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Miss Spent

**A drama project for young women
at the Josephine Butler Unit
HMP Downview**

Evaluation Report

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Thanks to the following individuals for their input, support and contributions to Miss Spent in Custody:

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Education team

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Summary

Miss Spent

Miss Spent was facilitated by Clean Break between 12th April and 23rd April 2010, at the Josephine Butler Unit (JBU) for young women, at HMP Downview in Surrey. Miss Spent had previously only been delivered in community settings, working with young offenders. This is the first time Miss Spent was taken into a custodial setting. A team of Clean Break facilitators worked with nine young female offenders aged between 17 and 18 for ten days, to explore personal skills and work towards a public event to which Clean Break and prison staff and other guests were invited. Eight of the nine girls were from a minority ethnic background.

Please note that to protect the participants' identity, their names were changed in this report.

A pilot for a new skills development course for young women in custody

As a pilot project, Miss Spent convincingly demonstrated the value of drama exercises, creative education and the use of role play in teaching personal skills, increasing confidence and self esteem, and enabling young women to consider their role in society, including looking at their offending behaviour as well as determining their own strengths and weaknesses. The learning outcomes of the project closely addressed youth offending risk factors and strengthened protective factors identified in Youth Justice Board (YJB) research. The experiential nature of Miss Spent enabled participants to explore and experience the issues they are likely to face as young women, whilst incarcerated, and on release, and encouraged them to question their role in society so far, and how they could grasp their own future and make it better. The use of drama games and exercises as metaphors for real life situations enabled participants to remember the lessons learnt from the activity more easily. The learning methods used in *Miss Spent* are particularly suitable for bodily-kinaesthetic learners¹, and are very useful with groups that are likely to have low literacy levels².

JBU staff members were extremely complimentary about the project. One member of staff wrote:

[the best thing about the project was] *"That is was very obviously and successfully designed for this specific age group of female offenders, it was fast paced, kept their attention and built their confidence and self-esteem. It was a huge success because the project covered (in depth) relevant issues such as the perception of women and allowed trainees to analyse themselves. It positively encourages decision-making, the development of communication skills and building self-esteem and confidence to the point where they want to perform in front of an audience! I am impressed with the*

¹ Derived from Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences concepts and learning styles. Bodily-kinaesthetic learners' preferred ways to learn and develop are by experiencing something physically, rather than just hearing or reading about it, or watching a demonstration. Most people have a preferred way of learning, usually auditory (by listening), visual (by looking, watching, reading) and bodily-kinaesthetic (by doing).

² Up to 50% of prisoners have difficulties writing, and 33% are unable to read (Anne Peaker, Handbook for Artists, published by Anne Peaker Centre 2007). In this particular group of young women, literacy levels were higher than amongst older offenders and we were able to gather a significant amount of written evidence from their project workbooks.

clear aims and the structure of this project which also fits in with and adheres to/enforces the usual high standards of behaviour expected by the prison establishment from its trainees. It has encouraged the trainees to work outside of their comfort zones, encounter new people, and to have completely new experiences. I really hope Miss Spent is run in other establishments and continues to have the positive effect on others that it has had on our department as a whole!" (JBU teacher)

Unfortunately, none of the girls were awarded the National Open College Network (NOCN) qualification attached to the course. The accreditation of the course was handled by teaching staff at the JBU and the main source of evidence used for the accreditation was the workbook completed by the participants in their own time, and the self-assessment evaluation forms they completed. The workbooks were designed and printed by Clean Break, and encouraged the girls to reflect on the aspects of the programme. It included reflections on the girls' individual strengths, identity, reasons for offending and desisting from re-offending, and plans for the future. The workbooks were of high quality and all the participants worked hard to complete them to a very high standard. The reason the JBU gave for the qualifications not being awarded was that the girls were either transferred or released before their portfolios were completed, and did not wish to leave their workbooks in the JBU for the accreditation procedures. Most of the girls had completed their workbooks and took pride in them.

Participants were mostly increasingly positively engaged throughout the project – some needing more encouragement than others, particularly at the start of the project. Overall it is fair to say the group dynamics became increasingly positive and by the end of the two weeks the group worked very well as a team, under the guidance of the experienced team put together and led by Charlie Weinberg, the locum Miss Spent Project Manager at Clean Break. Participants indicated they had benefited from taking part:

"Together with prison it will help me not to re-offend." (Rachelle)

"I learnt I should try more things." (Rachelle)

"Everyone's a bit happier." (Sienna)

"It's made me understand things more, be a bit more motivated and try something new." (Sienna)

"I think our YOT workers should see this so they could see our progress." (Sasha)

"Thanks for helping us help ourselves." (Aisha)

"Miss Spent taught me I can be myself and I don't have to pretend to be someone else when I am clearly not!" (Sophie)

The project engaged participants to a high degree, if not from the start of the programme, project staff managed to draw the girls in:

"When Miss Spent first came in I was rude, always stropping and moaning. Over the last couple of days I've done more than the 1st week and a half. Thanks for showing me what I could do. Without that I wouldn't have gained the confidence to do it." (Pamela)

"Personally I didn't really want to do it. But it was all right actually. I realised I learnt about self-esteem and getting on with people. I don't really get on with that many people." (Charmaine)

"I didn't want to take part at all but in the end I did and enjoyed it." (Rachelle)

Impact on participants' skills

Observational records and project work created by the girls show that the young women were able to discuss a wide range of issues relevant to young women in society today, as well as broader issues around offending, wellbeing, family and relationships. They were often general exercises, but clearly linked to circumstances and situations the majority of them would be likely to encounter. The project enabled participants to consider personal strengths and creative skills in a way the majority of them had not done before. Two participants had previously taken part in drama projects at school or in the community, but the others had no experience of working in this way. The participants' commitment to the project was mostly evident in their changing behaviour throughout the two weeks, as well as their written feedback. Their changing attitudes confirmed their positive assessment of the activity – all participants completed the project, took part in the presentation which concluded the two weeks, and took part actively in most of the activities, some of which were very challenging in terms of participants expressing emotions and confronting potentially sensitive issues. Prison staff did not need to exclude any of the girls from the programme, nor did they need to impose sanctions as a punishment for inappropriate behaviour at any point during the two weeks, which is apparently very unusual.

The actual impact on their personal skills was measured through a self-assessment questionnaire the girls completed at the start and end of the project. By the end of Miss Spent, participants indicated they had more confidence and had a more positive view of their futures:

"I am more confident and I can speak out more." (Ruby)

"I feel my self esteem has grown." (Sophie)

This table outlines the progress they felt they had made:

Personal skill / development - increase³	
Confidence & self-esteem	67% (6 out of 9)
Motivation	78% (7 out of 9)
Taking responsibility for my actions ⁴	56% (5 out of 9)
Using time in a meaningful way whilst here	89% (8 out of 9)
Feeling positive about my future ⁵	56% (5 out of 9)
Enjoy taking part in education activity	89% (8 out of 9)
Enjoy taking part in arts activity	78% (7 out of 9)
Skills for employment	89% (8 out of 9)
Skills for wellbeing	100% (9 out of 9)

³ One girl (Pamela) did not complete both questionnaires. However we were able to determine positive progress on some of the objectives through interviews and observation. Where there was other evidence to indicate her progress we have included her in the figures and percentages.

⁴ Two participants scored 10 out of 10 for "taking responsibility for my own actions" at the start of the project, so did not record an increase by the end of the project.

⁵ Two participants scored very high (8 and 10 out of 10) at the start of the project, so did not record an increase by the end of the project.

Impact on the rehabilitation of young female offenders

We can show that Miss Spent has achieved most of its aims and objectives:

Objectives	Outcome achieved
1. For participants to engage positively in the programme	Yes for all participants
2. To increase participants' confidence and self-esteem	87% ⁶
3. For participants to identify and develop attitudes and behaviour that will help them to desist from re-offending	100% ⁷
4. For participants to identify and develop attitudes and behaviour that will reduce the likelihood of participants harming themselves and/or others	Yes
5. For participants to develop life skills, including: communication skills; team working skills; presentation skills; problem solving skills; planning skills; emotional literacy; ability to self-motivate (work independently)	100%
6. For participants to engage (more) positively in education, training or employment after the programme (either in the custodial setting or in the community)	Limited evidence to date
7. For participants to develop positive aspirations with regards to their futures	87%
8. For participants to be aware of opportunities to pursue these aspirations after release	100%
9. For participants to have access to support to enable them to pursue these opportunities after release	Not known at the time of writing
10. Making a positive contribution for the benefit of others	78% (7 out of 9)

The long term impact of Miss Spent at the JBU is not yet possible to ascertain at the time of writing this report. Clean Break intends to catch up with the girls six months after the project to find out whether there has been a longer term benefit for them. Miss Spent particularly addressed some of the issues the young women would be likely to face upon release. An increased ability to deal with the difficulties and challenges of facing them is likely to contribute in some way towards successful rehabilitation. Some of the young women will be returning to very complex, difficult personal circumstances and some will be at high risk of re-offending due to those circumstances – unfortunately Miss Spent is not able to directly influence those circumstances, but it can help change the young women's responses to these risk factors. Strong motivation, self-efficacy and confidence will help them desist from re-offending and reduce negative influences from peers and

⁶ Two girls rated their confidence at 10 on a scale from 1 – 10 at the start of the project. One girl said her confidence had decreased but she was very concerned about her move to the adult prison which was imminent, and was having very complex personal problems which is likely to have contributed to her level of confidence at that moment in time.

⁷ All participants built on their protective factors and worked on reducing their risk factors. See section 5.3 for evidence.

influential adults.

It was very clear that participants would have choices to make, and that these choices would have consequences for their lives in the short term and the long term. All of the girls voiced they wanted to gain qualifications. Many had career plans and ambitions. The project made them aware that they had the skills and ability to make these ambitions a reality, but that they would have to work hard once released. They were also sign posted to various organisations, including Clean Break, they could go to for support and advice after release.

1. Project overview

Miss Spent

Miss Spent, Clean Break's project for girls and young women, was launched in June 2005 with a six-month action research period. Miss Spent is an arts-based personal development programme. Using a variety of arts disciplines in a gender specific group work setting, Miss Spent offers an opportunity for young women involved in the criminal justice system to engage (or re-engage) in a critical analysis of their own attitudes, offending behaviour and aspirations, towards building positive and self-defined routes to self-worth and fulfilment.

Miss Spent was initially delivered eight times over a period of two years and formally evaluated by Southbank University, culminating in a report in 2008. This evaluation led Clean Break to develop Miss Spent in custodial settings, the next phase of the programme. Miss Spent in custody was piloted for the first time in HMP Downview, in the Josephine Butler juvenile unit (JBU). It was funded by The Monument Trust (part of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts).

The pilot project (ten days) at the JBU was delivered in April 2010 over a period of two weeks, by a team put together by Charlie Weinberg, locum Miss Spent Project Manager at Clean Break. Charlie also fine-tuned the programme's content to match the custodial setting, and she was the lead facilitator for the project. Clean Break worked in close partnership with the education team at the JBU, led by Head of Education Diane Watson. Formal education was suspended in the JBU during Miss Spent so everyone could focus on and support the project.

The team from Clean Break included two drama practitioners, a professional photographer and a dance tutor who came in on different days, working alongside Charlie, who is herself an experienced drama practitioner and performance poet. At least two members from the education staff from the JBU supported the project at any one time, and were very proactively involved. A total of five members of education staff worked with Clean Break, in addition to Diane, who offered administrative and planning support. Uniformed officers observed the project for security reasons and some offered practical support. The author of this report attended the project on four days, to make observations and interview the girls as well as staff.

Nine young women took part, all of whom were 17 years old. Two were 18 by the time the project finished and were about to be transferred to the adult prison. The programme included a series of workshops and interactive drama activities, discussion, role play and some visual arts activities, which took place over the ten days. The project culminated in a performance presentation the girls put together and presented, during which they shared some of the work they had been doing with an invited audience of prison staff, YOT staff, Clean Break representatives and a small number of other guests invited by Clean Break and the prison.

Clean Break

Clean Break is a theatre and education company working with women with personal experience of the criminal justice system through a programme of theatre productions and theatre-based education and training in community and custodial settings. Their specific aim is to reduce risk factors present in these women's lives, which might

contribute to the likelihood of the women offending or re-offending, particularly risk factors related to drug, alcohol or mental health needs.

Clean Break has a very clear remit of using the arts and specifically drama education to promote self esteem, challenge barriers to learning, encourage and stimulate group processes and develop skills, aspirations and ambitions amongst those women for whom education, personal development and female positive relationships have often been very difficult.

The Josephine Butler Unit

The Josephine Butler Unit, housed in the grounds of HMP Downview, is one of only four small units for young women under 18 within Her Majesty's Prison Service. It can hold up to sixteen girls, although there were only nine at the time of the project, with one girl being released during the first week and a new girl arriving in the first week. There was another new arrival on the last day of the project. Some of the girls are serving sentences and some are on remand or awaiting sentencing. Once they reach 18, they are transferred to HMP Downview, the adult female prison.

Due to prison service budget cuts, the JBU's education provision has recently been reduced from 25 hours per week to 15 hours per week. The girls are normally locked in their individual cells each evening at 8.15pm, and released at around 8.30am to attend education or activities. There was a concern amongst education staff that the reduction in education resources would lead to the girls having to spend more time locked up.

2. Evaluation overview

This evaluation is a participant focussed evaluation, looking at the response of young women participating in the project, and the perceived impact of the project on their lives.

This report looks at whether the aims of the project were achieved. It is hoped that the outcomes of the project can support the longer term rehabilitation of participating young prisoners, and that the project will help them achieve future ambitions and improve their relationships with others.

Documentation of the project

Karin van Maanen (independent evaluator for the project and author of this report), aided by Clean Break and JBU staff and the project participants, gathered documentation throughout the project. This evaluation report is based on this evidence.

Miss Spent was documented in the following ways:

- Observation – the evaluator visited the project on four occasions, including the first and the last day of the project
- The evaluator and Clean Break staff completed an “engagement matrix” (see section 4 – Approach and Methodology) to assess and track changes in attitude and behaviour in the girls
- Participants were interviewed individually and/or in small groups by the evaluator and completed self-assessment questionnaires at the beginning and end of the project
- The evaluator read and analysed written work produced by the girls, including their individual workbooks
- Clean Break and JBU education staff provided feedback at regular debrief working lunches throughout the project, four of which were attended by the evaluator
- JBU education and uniformed staff completed questionnaires at the beginning and end of the project
- A SWOT analysis was undertaken (see section 6) based on all the documentation available

All nine participants contributed to the evaluation. Five members of JBU education staff, the Head of Education and two uniformed officers contributed to the evaluation.

Limitations of the evaluation

It has not been possible to include longer term tracking of the participants in the evaluation process. The evidence presented in this report is based on research and evaluation undertaken during the project, and provides a useful insight into the immediate workings of the project and its short term outcomes. The young women involved in the project were asked to participate in post-project interviews but due to difficulties keeping in touch with the girls after their release we were unable to.

3. Aims and objectives

3.1 Aims of Miss Spent

For the Miss Spent project team to:

- Build on young women's strengths and identify and promote confidence, attitudes and behaviour which reduce risk of offending and harm to self or others;
- Utilise the performing arts to enable young women at risk of and caught up in offending to develop their self-esteem, confidence and life skills;
- Provide relevant opportunities for girls and young women at risk of and caught up in offending to re-engage in education and training and to develop and raise aspirations;
- Provide awareness of localised sources of opportunities to pursue the arts and/or agencies providing ongoing support post-release in collaboration with prison YOT workers;

For Clean Break to:

Create a programme which Clean Break can replicate nationally in Secure Training Centres, Juvenile and Young Offender units with girls and young women.

Furthermore, Clean Break states that Miss Spent:

- Is designed to meet the unique needs of young female offenders;
- Values and promotes the female perspective;
- Empowers girls and young women to reach their full potential;
- Provides participants with choices, decision making opportunities and ownership of the work, within a series of structured sessions.

3.2 Personal development objectives

See table below (page 13).

Objectives	Success indicators
1. For participants to engage positively in the programme	Positive attitude and behaviour Participants report they enjoyed and benefited from the programme
2. To increase participants' confidence and self-esteem	Number of participants reporting increased self esteem and self confidence as a result of the project Number of participants whose behaviour indicates increased self esteem and confidence Number of participants able to identify and appreciate their own strengths as a result of the programme
3. For participants to identify and develop attitudes and behaviour that will help them to desist from re-offending	Number of participants that think they are less likely to re-offend as a result of Miss Spent Number of participants that have not re-offended within 3-6 months after release
4. For participants to identify and develop attitudes and behaviour that will reduce the likelihood of participants harming themselves and/or others	Number of participants that think they are less likely to harm themselves or others as a result of Miss Spent Number of participants that have not harmed themselves or others within 3-6 months after release Number of participants whose Mood Indicator sheets show positive change
5. For participants to develop life skills, including: communication skills; team working skills; presentation skills; problem solving skills; planning skills; emotional literacy; ability to self-motivate (work independently)	Number of participants that have developed any of the skills listed here during the project
6. For participants to engage (more) positively in education, training or employment after the programme (either in the custodial setting or in the community)	Number of participants who have signed up to future work/education and/or have made concrete plans for future education, training or employment post-project and/or post-release Number of participants who achieve the NOCN accreditation linked to the programme
7. For participants to develop positive aspirations with regards to their futures	Number of participants who have signed up to future work/education and/or have made concrete plans for future education, training or employment post-project and/or post-release
8. For participants to be aware of opportunities to pursue these aspirations after release	Number of participants who indicate a (higher) awareness of opportunities available to them post-release
9. For participants to have access to support to enable them to pursue these opportunities after release	Number of participants who indicate they have accessed this support after release

4. Approach and methodology

As the project set out to gauge attitudinal change in participating young offenders, tools were devised to measure their responses to taking part in the project, and to monitor a change in attitude.

Dr Rosie Meek from the University of Southampton was consulted on the evaluation framework.

Participants

When the project started, baseline information about participants was recorded, through self-assessment questionnaires and observation records, which included information about their personal history in terms of parenting, education, work and experience of the arts as well as offending history (if they wished to disclose this), and how they felt about taking part in the project.

Participants' responses to the project were recorded through observations and interviews, and through a self-assessment questionnaire. The evaluation focuses on personal motivation and levels of engagement and commitment in participants.

Engagement

Observations were focussed on indications of engagement and behavioural patterns (see appendix a for details) which would indicate levels of commitment and personal motivation⁸:

Disengagement/Disaffection

The point where participants start, manifesting a range of negative behaviours.

Curiosity

The point of first participation. Curiosity is a pre-requisite of learning. The arts engender curiosity because the precise outcome of the activity is unknown.

Involvement

The stage when participation progresses to active participation.

Acceptance

The stage where participants relax into the process and accept all of its challenges.

Success

The stage when participants are positively affected by their achievement.

Group work

Many of the exercises the participants take part in are highly self reflective and were used as evidence for the evaluation. Examples of this include:

- Mood Indicator sheets completed twice daily
- Themed collage work (on self-identity, ambitions)
- Group discussion sessions

⁸ Engagement Matrix, developed by DARTS (Doncaster Community Arts) to measure attitudinal change in arts participants

- Role play devised by the participants
- Group analysis and critique of the roles of women and perception of women's responsibilities in society and in the family
- Individual work books

Questionnaires

Participants and JBU staff completed self-assessment questionnaires at the start and the end of the programme

Interviews

Participants were interviewed informally (individually and in small groups) about their educational achievements, experience of performing arts, the time spent in custody and their personal interests/hobbies as early on in the programme as possible. These interviews were conducted during breaks or prior to the formal start of the programme at the beginning of the day.

JBU staff took part in discussions and daily ongoing evaluation with the lead facilitator and on four occasions had a working lunch with the evaluator to discuss any issues as well as participants' progress

Case studies

Information about each participant was gathered through observation, information disclosed by participants themselves in interviews, group discussion, group exercises, information made available by the prison staff and from workbooks (participants could keep their workbooks private if they wanted to, but no-one chose to do so.)

Tracking

We had hoped the participants would be interviewed 3 - 6 months after the project to ascertain a medium to longer term impact of the programme. Because most girls were released by then, we were unsuccessful in contacting them.

5. Did Miss Spent achieve its aims and objectives?

5.1 Positive engagement

Using the engagement matrix, we could show that over the two weeks there was a clear shift in engagement and increasing evidence of positive attitudinal change in the relationship between members of the group as well as between the girls and the facilitators. Although instances of disruption and negative behaviour continued, there was less of it. There was a very noticeable increase in positive behaviours, including curiosity, acceptance and involvement in all the girls. All the girls reached the "success" stage at the end of the project when all the girls remaining at the unit took part in the sharing event (one girl had been released during the first week). None of the girls were excluded nor did prison staff need to impose sanctions on any of the girls for inappropriate behaviour.

Often an initial reluctance to take part in particular exercises was rooted in a lack of confidence or a fear of "looking stupid" in front of others. It was particularly difficult for girls who had just arrived at the unit, and the new girl, Rachelle, who joined the group for the first time on day three of the project.

The girls' own feedback echo these observations:

"I didn't want to take part at all but in the end I did and enjoyed it."(Rachelle)

"I thought I wasn't going to be able to do any of it but then I could."(Ruby)

"I learnt I should try more things."(Rachelle)

"I think we done well. I didn't think anyone would do it."(Sienna about the performance)

"When Miss Spent first came in I was rude, always stropping and moaning. Over the last couple of days I've done more than the 1st week and a half. Thanks for showing me what I could do. Without that I wouldn't have gained the confidence to do it."
(Pamela)

"I didn't think it was gonna be that good, when we were rehearsing we thought it was gonna be shit. But in the end we thought it was quite good."(Ruby)

"We didn't want to make a fool out of ourselves."(Aisha)

JBU staff members also agreed there had been a noticeable change in the girls:

"Day 6 has really turned Pamela around. You can give yourselves a pat on the back for that."(Malcolm – JBU teacher)

"Karen's changed. In appearance and everything."(Reshma – JBU teacher)

5.2 Confidence and self-esteem

Many of the drama exercises were designed to help the girls identify and build on their own strengths. Many found this difficult, but these turned out to be some of the most useful exercises in terms of developing positive self-awareness and confidence. The performance elements further enabled the girls to step out of their comfort zones and achieve something they had never done before.

Most of the girls were initially reluctant to take part in the performance and it was not until the end of the project they all committed to presenting something at the sharing event. They defied some of the uniformed prison staff members' expectations that "they wouldn't pull it off." There were other examples of individuals changing - Karen, for example, could not think of anything positive about herself initially. When JBU staff and the other girls told her that she had beautiful hair, which until that point she always tied up in a bunch, she appeared at the next session with her hair down. There were other little changes that became evident in her body language and communication with others that indicated her increased confidence. Ruby was very quiet at the start of the project and slowly started to become more open and confident in her manner and body language.

Self-assessment

The girls were asked to assess their confidence and self-esteem, on a scale of 1 to 10, at the beginning and at the end of the project. Six out of nine (67%) of the girls said their confidence and self-esteem had increased:

Change in confidence and self-esteem according to participants

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
+1	0	0	-2	*	4	3	2	2

*) Pamela did not complete both questionnaires, but indicated in interviews that she felt much more confident.

"I am more confident and I can speak out more." (Ruby)

"I feel my self esteem has grown." (Sophie)

Observations

Some of the girls made very clear progress in this area, and they were the girls who assessed themselves as having increased confidence and self-esteem. Aisha was very confident from the start. She had been at the unit a bit longer than some of the others, and had an outgoing personality. She scored herself 10 at the start and 10 at the end. Rachelle arrived at the unit on day three of the project. It was difficult for her to settle in initially. Although she scored herself as a 10 at the start of the project, this was not evident in her behaviour. She was clearly concerned with how she would come across to the other girls, to the point where she refused to take part in many exercises. However at the end of the project she was taking part much more actively and even took the stage (albeit briefly) to lead an exercise at the sharing event. A member of the YOT team also commented she saw a big change in Rachelle. So there were many indications her self-confidence had improved, at least as far as her place in the group was concerned and her willingness to try something new:

"I learnt I should try more things." (Rachelle)

Charmaine was having a very hard time at the unit, for personal reasons. She had just turned 18 and would soon have to leave the safety of the small, 16 bed unit, where she was one of the oldest girls, to enter the adult women's prison. The adult prison houses over 300 women. There she would be amongst the youngest and most vulnerable prisoners. She struggled in many ways, but she participated actively in many aspects of the programme, and on the last day delivered a very confident and strong performance whilst leading an audience discussion with approximately 40 members of staff and invited visitors:

"You could see Charmaine building up her confidence throughout the exercise."
(Pamela, JBU teacher)

So in some ways her confidence was high, but she was clearly concerned how she was going to cope over the coming weeks which may have affected her self-assessment.

5.3 Desisting from re-offending

A substantial amount of work was done with the girls to get them to consider risk factors in their lives that might contribute to them re-offending after release, as well as to help them develop desistance factors that would decrease that risk (see section 5.3.1 and 5.3.2). A lot of this was done in an interesting and engaging way which managed to engage the girls and encouraged them to contribute and focus.

All the girls created their own personal road map towards a positive goal (for example a progression through education towards a career, earning money to afford their own place away from difficult family circumstances etcetera). They then identified the obstacles they would encounter and strategies to deal with these obstacles. Alongside the in-depth thinking about their own identities, positive role models, and the motivational work (78% felt more motivated at the end of the project, 89% said they enjoyed educational activity more), Miss Spent helps participants to identify pathways to a positive future of their own choice. It also looked at elements of offending behaviour and risk. If followed up and linked to YOT programmes, education and other support services available to young female offenders, it is certain Miss Spent would contribute to achieving the YJB's and the Prison Service's reducing re-offending targets. At the time of writing this report, we do not have information available on the JBU participants' progress.⁹ Some of the girls said they thought the project would help them not to re-offend and gave strong indications that their attitudes were changing.

"Together with prison it will help me not to re-offend." (Rachelle)

All the elements measured on the self-assessment questionnaires contribute to desisting from offending and are linked to reducing the risk factors identified in the YJB report *Risk and Protective Factors*¹⁰. The evaluation focussed particularly on the Miss Spent aims and objectives and programme content, which are related directly to addressing risk factors and strengthening protective factors identified by the YJB in this report.

The way Miss Spent addressed risk factors and strengthened protective factors is outlined in sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 below.

⁹ Tracking participants 3 – 6 months after the project was part of the original evaluation brief. However in the case of the project at the JBU this was not possible as the girls were released or transferred soon after the project, and paperwork to enable us to track them after release was not completed. However this is definitely something Clean Break wants to pursue.

¹⁰ Summary available as download from the Youth Justice Board, www.yjb.gov.uk June 2010. Full report available to order.

5.3.1 Addressing RISK FACTORS

Lack of commitment to schooling

By motivating the girls to think about their strengths and interests, several of the girls felt more motivated to think about what they could achieve in future. All the girls were interested in achieving qualifications, and the programme was accredited although qualifications were not awarded to any of the girls because their portfolios were not completed before they left the JBU. None of the girls wanted to leave their workbooks behind which were going to be the main part of their portfolios.

Apart from Charmaine, who was already very highly committed to education and initially felt Miss Spent was an unwelcome interruption to the education programme, all indicated they enjoyed taking part in education more as a result of Miss Spent, and JBU teachers were of the opinion that Karen and Pamela in particular had changed their attitude towards education very considerably:

"Day 6 has really turned Pamela around. You can give yourselves a pat on the back for that." (Malcolm)

Karen had initially said she "couldn't be bothered with school" but then asked staff whether she would be able to study for her GCSEs whilst at the unit.

Change in enjoyment in taking part in education activity

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
1	2	4	0	*	2	1	1	3

*) Pamela did not complete both questionnaires, but all indications were that she became committed to the idea of changing her life through education.

Impulsivity

The drama exercises and discussion groups around the girls' roadmaps to their futures and the analysis of offending behaviour (see below), as well as the way Clean Break and JBU staff managed general behaviour and group dynamics throughout the week, encouraged the girls to think about the consequences of actions, to reduce impulsivity and encourage longer term thinking and decision-making. Every opportunity to link behaviour back to exercises, and work on the development of emotional intelligence (see paragraph below) was utilised.

Low intelligence¹¹

Miss Spent worked particularly well on developing emotional intelligence. This is an important desistance factor - understanding your own actions and the impact on yourself and others, in the short term and the long term. This is very important for teenage girls, especially for those with very difficult and challenging family histories. Most of the girls had evident difficulties controlling anger and some of their offences included violence. Two in particular had considerable anxiety about family members, including younger siblings left behind in a household with a mother addicted to crack, and one participant had a baby son who had been taken into care. Most had relied on drug or alcohol abuse prior to entering the unit in an attempt to manage or reduce negative emotions. The girls completed a "mood-o-meter" at the beginning and end of each session to encourage them to be aware of the mood they were in, and to track changes in their moods. Many of the girls said they had gained knowledge and understanding of themselves and their own emotions:

"Thanks for helping us help ourselves." (Aisha)

¹¹ This is a risk factor identified by the Youth Justice Board

"Miss Spent taught me I can be myself and I don't have to pretend to be someone else when I am clearly not!"(Sophie)

"I realised I learnt about self-esteem and getting on with people. I don't really get on with that many people."(Charmaine)

Alienation and lack of social commitment

The whole project was geared towards reducing alienation. This was done in the following ways:

- The girls were teamed up in different combinations, rather than always working with their friends. This would change group dynamics and encourage team work skills and consideration of others.
- All nine girls also worked together as one team, making decisions amongst themselves, leading on presentations and exercises.
- The girls identified their own cultural and community backgrounds and compared those.
- A wide range of positive female role models from different ethnic backgrounds made up the Clean Break team.
- The influence of the media and lack of positive, culturally diverse female role models in the media was discussed.
- The girls considered what women's roles in society were, and what they could be and did not have to be – the choices they have.

Development of social commitment was measured with the self-assessment questionnaires as the "Ability to make a positive contribution to the community" (inside the unit and outside the unit:)

Change in "ability to make a positive contribution to the community" according to participants

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
0	3	3	-1	*	2	4	2	3

*) Pamela indicated she felt she had started to make a positive contribution to the group / the JBU community because of Miss Spent, in statements made to the group and to the evaluator

It is worth noting that Sasha only took part in the first 2.5 days of the programme and was then released. Pamela's attitude changed significantly – at the start of the project she purposefully separated herself from the group again and again, by sitting on the sidelines, refusing to take part, and displaying negative behaviour. Towards the end she was a proud member of the team. Charmaine's problems were outlined earlier in the report which may also explain her negative result here. She was becoming more and more aware as the project developed of the challenges she was facing (see case studies in section 7). Sophie wrote in her workbook:

"I want to use my power to make the community a better place."(Sophie)

Some of the other girls also showed a high level of social commitment, for example Sienna, who wanted to develop a career in social care, working with young people. This idea became much stronger and more developed as the project progressed.

Attitudes that condone offending and drug misuse

For two days in week two, the exercises, games and group work were focussed on attitudes around offending and complemented the work typically done with young offenders by the Youth Offending Teams. Elements of role play were incorporated which

analysed the positions and characteristics of “victims”, “rescuers” and “persecutors”. The negative and positive aspects of these roles, in particular how the girls could identify these characteristics in themselves, were analysed in group work and one to one work. The game and role play elements made it interesting and engaging, without shying away from deeper issues. The work then moved onto discussions and games around what makes it so difficult to choose, change, and take risks?

Through role play and games the girls considered choice, decisions and alternatives in a range of scenarios which were likely to relate directly to their lives, including peer pressure and pressure from family and partners (see paragraph below) and other obstacles. The whole group shared ideas about how some of these obstacles could be overcome, avoided, dealt with, or minimised.

The girls’ progress was measured through their questionnaires, as “the ability to take responsibility for my actions”:

Change in “ability to take responsibility for my actions”

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
1	1	0	-3	*	0	3	1	0

Sienna and Ruby scored themselves at 10 before and after, so there was no room for progress there. Charmaine again was finding it difficult to feel positive with the amount of things going on in her life. Aisha did not award herself any progress here. Her offenses were drug dealing related and she had a tendency to glamourise drug taking and there were indications she continued to see it as something cool and desirable. Pamela showed signs of being more able to look at her own actions and the impact on others.

Friendships with peers involved in crime and drug misuse

This was another element threaded through the programme, particularly criminal association, relationships with partners and close friends and family members. Many of the girls had been or were involved in relationships that were potentially putting them at risk, whilst at the same time appearing to be a protective factor in their lives. Without the need for personal details to be disclosed, facilitators again devised and used techniques to get the girls to think in general terms about relationships, so it could apply to a range of situations and types of relationships. In an active drama game, the girls identified people to avoid and people to protect them (without knowing who is a “protector” and who is “dangerous”). The exercise was about characteristics and traits rather than actual people and identified types of relationships that trigger anger or frustration.

Thinking and behaviour

There was a constant push to get the girls to consider their opinions and behaviour, and how this was conditioned by their immediate peers as well as society as they saw it. They were constantly challenged and encouraged to think critically, not to make general assumptions, but to develop informed opinions and decisions and to not fall into social, gender, class or race stereotypes. This was the central approach of the programme and was instrumental in its success.

Lifestyle

In several ways, lifestyle was touched upon. There were two main elements to this:

- What the girls would like to get out of life, in terms of lifestyle – what they wanted to have, where they wanted to be, what they wanted to do
- How they could adapt their lifestyle inside, to cope with being locked up every evening

The first element was about ambition and looking after yourself, and gave an opportunity to get the girls motivated to think about their future aspirations. Advice on general wellbeing was shared with the girls by JBU and Clean Break staff. A lot of effort was made by Clean Break and JBU staff to compliment the girls on how much better and healthier they looked since coming to the unit, particularly those who were de-toxing from drug or alcohol abuse and smoking – emphasising the benefits of not drinking, smoking and taking drugs.

The second element encouraged the girls to think creatively about how they could best use their time at the unit, and use it as an opportunity for personal development. The girls shared suggestions which included:

- Writing letters to friends and family to maintain and improve relationships, and as an outlet for their own anxieties and emotions (*"you could write down how you're feeling"*).
- Writing lyrics or poetry as an outlet for anxieties and emotions.
- Getting enough sleep, becoming healthier.
- Practice or prepare work for Miss Spent.
- Completing their workbooks to achieve theirs (most of the girls had completed or very nearly completed their workbooks by the end of the project and had done a significant amount of work in their own time. Unfortunately the accreditation process was not completed, see 5.3.1).

Eight out of nine girls said they had improved their skills to increase or maintain their own wellbeing:

Change in skills to increase or maintain wellbeing

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
1	1	2	2	*	2	6	1	3

And eight out of nine girls said they were better equipped to use time in a meaningful way whilst at the JBU, with big changes for Rachelle, Aisha, Charmaine, Ruby and Karen (Pamela confirmed verbally she felt she had been spending her time in a more meaningful way over the two weeks and Sophie scored 10 out of 10 at the beginning and the end of the project):

Change in using time in a meaningful way

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
1	4	5	9	*	3	4	0	1

5.3.2 Developing PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Sense of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. The idea of self-efficacy is one of the central points in positive psychology. This branch of psychology focuses on factors that create meaning for individuals. It is believed that our personalised ideas of self-efficacy affect our social interactions in almost every way. Understanding how to develop self-efficacy is a vitally important goal for positive psychology because it can lead to living a more productive and happy life.¹²

¹² en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-efficacy

Although self-efficacy was not measured specifically with this group, it is closely linked to self-confidence and self-esteem, and feeling positive and motivated about the future. We already know the majority of the girls felt more confident (67%) and more motivated (78%). There were some significant changes in feeling positive about the future:

Change in "feeling positive about my future"

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
0	0	-1	0	*	4	6	1	6

Including Pamela, who indicated she felt much more positive towards the end of the project, in her words, her behaviour and her body language, five of the nine girls felt more positive. Sasha scored herself a 10 at the start because she was only two days away from release. Rachelle scored 8 at the start and 8 at the end so she remained at a high level. Charmaine remained on 5 and Aisha was the only participant who felt slightly less positive. It was not possible to ascertain why, as she was unwilling to discuss the matter on the last day.

High intelligence

See the paragraph on low intelligence in 5.3.1

Link with teachers and with other adults and peers who hold positive attitudes, and model positive social behaviour

A wide range of positive female role models from different ethnic backgrounds made up the Clean Break team – all respected arts professionals and drama practitioners who related very well to the girls whilst at the same time presenting a strong and positive example. The JBU teachers were also highly committed and were excellent, positive role models for the project. The way the whole team worked together strengthened the project in a way that cannot be emphasised enough. Communication was excellent and any problems were discussed calmly and resolved quickly. Ground rules set by the prison were followed and additional "rules for being in the room during the project" were outlined by the girls themselves. These were supported by all staff. So it was not just the individuals that were good role models, but they also set an excellent example of how to work together and interact positively, sometimes under stressful circumstances.

"This is the best drama project we've ever had." (Business Studies teacher)

"It has been more challenging [as the project was developing] but Downview and Clean Break staff communicated well about setting boundaries [for the girls]. We do have different approaches but it has been much easier to communicate and make it work than with drama projects we've had before. Clean Break were really flexible. If changes had to be made it was fine." (JBU teacher)

"You definitely draw together a good group of people." (JBU Head of Education on the Clean Break team)

"Best drama project so far in the way it was structured and the ground rules introduced." (JBU Art teacher)

Opportunities for involvement, social and reasoning skills, recognition and due praise

These opportunities were created constantly. The whole project was built on positive involvement of all the girls, social and reasoning skills were part of every single exercise, and the girls were time and time again encouraged to recognise their own and each other's skills and strengths. Their level of insight increased which was evident in some of the things they said and wrote:

"I think young women commit offences because they need to support their self and their family. Maybe because they feel trapped in their life so they take an easy option to get out." (Pamela's workbook)

Due praise was given at every opportunity to show the facilitators' appreciation of the girls' effort and positive contribution, to the group, but also to each individual. On the last day, each girl was given a card with personal messages from Clean Break staff which congratulated them on specific personal achievements.

5.4 Reducing the likelihood of self-harm/harming others

Evidence that Miss Spent actually reduces instances of self-harm and/or harming others is very limited. At least two of the girls had history of self-harm. One of the girls was self-harming whilst at the JBU but stopped for the duration of Miss Spent. However, Miss Spent may reduce the likelihood of self-harm or harming others through the development of self-efficacy, self-esteem and emotional literacy, which can enable young women who self-harm to seek appropriate emotional support. Lack of emotional support is an important risk factor in self-harming, as well as sexual, emotional and physical abuse including rape, neglect, loss or separation, parental mental health problems, parental substance misuse, domestic violence, psychiatric diagnoses and substance misuse (both alcohol and drugs).¹³ The case studies confirm that many of the young women at the JBU are at risk of self-harming.

Some of the girls disclosed they found it difficult to manage anger, and staff disclosed that some girls had been convicted of violent behaviour towards others. Evidence that Miss Spent reduces the likelihood of these girls being violent towards others in the future is not available as it is beyond the reach of this evaluation.

However it is reasonable to assume that Miss Spent contributes in some way to participants' awareness of their emotions and how their emotions and moods could put them at further risk of self-harm and harming others. Miss Spent is likely to enhance other interventions provided by the YOT and by the JBU's health services. The project had also encouraged some of the girls to manage their emotions by writing lyrics, poetry or letters in their cells, providing a different outlet for strong negative emotions.

Some of the Miss Spent exercises were specifically focussed on reflecting on the roles and possible behaviours of victims and perpetrators. The girls took part in a critical analysis of how people could become dominated by others and become victims of abuse, or perpetrators of crime due to influence by others.

¹³ www.wellcome.ac.uk/en/pain/microsite/culture4.html

5.5 Life skills

The life skills Miss Spent programme aimed to develop within participants included:

- **Communication skills**
- **Team working skills**
- **Presentation skills**
- **Problem solving skills**
- **Planning skills**
- **Emotional literacy**
- **Ability to self-motivate (work independently)**

All these learning outcomes were strongly evident in the programme plan, and all the girls showed progress in these areas. All the girls were very motivated to work independently, and on several occasions asked whether they could start earlier or take work back to the wing or their cells. They also completed their workbooks without needing external pressure or motivation.

The girls themselves recognised their progress and the fact that their skills improved as the project went on:

"I didn't think it was gonna be that good, when we were rehearsing we thought it was gonna be shit. But in the end we thought it was quite good." (Ruby)

"I have done a lot of courses, but I must say this is one of the best. I think I enjoyed it because I knew more of what I was doing." (Sophie)

"I think we done well. I didn't think anyone would do it." (Sienna about the performance)

Their motivation was particularly evident on the day Clean Break's singing tutor was unable to come to the unit as planned because she was involved in an accident on the way to work. The girls planned their own activities and decided to work on their collages and workbooks. They started early that day and cooperated very well with little need for intervention from teaching staff or Miss Spent's programme manager.

5.6 Engagement in education, training or employment after the programme

Some of the girls were very committed to education and stated early on in the programme they wanted to get qualifications, pass their driving licence, finish their GCSEs, get a job or return to a job (Ruby and Charmaine were particularly motivated). Their engagement in the activity, their self-assessments with 8 out of 9 girls stating they enjoyed educational activity more (the only person who didn't change, Charmaine, had already scored herself at 10), and all the girls indicating they felt they had been spending their time in a meaningful way, shows they were fully engaged in Miss Spent, which could positively affect their motivation afterwards.

JBU teachers' assessment indicated there was an increased engagement amongst several of the members of the group who had been less motivated prior to Miss Spent (see 5.3.1, Lack of commitment to schooling, page 18). The commitment was certainly there at the end of the two weeks.

Eight out of the nine girls also thought their skills for employment had increased, and seven thought they had improved their arts skills.

Change in skills for employment

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
1	1	2	-2	*	2	7	1	3

Change in arts skills

Sasha	Rachelle	Aisha	Charmaine	Pamela	Ruby	Karen	Sophie	Sienna
1	3	0**	3	*	4	9	0**	3

*) Pamela confirmed this verbally

***) Aisha and Sophie had quite a lot of experience of performing arts prior to coming to the unit

5.7 Positive aspirations

Most of the girls were able to (further) develop positive aspirations for release. They mostly linked to achieving at school, going to college or going to University, or working towards a specific career. See 5.3.2 - Developing protective factors - sense of self-efficacy (p. 21).

Anecdotal evidence confirmed the development and/or strengthening of positive aspirations, or at least a commitment amongst the girls to think about it:

"It's made me understand things more, be a bit more motivated and try something new."(Sienna)

"I want to use my power to make the community a better place."(Sophie)

"I want to find out sooner rather than later what I want to do as my career. I hope one day to stop following other people's footprints."(Sophie)

6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths & Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

Based on comments from participants, prison staff, Clean Break project staff and observations made by the author of this report

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality and integrity of the project • Excellent partnership between Clean Break and JBU education team • High level of commitment from the participants • High skills level amongst facilitators and a wide range of creative and therapeutic skills amongst the team – excellent role models • Robust project plan which allowed for flexibility and responsiveness to individuals' needs and unexpected circumstances • Flexibility of project team when dealing with unexpected circumstances • Positive impact on uniformed prison staff members' perception of participants • The fact that the programme can lead to a recognised qualification • The fact that the programme is gender specific • The quality of the workbook • The performance / sharing element at the end of the project 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of involvement from YOT staff (despite Clean Break and the JBU Head of Education doing everything they could to encourage their involvement) • No de-brief / post project evaluation meeting for the whole team • Clinical Supervision was put in place for the Miss Spent delivery team. Regrettably it was not taken up during the process but was instead used as a reflective tool post-programme delivery • No dedicated administrative support for the project during the weeks it was running • The JBU being unable to complete the accreditation process for any participants • There was a Service Level Agreement in place but it did not stipulate in detail arrangements agreed with the prison around accreditation and tracking the girls after release. Including these in future SLAs may be helpful to ensure accreditation processes are completed and that there is more administrative support for tracking the girls after release.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued relationships with participants if they contact Clean Break after release • Collaboration with the JBU on future projects • Rolling out Miss Spent nationally, possibly to STCs, YOIs and juvenile units • Emphasising the close links of the project aims with key prison targets, YJB aims and NOMS pathways • Building on the cross-curricular work embedded in the programme • Offering a range of qualifications – NOCN, ASDAN, AQA and Arts Award 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on members of JBU education staff for delivery could be risky if other institutions were not able to commit to this level of partnership working • Difficulties in determining medium to long term impact on participants • Lack of budget availability in prisons to buy in external projects of this kind • Competition from other organisations delivering cheaper programmes (but likely to be of lower quality)

7. Case studies

7.1 Sasha

Sasha was very quiet when Miss Spent staff first visited the unit prior to the project starting. Most of the girls were relatively communicative, even if the communication wasn't always positive, but she remained very quiet. She was due to be released during the first week of the project so perhaps was not engaging in the idea of it, because she knew she would not be at the unit for much longer.

However, once Miss Spent started she threw herself into it with gusto. She even managed to complete part of her workbook and was determined to finish it after her release so that she could receive the qualification.

"I think our YOT workers should see this so they could see our progress." (Sasha)

On the day of her release, during a group exercise about true identities, Sasha revealed to the group she was bi-sexual, which showed a growing confidence and trust in the group. Her final comments in her workbook were that she did not want to leave the JBU and that she felt safe there:

"I don't want to leave. Downview is like my second family. My safe place."

7.2 Rachelle

Rachelle arrived at the JBU on the third day of the project. Clearly uncomfortable with joining the group in the drama exercises, she spent a couple of days mainly working on her workbook, and drawing. She said the drama exercises were childish and stupid, and would initially not be persuaded to join in. Being on a two-month sentence with no early release option, she didn't have an early release to gain from good behaviour – *"there's nothing I can do to get out of here"*. But towards the end of the project, Rachelle interacted much more with the group. Karen and Ruby very much encouraged her to join in, and she contributed to the project in lots of ways – through visual arts, and she wrote a poem which one of the facilitators read out for her on the final day. She also led an on-stage drama game on stage. YOT staff acknowledged her progress:

"When can you come back and do some more of this [Miss Spent]? Rachelle is a completely different young woman."

Rachelle's relationship with YOT and prison education staff improved quickly throughout the project. She found it difficult to communicate verbally and preferred drawing and writing. When asked whether some of the work was helpful to her, she said:

"It helps a little bit, I don't know. I'm confused about life."

Towards the end of the project, she became much more positive:

"We get on better."

"Together with prison it will help me not to re-offend."

"I learnt I should try more things."

"I didn't want to take part at all but in the end I did and enjoyed it."

Rachelle spent a lot of time on her workbook and illustrated it with drawings. She really took to the collage identity exercise and wanted to do more of those after the project.

7.3 Aisha

Aisha was quite attached to her "gangsta" identity. She had been in and out of custody for some time and was transferred to the JBU from a Secure Children's Centre. She was expected to receive a relatively long sentence. When asked what sort of things she like to do, her answer was "stacking the money." She liked the fact that she was a "gangsta" about herself.

Aisha said she loved drama and that she got an A* for drama at school. She did a lot of creative writing in her cell, and wrote lyrics during lock up time. She loved performing and performed a song with Sophie, on the final day, and presented the girls' own version of the television talk show "Trisha." As the project progressed, Aisha became very interested in some of the feminist ideas that were discussed:

[We're here to... exercise] *"to prove women are just as equal as men."*

She volunteered to present the "expectations of women" presentation the girls had prepared on the final day.

Although initially a bit apprehensive about Miss Spent - *"We didn't want to make a fool out of ourselves"* – Aisha was very motivated from the start: *"We don't want to have a break."* She often volunteered to do things and took the initiative.

She was pleased with what was achieved:

"I think we should pat ourselves on the back for this."

"Thanks for helping us help ourselves."

7.4 Charmaine

Our first impression of Charmaine was that she was an extremely bright girl, hard working, full of initiative and very committed to education. She was keen to gain qualifications and receive a certificate for Miss Spent. She was initially reluctant to take part in Miss Spent because it meant missing regular lessons, but appeared more willing to take part once she found out it was an arts based programme and it was accredited. Aside from her commitment to education, Charmaine told us about her interest in visual arts and proudly showed us paintings she had created which had been submitted to the Koestler Arts Award competition for prison art.

"Personally I didn't really want to do it. But it was all right actually. I realised I learnt about self-esteem and getting on with people. I don't really get on with that many people."

Anger management was an issue Charmaine identified herself. She wanted to become a hairdresser but said she was impatient and *"might stab someone with scissors one day."* The possible source of her anger became apparent when we became aware of the fact that Charmaine perhaps had the most difficult background (that was disclosed to us) from all the girls. Her mother, a crack cocaine addict, had told her she had been the product of a rape. Charmaine is the only mixed race member of her family and told JBU staff her own family discriminate against her and call her names. When she arrived at the unit she was addicted to crack cocaine, which her mother allegedly had supplied her with and encouraged her to take. She had previously wanted to stay at home to care for her younger siblings but was now working towards being able to get her own place to avoid the risk of returning to an abusive and drug fuelled environment. She had turned 18 whilst at the unit and would be transferred to the adult prison soon, having been sentenced to four years. She was likely to serve at least two years and would need to complete at least nine months in the adult prison.

"[I drew] a light bulb because I'm quite bright. A cloud because of my emotions. Sometimes I get angry, I get sad." (Charmaine's comments on a drawing representing herself and her family)

Throughout the project it became more and more apparent how troubled and vulnerable Charmaine was. She distanced herself from the group on a few occasions and although she worked hard on certain assignments, she often seemed withdrawn. She did take the opportunity to shine at the performance at the end of the project:

"You could see Charmaine building up her confidence throughout the exercise." (JBU teacher)

7.5 Pamela

Pamela told the group that her mother served time for a knife crime, and that her father had died. There were also indications she been abused physically by her mother and had first run away from home at the age of 13. She had a son, who was now in care.

Pamela had been at the JBU for a couple of weeks when the project started. She clearly had difficulty in bonding with some of the other girls, which was mainly due to her own mood swings, which would usually lead to her complaining about other people, or distancing herself from the others. This would result her being excluded from activities. Reflecting in her workbook, he recognised she had to manage her moods and anger and devise coping strategies. She also wrote in her workbook:

"The group makes me feel nervous because I don't feel comfortable in groups."

Pamela welcomed the time for self-reflection and at one point told the group:

"Look at that time [during lock up] as time to spend by yourself. To reflect on what you could get out of this place. There's no point in feeling sorry for yourself, it just makes it worse. I wise up and get on with it."

Her goals were to become more confident to do things she wanted to do, go to college, move away, get her ideal job and settle down.

The second week saw a big change in Pamela, particularly the sessions where the girls

reflected on their offending behaviour and on what they wanted to do after completing their sentences:

"Day 6 has really turned Pamela around. You can give yourselves a pat on the back for that."(JBU teacher)

"I'm always learning new things which makes me blossom."

"Miss Spent taught me that I'm good at quite a few things."

Pamela's statement, on stage in front of all the prison staff and invited audience members watching, perhaps summed it up most accurately:

"When Miss Spent first came in I was rude, always stropping and moaning. Over the last couple of days I've done more than the 1st week and a half. Thanks for showing me what I could do. Without that I wouldn't have gained the confidence to do it."

7.6 Ruby

Ruby had only been at the unit for a few days when Miss Spent started. She was very quiet throughout but started to open up a bit more towards the end, achieving her personal goal *"to feel more confident and to be able to show my feelings:"*

"I thought I wasn't going to be able to do any of it but then I could."

"I am more confident and I can speak out more."

Ruby was at the JBU for an offense that she had committed some time ago. She was doing her GCSEs just before going into custody, and hoped to complete her exams at a later date. She also had a part-time job which she hoped to return to. She appeared to be very committed to education and said she liked maths, and achieved Bs and Cs for her favourite subjects, expressive arts and maths.

By the end of the programme, Ruby decided she wanted to study tourism and travel. She completed her workbook which she showed proudly to staff on the last day. The group's achievements exceeded her expectations:

"I didn't think it was gonna be that good, when we were rehearsing we thought it was gonna be shit. But in the end we thought it was quite good."

7.7 Karen

Like Ruby, Karen had only been at the unit for a few days when Miss Spent started, and the two girls were often seen working together. She was less able to communicate her feelings, either verbally or in her workbook and needed some assistance (which she asked for herself) to complete it. However there was other evidence that Karen started to blossom:

"Karen's changed. In appearance and everything."(Reshma)

Karen identified a lack of motivation as one of her issues. She was at the unit for a range of petty offenses. After her reflection as part of Miss Spent, she decided to do her GCSEs, and look into the possibility of working with young people or becoming a drug and alcohol counsellor.

7.8 Sophie

"I have done a lot of courses, but I must say this is one of the best. I think I enjoyed it because I knew more of what I was doing."

Sophie was a positive force from the start of the project. She had taken part in drama projects in the community before, and enjoyed performing. Her personal goals were to gain confidence, to complete Miss Spent and gain a qualification, to feel happier, to "move closer to her ambitions" and to feel proud. Staff identified her as having learning difficulties, but she progressed and participated extremely well and her motivation was clear.

"I want to find out sooner rather than later what I want to do as my career. I hope one day to stop following other people's footprints."

She disclosed she had issues at home, within the family, and appeared to have been on the at risk register for some time in the past, having regular input from Social Services at home. She had fading scars from self-harming. Her goals were to go to college, become more confident and to possibly study ICT, a subject she enjoyed very much at the JBU. She had a strong social conscience and said she had done voluntary work in the past, and continued to want to make a positive contribution:

"I want to use my power to make the community a better place."

Sophie's workbook revealed she got a lot out of the programme:

"I feel my self esteem has grown."

"Miss Spent taught me I can be myself and I don't have to pretend to be someone else when I am clearly not!"

7.9 Sienna

Sienna was not far from being released after spending eight weeks at the unit when Miss Spent took place. She had been working towards a social care qualification before her custodial sentence. She was focussed on the future and Miss Spent helped her with that:

"It really made me think for the first time about what I really want to do when I get out. I am really proud of it and am going to take it home." (about the work created during the "ambition" exercise)

"It's made me understand things more, be a bit more motivated and try something new."

Sienna enjoyed the project and contributed a lot, despite being uncomfortable about performing (she had a physical disability which made her feel self-conscious and also

made it difficult to walk). However on several occasions she took a leading role within the group in terms of deciding on the programme for the closing event. She obviously gained respect from the other girls which contributed to her growing motivation.

"I think we done well. I didn't think anyone would do it." (about the performance)

"It's better than education. A chance to express ourselves."

"Everyone's a bit happier."

8. Feedback from prison staff

All prison staff (uniformed and education staff) indicated that the project had exceeded their expectations – even if their expectations had been quite high before the project started, Clean Break still managed to do better than they had anticipated. Uniformed staff members who completed questionnaires had noticeably lower expectations but were pleasantly surprised:

"I didn't think they were going to get up and do it." (Officer after the performance on the last day)

On average, staff members scored 8 out of 10 on the question "to what extent did you think this project made a positive difference to participants?" All staff members agreed the girls had gained in confidence and that the project was of extremely high quality:

"The staff running the project were absolutely brilliant. Even when the enthusiasm of the young women was at an all time low staff remained extremely patient and focused." (Uniformed officer)

Education staff all agreed the girls had gained significant life skills (see section 5.5, p. 26), with high scores too for raising the girls' aspirations (average 9 out of 10) and reducing the likelihood of them re-offending (7.5).

They thought Miss Spent contributed strongly (average score 8) to key prison service targets by providing purposeful activity outside the cell, by improving behaviour and consideration towards others and by aiding rehabilitation and reflection around deterring from offending.

"Excellent. A real improvement was seen in the girls' behaviour and confidence, self development." (Member of YOT staff)

"This is the best drama project we've ever had." (JBU teacher)

[the best thing about the project was] *"That is was very obviously and successfully designed for this specific age group of female offenders, it was fast paced, kept their attention and built their confidence and self-esteem. It was a huge success because the project covered (in depth) relevant issues such as the perception of women and allowed trainees to analyse themselves. It positively encourages decision-making, the development of communication skills and building self-esteem and confidence to the point where they want to perform in front of an audience! I am impressed with the clear aims and the structure of this project which also fits in with and adheres to/enforces the usual high standards of behaviour expected by the prison establishment from its trainees. It has encouraged the trainees to work outside of their comfort zones, encounter new people, and to have completely new experiences. I really hope Miss Spent is run in other establishments and continues to have the positive effect on others that it has had on our department as a whole!"* (JBU teacher)

Appendix a. DARTS engagement matrix

1. Disengagement/Disaffection

The point where participants start, manifesting a range of negative behaviours:

- Lack of interest
- Make negative comment
- Disrupt and distract others
- Exhibit violent behaviour
- Withdraw and refuse attention
- Irrelevant talk
- Short concentration span
- Make assumptions of failure
- Avoid answering questions
- Deny responsibility for own actions
- Destroy work
- Become involved in others' disputes
- Walk out of session

2. Curiosity

The point of first participation. Curiosity is a pre-requisite of learning. The arts engender curiosity because the precise outcome of the activity is unknown.

- Watch
- Listen
- Ask questions
- Experiment
- Dip in and out
- Show interest
- Ask for instruction or demonstration
- Comment positively on the work of others
- Have a go but destroy outcome

3. Involvement

The stage when participation progresses to active participation

- Respond to instruction
- Copy
- Get hands busy
- Discuss process and outcomes
- Co-operate and collaborate
- Engage in group work
- Stay on task
- Show restraint under duress
- Relate own experiences
- Bring materials, ideas or examples to sessions
- Talk about the activity outside the session

4. Acceptance

The stage where participants relax into the process and accept all of its challenges

- Initiate ideas and tasks
- Suggest improvements
- Accept feedback

- Offer advice
- Complete tasks
- Receive comments from peers
- Learn new skills
- Meet new challenges
- Commit
- Take tasks away from the project
- Communicate with artists beyond the tasks

5. Success

The stage when participants are positively affected by their achievement

- Accept praise
- Make positive statements about their own work
- Practise skills
- Strive for improvement
- Show work to others privately
- Celebrate work privately
- Welcome praise
- Experience pride and self-belief
- Comment positively on the work of others
- Accept criticism
- Reflect
- Have aspirations