



Creative Examples



4. Rotherham boys in 'Rebuzz'

Our “Creative examples” showcase a variety of programmes and projects which arts and cultural organisations are using to help them make positive connections with children, young people and communities. They aim to help you review your existing work to see if any of these ideas and approaches documented here might be useful in your context.

Rotherham boys in ‘Rebuzz’

Introduction

Art Form: Dance

Level: Secondary

The project

Yorkshire Dance wanted to get more boys engaged with dance (a [recent survey](#) showed that fewer than half the number of boys engage with dance activity than girls) and they also wanted to target boys with low attainment, low engagement, and low aspirations to use dance as a way of raising their aspirations and inspiring them with male dance role models.

This grass roots youth dance project, called Rotherham Boys, resulted in a youth dance company forming called ReBuzz. Yorkshire Dance worked with local dancers as well as bringing in regional and national expertise. There were two all-male dance showcases in Rotherham, ‘Making Men’ which showcased the work as well as guest boy dance groups from across Yorkshire.

Achievements

There were some real successes in the project. There were 12 outreach projects, across deprived areas of South Yorkshire, and more than 180 boys came to dance workshops. A performance piece was created with Dave McKenna (Being Frank Physical Theatre), and a tour of two regional youth dance festivals. The group created three films – documenting their experience with local dance artist Anthony Bayou, then a [project](#) with guest choreographer, Dave McKenna, and an intensive project on the theme of [surveillance](#).

ReBuzz was selected as one of ten youth dance companies to be part of a regional youth dance project ‘Dance Whispers’ in partnership with The National Youth Dance Company at Sadler’s Wells. This project began in March 2015 and culminated in a performance at Northern Ballet in summer 2015. The group was also selected by Youth Dance England to perform in the National U.Dance Fringe Festival in 2014.

Rebuzz has performed across Yorkshire in The West Yorkshire Playhouse, Barnsley Civic, Bridlington Spa and The Northern School of Contemporary Dance.



How was it funded?

The project was supported by Provident Financial's Good Neighbour fund, designed to support innovative projects to benefit disadvantaged communities.

Who were the partners?

Local partners included youth centres, schools and community groups in deprived areas of South Yorkshire. Rotherham Borough Council supported the project and the project steering group.

Wath Comprehensive School was a key partner with many of the core Rebuzz boys from this school. Rotherham College hosted two performances of 'Making Men'. The Youth Service was also involved.

Impact

1. **GCSE Dance** Of the seven boys that joined the project initially, four chose to study GCSE dance.
2. **Surveillance film** Professional filmmaker Rad Miller and urban dancer Bobak Walker ran a two day project on the theme of surveillance. This introduced new boys to the group and enabled creative work using both film and dance. The result is a nine minute dance film which was submitted for the national U.Dance Dance on Screen competition. U.Dance are at www.yde.org.uk *"It was fascinating to hear the young people's thoughts around this subject including some in-depth knowledge and understanding around internet security. The discussions we had varied from details of fraud and the big brother state to CCTV in school and TV shows like "You've Been Framed."* Anthony Bayou, Dance Artist.
3. **Aspirations developed** Joe Cummins was part of the Rotherham Boys Project for more than two years, and is still involved. Before taking part Joe had little experience of dance. Through the project, Joe developed in confidence, skill and enthusiasm and was nominated as lead choreographer for the regional Dance Whispers project. Visiting Sadler's Wells and connecting to young people in the National Youth Dance Company opened Joe's eyes to new opportunities and experiences. Joe is now considering auditioning for the Yorkshire CAT scheme. Joes says: *"Being in ReBuzz has given me so many opportunities, I have made new friends, learnt new skills and been able to perform at so many different platforms. When I leave school I want to complete a diploma in Dance at Rotherham College and hopefully move onto University to study dance as I want to become a dance teacher. I have really enjoyed working with all the different choreographers we have had whilst being involved in ReBuzz. I am really looking forward to our next project as I am able to make my choreography on the group, I really enjoying coming to ReBuzz every week. If I didn't come I think I would just be playing on my X-box or winding my mum up! Being involved in ReBuzz has made me realise how much I enjoy dancing, I definitely want to be involved in dance when I finish college."*



What lessons were learned?

“Developing grass roots work like this takes time and local partnerships to succeed. We were lucky to find a local school to support the development of the project. Wath Comprehensive offered guidance and advice through our project steering group and encouraged their students to participate. We employed a local project manager who provided pastoral care and developed relationships with the boys, their families, partners and venues. This has been crucial in the success of the project.”

Hannah Robertshaw, Youth and Community Director, Yorkshire Dance.

Other information and links

Links

ReBuzz is on Facebook

Who worked with the project?

Yorkshire Dance www.yorkshiredance.com

Wath Comprehensive School www.wcs.rotherham.sch.uk

Places/performances

- The Wath Festival
- ‘Dancefest’ at Rotherham Civic Theatre
- ‘Chance to Dance’ in Sheffield City Centre
- Northern School of Contemporary Dance, boys dance platform
- BIG Dance at Bridlington Spa
- National U.Dance Festival in Leeds
- National U.Dance Fringe in Nottingham
- ‘Re-Fresh’ at Trinity Leeds
- Yorkshire’s annual Youth Dance Festival ‘Fresh’ hosted by Yorkshire Dance at the West Yorkshire Playhouse
- ‘Dance Whispers’ at the Stanley and Audrey Burton Theatre, Leeds
- South Yorkshire Youth Dance Showcase ‘Crossing Borders’ at Barnsley Civic.

