult dance class, "Toxteth adult group".

Year three: On going funding to develop sustainability of both groups.

Croxtheth Youth Dance Group.

Year one: Set up regular dance session, providing dance for two age groups, older group to have workshop for themselves, and join in with younger group, developing the groups movement vocabulary. Classes to be attended by staff and volunteers, developing training. Dance group to meet independently to develop work with the support of the volunteers and staff. Also provide opportunities for performance and different dance styles.

Year two: Development of funding, training for volunteers, adult classes.

Year three: On going funding, group developing independence, possibility of setting up new members.

Wirral Mind.

Year one: Set 10 week introduction to dance, review and deliver another 10 weeks of workshops, developing links with the organisation as well as the clients. Introduce workshops for workers. On going workshops for client group, provide opportunities for performance, take group to see a performance, introduce different dance styles.

Year two: Introduce programme in to other Mind and mental health organisations, continue work with Wirral, provide training opportunities for clients, and hopefully see a change in clients medication.

Year three: Would like to see client groups taking ownership of project, and the delivery of the workshops.

Knowsley Boyz Group.

Year one: Meet regularly once a week developing their groups creativity and performance skills. The group will be given opportunities to be involved in performance projects which will enable the group to work with other professional artists and experience working with different art forms.

Year two: With the support of K.A.S. develop a recruitment programme to generate interest from other young males in the area, as some of the older members may be ready to move to Knowsley youth dance or Knowsley male dance.

Invite workers from KYG/KMD to deliver occasional workshops to create a definite partnership between the groups in the Knowsley area. Continue to create and develop performance pieces to be performed in the annual dance events.

Year three: With the continued support from K.A.S. the group will continue to run on a regular class, members will increase and the group will be creating and performing dance pieces with a lot more creative input by the older members, with a strong link between the Boyz / KYD / KMD.

Elimu, Adelaide House, Walton prison.

Year one: Delivery of dance workshops, tasters, and short projects leading to performance. Possible encouragement to some clients interested in furthering their development and understanding of dance. Providing opportunities of viewing dance be that the form of video, or live performance either in house or at a theatre.

Year two: develop links with other organisations ie. probation, prisons, introducing similar models of work.

Year three: continue work with various organisations, provide training for staff to develop sustainability.

Performance indicators developed after the first year to develop evaluation of all groups involved.

Evaluation

Evaluation of youth groups will be conducted in the form of end of term review, verbally and by questionnaire. Parents and workers to also be involved in the evaluation process. Also attendance will be monitored.

Other groups will take the form of verbal evaluation after each session and question are after the length of time the project has run. Also included will be the centre staff of the various organisations.

All the above will inform the overall evaluation of **Out of Reach**.



Date:

Are you completing this:

- Before the session**
- After the session**

Age

Male or Female

Name of dance group

OUT OF REACH IS SUPPORTED BY THE NATIONAL LOTTERY CHARITIES BOARD



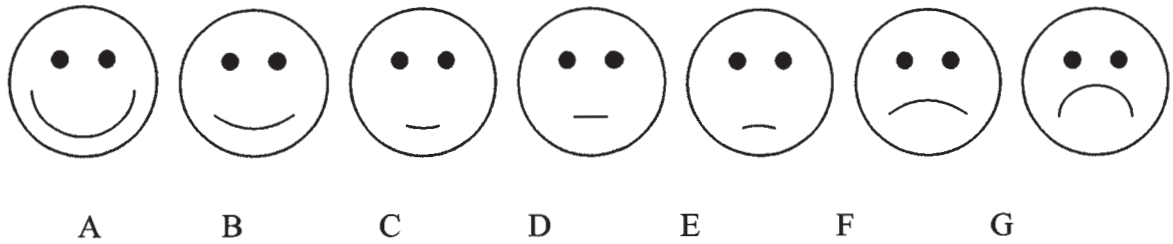
**Merseyside
Dance
Initiative**

a partner of
dance northwest

The Annexe
13/15 Hope Street
Liverpool L1 9BQ
Tel: 0151-708 8810
Fax: 0151-707 0600
e-mail: mdi@eosynet.co.uk

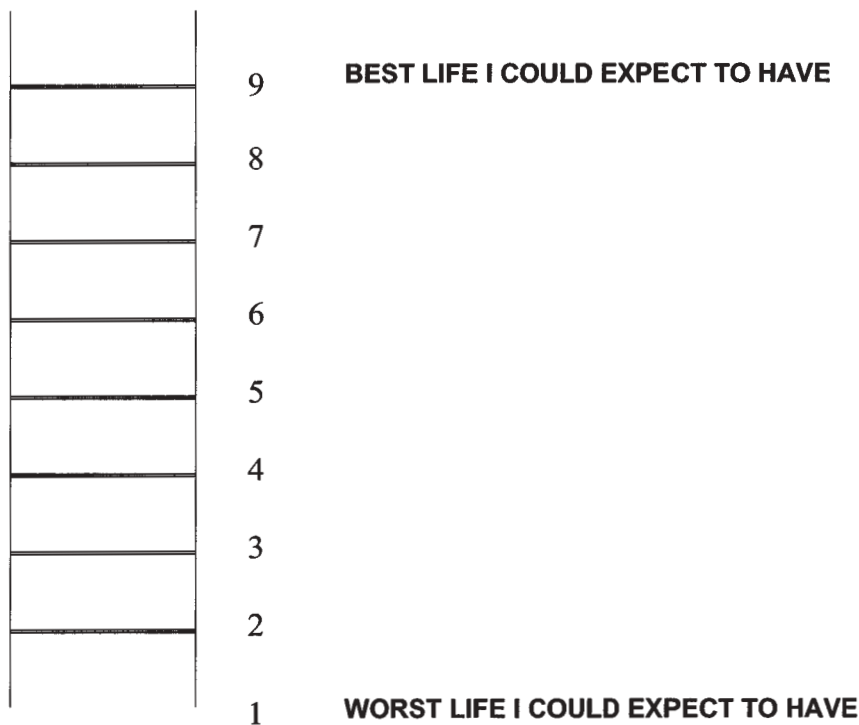
Face Scale and Cantrils Ladder

Here are some faces expressing various feelings which face comes closest to expressing how you feel about your life?



Here is a picture of a ladder. At the bottom of the ladder is the worst situation you might reasonably expect to have. At the top is the best you might expect to have. The other rungs are in between. Where on the ladder is your life?

On which rung would you put it?





Appendix 3

Methodologies

Table 6 Methodologies used to collect data

Interviews conducted	
AS (Case Study 1)*	- Out of Reach project co-ordinator
JC (Case Study 1)	- client (turned dance leader)
NT (Case Study 2)	- Toxteth Youth Dance member
JB (Case study 4)	- dance member
KC (Case study 5)	- dance worker
MC (Case Study 6)	- dance worker
Knowsley Boyz (Case Study 7)	- dance members (several boys)
(recorded on video)	
Photovoice, Letters, video	
Comments from MDI team (video)	- Four members (AS, JB, CC, KG)
Comments from school staff (video)	
Comments from partner organisations/parents	
Photographs of groups during dance sessions	
*not recorded on tape	



Appendix 4

Interview Questions

SET 1 – Interview questions for participants:

- 1 How were you introduced to the **Out of Reach** programme?
- 2 What do you think the benefits of being involved in the **Out of Reach** programme are?
- 3 If **Out of Reach** didn't exist would you get the same opportunities elsewhere?
- 4 Has being involved in **Out of Reach** changed you in any way? Explain
- 5 What impact do you think **Out of Reach** has had on your group?
- 6 What do other people think about your dancing?
- 7 What do you think makes a good dance teacher?
- 8 What kind of feedback about the **Out of Reach** projects have you got?
- 9 Did you do the Smiley faces? What did you think of them?
- 10 Is there anything about the **Out of Reach** projects you would like to change.
- 11 Is there anyway that you feel **Out of Reach** projects could be improved?
- 12 If you could advertise **Out of Reach** what would you say about it? (1 sentence)
- 13 **Out of Reach** is a community project - what does that mean to you?
- 14 Anything else you would like to say about being involved with **Out of Reach**

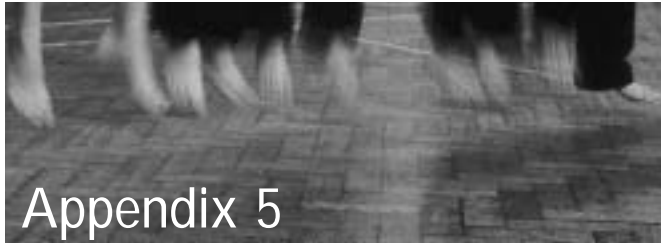
SET 2 – Senior members of the school were asked a series of questions relating to different aspects of the dance. These were:

- 1 Do the children mention anything about the dance classes to you?
- 2 Do you see any change in the children - socially or anything else that might be linked to the dancing?
- 3 So what do you think generally about the dance project?
- 4 Would you personally like to become more involved in the teaching or your staff - and how can you see that happening?

SET 3 – Questions to dance leaders

- 1 How do you feel about the projects you are directly involved in?
- 2 Do the children mention anything about the dance classes to you?
- 3 What do you think the children (or other group) feel about the dance Classes/project from the things they say and do?
- 4 How do you feel about the projects you are directly involved in?
- 5 As a dancer/dance leader what do you think are the most important things that can be gained from doing dance?
- 6 Do you see any change in the children - that might be linked to the dancing (socially or anything else)?
- 7 What other activities have children engaged in as a result of dance classes?
- 8 What do you think these have meant to individuals?
- 9 Evaluation - smiley faces. How did they work?
- 10 What do you feel it takes to be a dance leader?
- 11 What is the most testing/difficult aspect of taking classes?
- 12 What do you feel about community dance in general? Where it is now, and its future.

Table 7 Face Scale response – raw scores for all groups¹⁰



Appendix 5

¹⁰ B = Before A = After Scores. Possible Scores 1-7, missing scores denoted by 99

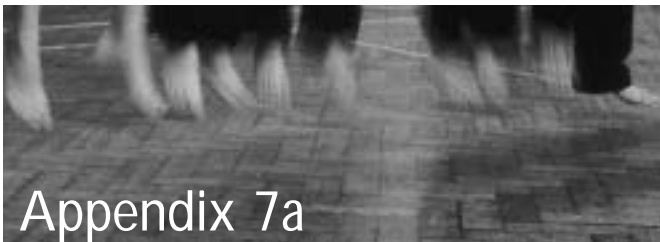
Knowsley		Toxteth		Toxteth (Cont.)		Croxteth		Wirral Mind		Walton Prison	
B	A	B	A	2	1	B	A	B	A	B	A
1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	3	4	2	1
1	1	2	2	1	1	.2	2	2	3	1	1
2	1	2	3	3	2	1	1	3	1	1	1
2	2	3	3	1	99	2	2	3	6	2	0
1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	99	1	1
1	1	3	1	1	1	2	2	2	99	3	1
3	4	2	2	1	1	.2	2	1	3	2	2
1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	99	1	1
1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	4	2	2	2
2	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	1
2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
2	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	5	3	1	1
2	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	5	2
3	2	1	1	2	2	1	99	3	2	3	1
2	1	2	1	1	2	1	99	4	2	2	1
1	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	1
1	1	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	2	3	3
1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	4	1	1
2	1	99	1	1	1	2	99	1	2	2	1
2	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	3	7	1	1
3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	1
2	1	2	2	1	1	1	99	5	99	2	1
7	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	2	1	2	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	.3	2	3	1	2	2
3	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	5	3	.	.
1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	3	1	.	.
1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	.	.
1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	.	.
1	1	1	1	2	2	1	99	.	.	.	.
1	1	2	2	3	99	1	99	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	99	2	2	1	99	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	2	3	1	99	.	.	.	.
2	2	1	2	2	2	1	99	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	.	.	.	.
2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	.	.	.	.
2	1	99	99	2	1	1	3	.	.	.	.
1	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	7	2	1	1	1	.	.	.	.
1	1	7	7	1	3	1	1	.	.	.	.
3	1	3	3	1	99	1	1	.	.	.	.
2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	.	.	.	.
3	2	2	99	1	2	1	1	.	.	.	.
1	1	2	2	1	99	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	2	3	3	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	3	2	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	3	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	1	4	4	1	99	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	99	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	4	2	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
2	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	2	3	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2	2	1	99	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
99	99	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Table 8 Cantrils Ladder response – raw scores for all groups¹¹

¹¹ B = Before. A = After Scores. Possible Scores 1-8, missing scores denoted by 99. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with life

Appendix 6

Knowsley		Toxteth		Toxteth (Cont.)		Croxteth		Wirral Mind		Walton Prison	
B	A	B	A	2	1	B	A	B	A	B	A
9	9	9	9	7	8	.6	5	8	6	5	9
8	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	8	8
7	8	7	7	9	9	.9	9	5	5	7	8
7	8	6	6	7	7	7	6	3	2	8	99
9	9	8	9	8	8	9	9	9	99	9	9
9	9	7	8	8	8	7	8	6	99	6	9
6	5	8	8	9	9	7	7	2	9	4	4
9	9	8	8	7	7	8	8	7	99	9	9
8	99	7	7	8	8	8	8	5	6	8	8
8	8	7	7	7	7	6	7	7	8	9	9
7	7	9	9	9	9	9	9	6	6	6	8
8	9	8	9	8	8	8	8	6	6	7	7
8	9	8	8	9	9	1	7	4	6	8	8
5	7	7	8	7	8	9	9	8	9	3	6
5	6	9	9	6	99	8	99	7	8	6	8
8	9	9	9	7	7	8	99	5	6	3	3
9	9	8	9	9	8	7	6	8	9	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	7	8	8	4	4
9	9	9	9	7	7	6	7	9	6	8	8
5	9	9	99	6	99	7	99	6	7	8	9
7	8	7	7	8	8	7	8	8	7	9	9
7	7	9	9	8	7	7	9	7	8	4	6
8	7	8	8	8	8	9	99	4	99	4	5
5	9	8	8	9	9	4	7	6	6	5	99
9	9	9	9	7	8	7	8	7	9	3	3
6	7	9	9	8	8	9	9	5	5	.	.
9	9	9	9	7	8	7	8	5	8	.	.
9	9	10	10	6	6	9	9	8	9	.	.
8	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	7	6	.	.
9	9	9	9	7	8	7	99	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	8	9	6	8	99	.	.	.	.
9	9	9	99	9	99	6	99	.	.	.	.
9	9	9	9	8	8	6	99	.	.	.	.
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	99	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	8	9	99	9	9	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	8	6	7	.	.	.	.	.	.
8	9	7	8	8	8	.	.	.	.	.	.
7	9	1	2	6	8	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	8	7	6	9	99	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	8	9	9	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	9	1	9	9	.	.	.	.	.	.
8	9	1	1	9	9	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	9	7	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
8	9	9	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	99	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	8	8	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
7	7	8	9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
7	8	9	9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
7	9	5	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	99	9	99	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	5	9	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	8	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
8	9	9	9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	8	7	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
8	8	9	99	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	9	9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
7	9	8	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
7	7	7	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	9	7	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	6	7	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9	99	8	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	6	8	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.



Appendix 7a



The City Liverpool

Enquiries to:

Phone:

Fax:

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date:

Dr Denise Peerhoy
Merseyside Dance Initiative
The Annexe
13/15 Hope Street
Liverpool L1 9BQ

Dear Denise

Out of Reach First Year Report 1999 – 2000

Thank you for the copy of the above report and covering letter.

We found the report to be very interesting especially areas of work which have involved groups of people who are socially excluded.

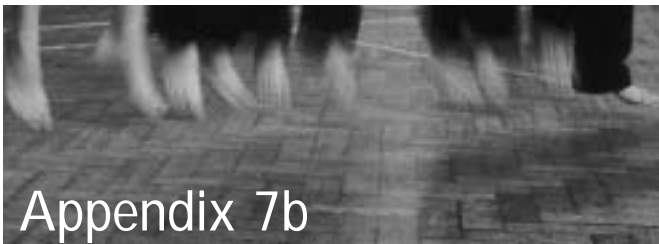
As you know we are a small day centre delivering a service to 25 adults with learning disabilities and those who took part in the MDI Dance 2000 project very much enjoyed the experience. We believe all the positive outcome described in the report on pages 7, 8, 9, 10 definitely applied to the people in our centre who took part.

The benefits of taking part are truly beneficial and far-reaching. We noticed in the last paragraph on page 3 that Out of Reach have included adults with learning disabilities as one of the target groups for the next two years. If you wish us to become involved in any future projects we are very confident that a number of individuals from this centre would welcome the chance.

We hope these comments have been helpful.

Yours sincerely

Liverpool City Council
Alderwood Resource Centre,
c/o Bridge Chapel Centre, Heath Road, Liverpool, L19 4XR



Appendix 7b



The achievement of educational excellence and equality through challenge and support

20th July 2001

Dear Denise

Thank you for the copy of the MDI Out of Reach first year report which Linda kindly forwarded to me. Jackie Birchall spent a number of weeks with children from The Elms School particularly in workshops. First of all to take part in a Knowsley Arts performance at the Kirkby Suite and later on to take part in a very successful performance at the Neptune Theatre. During this period of time, the children completed simple questionnaires, some giving verbal feedback others giving simple gestural feedback of enjoyment.

Jackie worked closely with another colleague of mine, Corrine Hawkins and myself. We found that the children responded spontaneously to music and movement and wanted to become involved in a dance production. The children at The Elms have a varied 'special need', ranging from Downs syndrome to total 'Global delay', and would or may not have had the opportunity of taking part in any dance workshops or productions. In this respect the Out Reach project was indeed meeting the needs of this 'deprived' group. The group itself were very positive about the dance workshops, having fun, using dance to express their feelings and most of all giving them confidence to work with others.

Since participating in these workshops the children have performed their dance for parents and governors at our Leavers presentation which was extremely successful.

At The Elms School we must echo the response given by the Wirral mind group and wholeheartedly agree with their comments. In particular, we hope that the sessions will run again as we were very much aware of the benefits, that the sessions provided for our children.

The report itself is very illuminating and responses given by individual groups very interesting. It is certainly a medium by which the children in The Elms will hopefully be able to continue as part of their Individual Education Plans, the sheer impact of dance on their health and future well being.

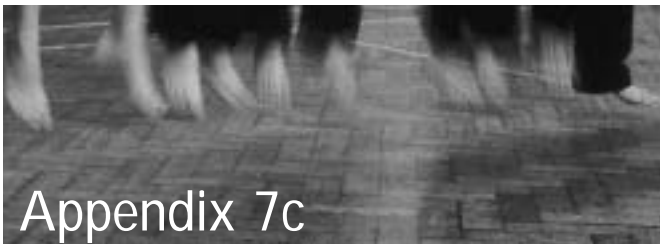
We would like to thank you for allowing us to be part of this initiative and hope that we can continue working with the Dance Outreach group.

Yours sincerely



Business Partners





Appendix 7c

Just a note to say thank-you, to
for all the confidence
you have given James
over the years, We are
really proud of what he
has achieved and a
part of that is down to
you.

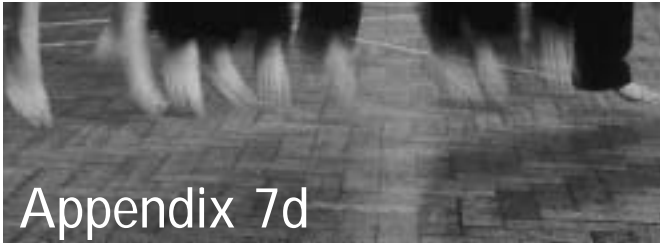
Thanks for looking after
him and teaching him
that boys can dance as
well!

Jacqui

Thanks for everything

Thank you for being
so generous and giving
It's people like you
who put joy into living!





Appendix 7d



Re: The Dance Group

Dear Alicia,

Personally I hope that the dance sessions will be running again as I have been so aware of the benefits of what you provided.

The benefits were many:

The physical exercise, the fact that several of the group members problems are such that other exercise disciplines are not an option.

The complexity of movement and co-ordination was good for concentration and the ability to transcend anxieties and offer respite from mental worries

The bonding together of the group and the positive ambiance of the group was uplifting to group members

I think that the group given the right input from us advertising to reach a greater number of participants, and the chance of running the group longer term would provide a creative outlet for people

Such opportunities are limited.

As an aside, both J and N spoke in such glowing terms of the way that they were received at the event that they attended at the Bluecoat Chamber.

Once again thanks Alicia, and I hope to see you and the group back up and running here again soon

Yours faithfully





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