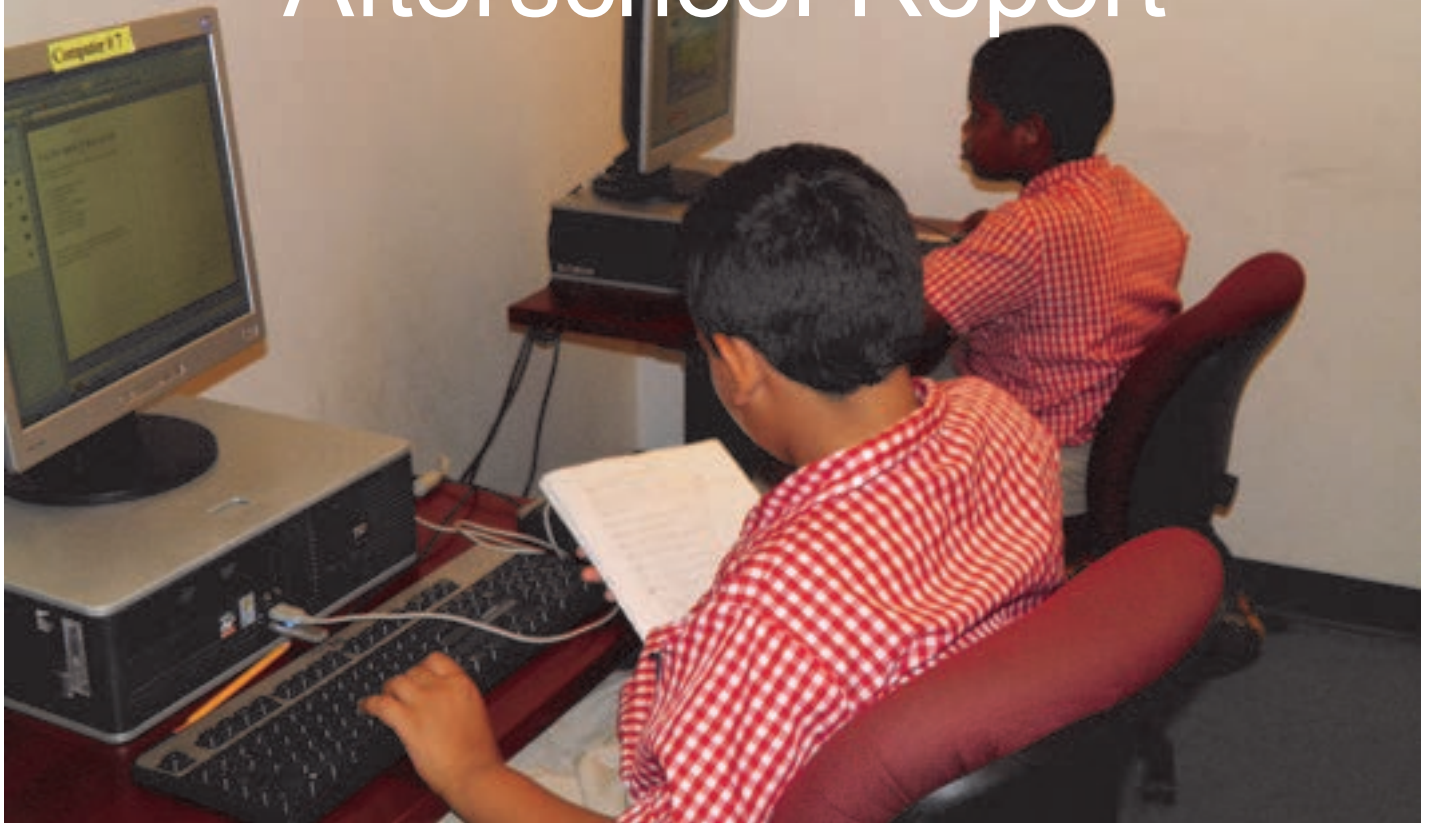


CIYDC Youth Transitions Afterschool Report



Executive Summary

Piloting the Cayman Islands Youth Development Consortium Youth Transition afterschool programme is a testament to the passion and drive of the consortium to implement asset-building programmes throughout the island. However, it is more of testament to the possibilities of creating such opportunities for our young people, when there is shared vision.

The implementation of this pilot programme would not have been possible had it not been for the partnerships and collaborations created along the way. Most importantly, it would not have been successful if not for the attendance of the students involved with the cooperation and support of their family.

Throughout the implementation of the pilot project, lessons were learnt and opportunities for improvement were discovered.

The objective of this report is to point out the implementation of the programme objectives, provide relevant information for better planning in the future and for improving implementation of programmes planned.



Background Information

With the intention of implementing similar asset-building programmes in all districts across the Cayman Islands, the CIYDC Youth Transition Programme was piloted in West Bay during January 2011 - June 2011.

Preliminary meetings were held September 2010 with the principals of all the schools in the West Bay area and the meeting with the Sir John A Cumber primary school principal Mr. Wallace and deputy principal Mrs. Lumsden, led to a meeting with Ms. Jeana Ebanks, representative of the West Bay MLA office and Mr. Michael Myles, the at-risk youth liaison of Ministry of Education.

A series of meetings were held with other programme providers, with the interest of exploring the needs of the children in the West Bay area. Students needs were prioritized by Mr. Myles utilizing the at risk youth rating tool that defines young people at risk being those that run the risk of not achieving the basic knowledge , skills and attitude necessary for becoming productive adults. The students recommended to attend the programme were students listed on the Ministry of Education at risk register. A rating tool completed with the involvement of the principal, counselor and educational psychologist at the school yielded 9 students in year 5 and 6.

From the series of meetings held we were equipped with this list from the at risk youth liaison and the initial contact was made with parents/ guardians to introduce the CIYDC Youth Transitions programme. During the initial contact with parents they were informed that the students selected were due to their need for additional support.

One-on-one meetings were held with three out of nine of the parents/ guardian and I spoke to two of them via phone. Contacting the remaining parents was proven futile as the contact details were either in need of update or parents expressed disinterest.

After approved by the principal CIYDC was granted permission by the Department of Education to utilize a modular school room for the programme.

A meeting with the principal, deputy principal, counselor, educational and behavior psychologist along with the at-risk youth liaison was held at Sir John A Cumber primary school. At this meeting the vision of the programme was shared with the faculty and then each student selected discussed. It was recommended by the faculty that two male teachers be assigned to the programme due to the uniqueness of the ten boys selected for the programme. It was also recommended that the twin brother of one of the enrollees also be selected to give aid to his brother. A budget proposal for the additional male teachers was submitted to Mr. Myles as requested. As suggested we started with the children who were registered as a result of making contact with their parents.

In preparation for the programme the programme assistant and volunteers were trained in the Stewards of Children Child Sexual Abuse Training and an informational meeting was held with the parents of the students registered.

The programme started mid-January with seven of the ten students and an additional member, the only female, who volunteered to join. A student whose mother was employed to clean the school, joined us whilst she completed her duties on the compound. Another female student was assigned to the programme by the at risk youth liaison, to give support to her mother who had other children to deal with in the evenings.

Overview of Programme Process

PURPOSE/ GOAL OF PROGRAMME

The goal of programme was to hold weekly afterschool sessions to build the developmental assets in the young people enrolled as participants of the programme. This was to be achieved through individual asset-building planning and creative programming. This was achieved over the six month period that the programme was held.

INDIVIDUAL ASSET BUILDING PLAN

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS GAME - Upon entering the programme each student completed a developmental assets game to rate themselves from 1-10 on each of the assets and a simple plan was discussed with them to increase the areas that they needed to improve in. Eg. Reading for pleasure. Each parent had to also complete a rating sheet on how well they thought their child did on for each asset. Doing these gave us a brief view into each student's life as it relates to the assets.

THE PLAN - After assessing each child at the beginning of the programme, it was discovered that understanding the concepts and format of the asset building framework was challenging for their literacy skills and basic comprehension and understanding. Most of the planning was done on a weekly basis after introduction to the assets or after completion of an asset activity.

ASSET-BUILDING SESSIONS/ ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS

The uniqueness of the CIYDC Youth Transitions programme is in the two tier approach to develop the developmental assets of the students whilst fostering resilience. This was achieved by firstly setting up the programme utilizing the main categories of the assets so students were consistently told that they were increasing their asset through involvement eg. Going to the squash club meant that they were using their time constructively and increasing asset 18, by spending time each week in sport activity. Secondly, developing the assets started with activities to introduce the assets and later on sessions from each asset category. Some of these activities were group based and other times were done individually as well. The main curriculum used was the Search Institute's book "Building Assets is Elementary" for ages 8-12. Most of the students in our programme scored low on their literacy tests and so daily reading was a very important activity. Reading for pleasure would therefore be the asset we spent most time on.

Each student were asked to decided on an asset project that they would work on over several weeks and present at the end of the programme. The two most consistent participants completed their projects. One wrote a book on his interest as an iguana seeker to encourage others to read for pleasure and the other prepared a brochure on how to make your neighborhood a better place, using his skill of drawing.

PARENT/ FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Prior to the start of the programme in January, a meeting was held with individual parents/ guardians and an introductory session for all parents was held. Communication with parents was either by telephone, text or email. During the month of April a special meeting was held at the home of the participants, which led to better attendance and participation for some falling short in these areas. Besides the no contact from two parents, and sometimes lack of cooperation, the participants of whom parents were actively involved by either follow-through with discipline, involvement with the asset project or supporting the participating student by pick up from the programme, were the ones that benefited most from the programme.

Implementation of Programme Objectives

Objective 1: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Each student upon entering the programme were given an opportunity to do the developmental assets game. In the game they scored themselves from 1-10 on each of the developmental assets. However, most of the students had difficulty understanding the information and concepts presented therefore this presented much difficulty making personal development plans. The personal development plans were simplified and items verbally agreed on eg. Reading for pleasure - read for at least 15 minutes per day. Plans were implemented on an individual basis and when necessary the afterschool schedule facilitated time allotments for all the students to work on the same items at the same time.

Objective 2: COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

Homework Lab: Everyday each student were asked to present their homework. Whenever there were no homework students were asked to bring a reading book for individual reading. Homework assistance was given and students were prepared for their exams by doing prep and practice papers.

Information Technology Zone: During visits to the library students had the opportunity to use the computer to work on assignments, projects and an occasional game time.

Reading Spot: T4 reading either took place at our round table or in the reading corner of the room. Later, reading was done in the library.

Writer's Corner: There was no writer's corner established but students had an area to do homework assignments.

Objective 3: POSITIVE VALUES

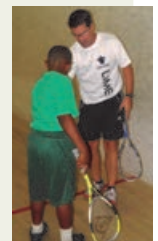
Developmental assets sessions or small group activity in character building: Our main character building sessions were during devotions at the beginning of the evenings. These segments were also spearheaded by the students who either volunteered to pray or read the scripture. Each student received an introduction to the asset-building framework and participated in activities that helped them gain an early understanding of the developmental assets and why they are important. Developmental asset sessions were difficult to do when students missed the programme as some of these were planned as group sessions dependent on certain numbers of participants.

Objective 4: CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

Arts & Crafts: Time was provided for the students to use their creative abilities to work on posters highlighting assets.

Games & Sports: Most games and activities took place in the Sir John A Cumber school playground and basketball court. Through the literacy coordinator at the Ministry of Education, Anne Briggs, a partnership was developed with coach Glen Stark of the Squash Association, to offer our students free lessons at the squash club.

Music: From contact made through Cayman National Cultural Foundation, Rita Estanovich the students received lessons in hand drumming from the group Percussion Ensemble.



Implementation of Programme Objectives

Objective 5: EMPOWERMENT

Students were made aware of the importance of becoming agents of change through community service-learning and volunteering. We visited the Golden Age home in the West Bay area to read to the residents there. Though skeptical at first each student expressed appreciation for the opportunity.



Objective 6: SOCIAL COMPETENCES

Planning and decision making was an important activity among the students as this meant establishing ground rules so that each of them could get the best out of the programme. By contribution of the students this later developed into their code that was displayed on a poster in the room. Due to the uniqueness of this group peaceful conflict resolution was almost an everyday activity and mostly done on a case by case basis.

Objective 7: POSITIVE IDENTITY

This was a very crucial objective that dependent on the positive interactions of each participant with their peers and the adults involved in the programme as well as the accomplishment of tasks. We were warned and experienced from the initial stage of the programme that each participating student had a negative history with each other through bullying, name calling and consistent verbal abuse. By the end of the programme we saw a lot of progress made as each student began to share with each other, help each other and work positively together. One participant was so proud of himself as he greeted staff one evening he commented how he had helped another participant during school. He said it in such a way that would have made you believe that he himself was surprised of his behavior. There were times when the participants didn't exactly see eye to eye with the staff and with each individual case these were dealt with by talking things through. Whenever programme assistants were absent either by attending class or being ill, the participants would ask for them and comment on how they had missed them.

The other important aspect of this objective was the accomplishment of tasks and though some participants didn't like the idea of reading everyday, still they enjoyed the feeling of accomplishing this task. Preparing for exams and working on the projects in the library was another good opportunity for this. The two participants that completed their projects often commented how proud they felt having decided to continue working on their projects. Imagine how they felt when their school friends kept asking them about what they were working on and of course finally seeing the completed work.

Objective 8: FAMILY SUPPORT

Parent Meeting Evening was held at the start of the programme to discuss the policy and procedure with each parent. House visit - family meeting was held in April to discuss progress, issues or concerns with each parent.

Highlights

Significant Successes

Success	Factors That Supported Success
CONSISTENT ATTENDANCE	Parent Involvement & Support *Attendance increased on squash trip days or field or incentive trips.
COMPLETION OF ASSET PROJECT	Using skills or interest of the participant Parent Involvement & Support

Shortcomings and Solutions

Shortcoming	Recommended Solutions
ENROLLMENT - CIYDC staff contacted participant parent/ guardians to enroll in programme. Experienced difficulty in reaching some parents.	All parents of students on the at risk youth roster should be informed, by the Ministry of Education, of the need to be involved in the programme to help develop their assets. This can be done at a case conference at the beginning of the school term. *The BEST model can be applied here All participants enrolled at the same time and required to attend full programme of 10 months.
BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT - From the very beginning of the programme this area was expected to be the hardest as each member enrolled had a negative history with each other at some point. There was a lot of verbal abuse and rivalry among the students. The name calling, put downs and disrespect between the students often made it difficult to do activities.	A full overview of behavior and academic performance of each participant. Establish ground rules from very early in the programme and have consistent reviews. Have specific and clearer consequences for rule breaking
NO ASSET MENTOR	Recruit and train asset mentors prior to start of programme
Personal Developmental Plan/ MONTHLY JOURNALS too comprehensive	Make format simpler
PROGRAMME SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES - too much adjustment due to lack of resources and controllable factors	Schedule activities as done previously but with slots for invited guest and flexible areas. Staff to have complete plan of action for each month and plan time for acquiring resources needed.
HOMEWORK COMPLETION - Lacked consistency	Request a school liaison to aid communication with school and programme and to set up informative session with teachers of participating students Implement a way to liaise/ communicate daily with teachers
LITERACY PROGRAMME - availability of materials	Staff/ volunteers trained and materials available prior to start of the programme

Implications, Conclusions & Recommendations

For the duration of 10 months, this programme is planned to be a long term process, with the view that each participant has strengths to develop rather than person with deficits or risks. The idea is to nurture the protective factors that help each participant succeed, and thus our recommendation is that the programme include participants of year five, six and seven to further lend to this long term process, provide a continuum of service and foster resiliency.

Implementing the pilot CIYDC Youth Transitions Afterschool programme will now set the pace for the implementation of other asset building programmes in the Cayman Islands. With the learnt lessons and celebration of successes, this shall provide CIYDC programme coordinator and staff with information on improving this programme.

One of the most important lessons learnt from this pilot project is the collaboration and involvement of community partners. If not for the efforts of all persons involved this pilot project would not have been implemented. For the benefit of implementing similar programmes in other districts CIYDC is currently forming district committees to be involved in the set up and implementation of the programmes. This approach will not only create an ownership of the programme by district members but also aid consistency and accountability.

Acknowledgements

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PARTICIPANTS

Naethiun Chambers, Nathaniel Hyde, Jimmall Facey, Tyrek Minzett, Lowell Anderson, Monique Brown, Christopher Smith, Alexander Smith, Keanu McKenzie, Abigail Ebanks, Paul Jacas, Ernesto Ebanks

INDIVIDUALS/ ORGANIZATIONS

Ms. Roxanne Walton, Mrs. Wynter, Ms. Zoya Lawrence, Ms. Crystal Trusty (CIYDC Staff/ volunteers)

Mr. Michael Myles (At risk youth liaison - Ministry of Education), Mr. Wallace & Mrs. Lumsden (Principal and Deputy Principal of Sir John A Cumber), Ms. Murray (Counselor of Sir John A Cumber), Other faculty/ staff members of Sir John A cumber, Staff of Teacher Ridley Memorial Public Library, Rita Estanovich (Cayman National Cultural Foundation), Anne Briggs (Literacy Specialist - Ministry of Education), Mrs. Blackman (Corrective Reading Trainer), Coach Stark (Cayman Squash Club), Eden Hurlston and the Percussion Ensemble group.

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Davenport, Caledonian, Conyers Dill and Pearman & Cayman National