

Walsall Street Teams
Annual Report 2009

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General Manager's Report



2008/09 stands out as a year marked by growth and development for WST. It has also proven to be a year of a change in terms of commissioning and new financial processes as not only structural changes take place locally, but also the UK economy went sharply into decline.

Despite this, WST has not only seen growth into new areas but also sustainability in terms of our current work for the year ahead.

New areas of development have included:

- Dudley Street Teams (Jigsaw satellite)
- Intensive Intervention Programme
- Runaways work – partnership with the Children's Society
- MARS – young men at risk of sexual exploitation
- Training – awareness raising for parents in addition to our professionals training

All areas of development are carefully considered in line with our organisational goals and plans. We are mindful of responding to evidenced need, closely relating to the core business of WST, with benefits to our client groups the main deciding factor.

The detail of the work continues to change and with 'new' trends emerging in the field of sexual exploitation regularly. Our referral records indicate a younger age group needing high end preventative work – this is continuing concern identified in the last couple of years.

Our work with young men (MARS) has moved forward and our training programme for this work is proving useful with professionals as they are able to identify risks and make accurate referrals to the project. There is still much to be done with this work, and we are viewing this as a developmental project for the next 3 - 5 years.

We now offer a service in Dudley, having procured funding for a 3 year post, working closely with the Dudley Safeguarding Board as they set up their vision for this work.

Walsall won a contract for the Intensive Intervention Programme, part of a national pilot scheme (DCSF) in 2008. WST and Rathbone were appointed locally as delivery agents for this work aimed at working with young people who offend with the goal to reduce the rate of re-offending within this client group. This will form part of the wider 'Think Family' agenda in Walsall.

Our training and awareness raising work has successfully piloted a number of sessions with parents over the past year. Our aim is to support parents to identify risks in their children's lives and thereby safeguard them from exploitation. We hope to increase this involvement with parents for the same reason.

Nehemiah has continued to offer successful workshop programmes over the course of the year. Many of the clients who have completed a workshop programme have chosen to regularly attend a Thursday evening drop-in session as a continuation of engagement. This has given us the opportunity to work with individuals over a longer period of time.

Sue Bretherick

MARS works with boys under the age of 18 at risk of, or involved in, sexual exploitation. These young boys are often exploring their sexuality but need help in reducing the hidden risks, raising the awareness of Internet dangers and safe relationships. Many of these young people come from care homes and have a history of sexual abuse, neglect or emotionally abusive carers. There is often family disruption, conflict, instability, poor relationship with family and peers. Many experience low self-esteem, expectations and vulnerability.

Government statistics suggest 1 in 4 men have been abused in some way before the age of 18.¹ This would provide a figure of between 30 – 40,000 men in Walsall who have been abused at sometime before 18, but does not include those who are currently being abused. Other demographics in Walsall suggest that males 15 years and under, provides a figure of 6 – 7,500. This is a large number of potential/vulnerable young people.

Over the last year WST has implemented research across the borough of Walsall firstly to establish if Walsall does have an issue and secondly to identify a need for a specialist support service.² A questionnaire was distributed among local agencies and professionals with 33 respondents, of which 23 were case holders. Of these, 31 young men and boys were identified as sexually exploited, and 71 identified as vulnerable according to the risk criteria supplied, suggesting a figure of just less than 1 in 2 of those who are vulnerable will go on to be exploited.³

Of those who were exploited, the most highlighted risk factors were financial difficulties and a background of care, followed by substance misuse, family disruption and low self-esteem, with a history of sexual abuse being another high scoring factor. Of those who were vulnerable, the key factors were episodes of running away, and returning from being missing, yet being well kept. Other high scoring factors included family disruption, financial difficulties, homelessness, substance misuse,⁴ and low self-esteem.⁴

With regards to awareness of the issue of exploitation, of the 33 professionals surveyed, a third believed the issue was here and evident, two-thirds stated their belief that the exploitation of young males was here but hidden, and nobody stated that the problem was non-existent.⁵ This research was used in securing funding from Children in Need to employ a full-time worker to develop the MARS Project over the next three years.

1 Bevan, S. <http://www.survivorsswindon.com/stats.htm>, accessed October 2007.

2,3,4,5 Maley, D. (2008) "Sexual Exploitation of Young Men & Boys", Walsall, Walsall Street Teams.



Police provide fresh cash boost for teens project

By Bobby Bridge
NEWS REPORTER

A SCHEME to help keep youngsters in school and on the right track has been given a helping hand by West Midlands Police.

The 'Nehemiah Project', which is run by the Walsall Street Teams charity, has been given a £8,500 donation by the force's charity Building Blocks after officers from the Bluswich Station recommended the group for the grant.

The money will go to help the project's work with 14 to 18 year-olds who are at risk of being excluded from school, or who are already involved in anti-social behaviour.

It aims to help keep them in the classroom and away from offending through one-to-one support and workshops.

Rachel Capitt, vulnerable persons officer for the Walsall area, said: "The money will go to help one-to-one sessions and stop children from getting into crime, giving them confidence and helping to build character."

"The programme last for 10 weeks and run throughout the year and the sessions give the youngsters life skills and get them

committing anti-social behaviour, so it helps everyone in the community. "It's a very good charity" said we're delighted we can support it."

The scheme has already helped many youngsters.

One teenager said: "Since getting to know you, I realise I don't need to get drunk down the park and smoke cannabis to have a laugh there's much more to live for than that."

Another said: "I learnt more in the first session than I have in school for a long time."

The 'Building Blocks' charity has been running for 10 years with the focus on helping youngsters overcome problems surrounding drug and alcohol abuse by funding community projects and has so far donated almost £27,000 to around 40 organisations.

The money has been collected through donations and recycling initiatives.

For further information relating to the charity, and to download an application form, please go to www.buildingblockscar.org.uk.

Robert never liked school. He had little respect for his teachers, had poor attendance and low aspirations. His parents were also concerned about his growing anti-social behaviour. Robert was referred to Nehemiah. He has successfully completed the 10 week course and actively participated. Robert has since return to school with a new attitude. Having enjoyed completing activities on the course he now wants to achieve at school. Robert is aiming to take 5 or 6 GCSE's.



IIP brings together expertise from WST in relation to working with young people around sexual exploitation and anti-social behaviour and Rathbone "Prove It" training programme.

Walsall IIP aims to support challenging young people and their families through a comprehensive package of interventions and support. The project adopts contract based agreements and support from a range of services, using appropriate incentives and sanctions to change behaviour and improve outcomes with an aim of supporting young people's transition into positive progression routes. Walsall IIP is one of 20 national pilots.

WST would like to thank it's supporters:

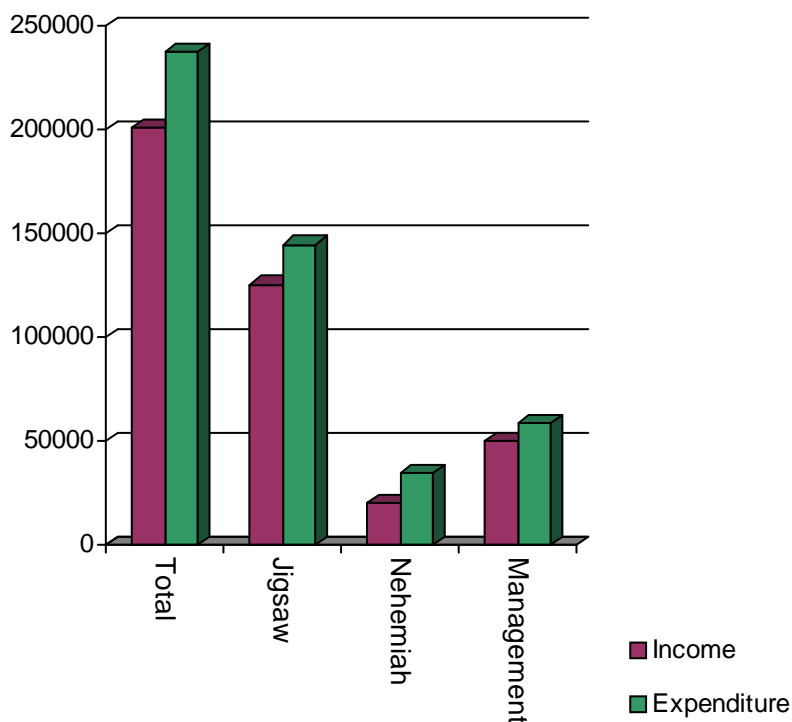
- Aldridge Parish Church
- Alfred Haines Charity
- Black Country Connexions
- Comic Relief
- Dudley MBC
- Eveson Trust
- The Henry Smith Charity
- Here to Help Awards—Save the Children
- Peter De Haan Charitable Trust
- Lloyds TSB Foundation
- Mercer's Charitable Trust
- Michael Marsh Charitable Trust
- Tudor Trust
- Victims Fund
- Walsall Community Church
- Walsall MBC
- Walsall tPCT
- Walsall Voluntary Action
- West Midlands Co-operative

Financial Overview

Total Income £201,168
of which unrestricted reserves £5,544

Total Expenditure £237,950
of which salaries & wages £178,898

Total Funds C/F £92,384
of which
restricted funds £82,181
unrestricted reserves £10,203



April 08—March 09

Jigsaw Project

Number of young women engaged: 55
Number of workshop attendees: 23

Solomon Prevention Project

Number of senior schools participating: 11
Number of junior schools participating: 26
Number of young people contacted: 3339
Number of professionals trained: 132
Number of parents trained: 22

Nehemiah Project

Number of workshop attendees: 30

"i listen to what you say and you listen to me and then i go away and think about what we talked about and it has helped me."

"i feel happy with what we have done. i understand life on the streets. this will help in the future. i can remember solomon dvd. there are really dodgy people in parks."

"we are really glad you came today. look how we have changed in that time and we are talking now."

"i am absolutely amazed. i couldn't believe it was the same girl."

"you are the best worker i have had. you listened and then helped"

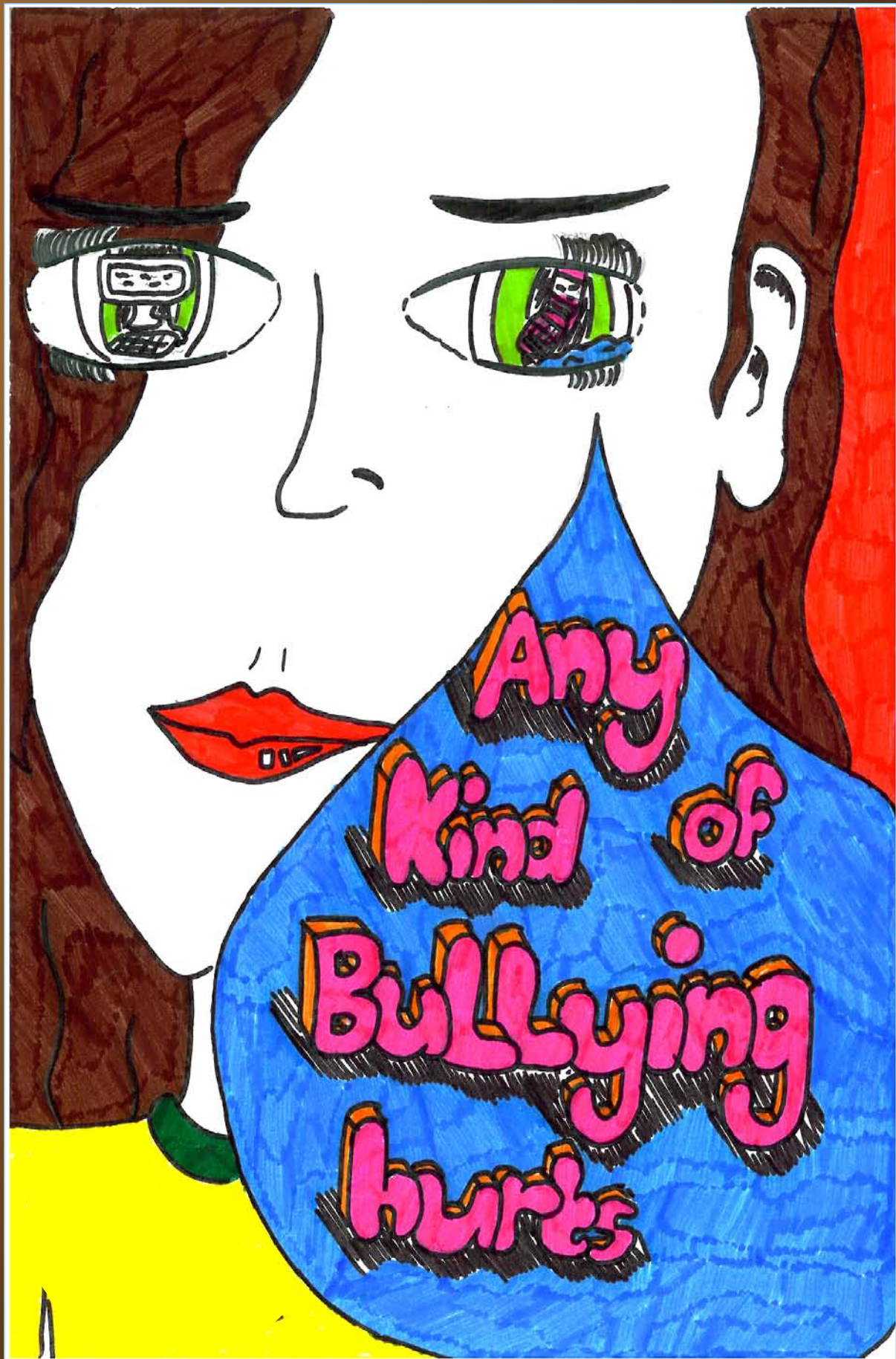
"if she hadn't come to you she would really be at risk. but you have given her stuff to think about that has changed her behaviour."

"they don't teach them that sort of stuff in school"

"it has been a real eye opener for me. you don't realise these things until you are faced with them. thank you."

"other people come and see me but are not really interested in me and go as quickly as they can. but you didn't do that. you gave me time and listened to me."

"i can't believe this. everyone said i was stupid...getting these 2 certificates shows that i can do the work and i'm not stupid."



drawn by: Eleanor @ Blackwood School—for Solomon poster competition

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