



October Club and St Giles Trust break the cycle of offending

www.stgilestrust.org.uk

How The October Club helped create The Ripple Effect

- How the support helped create The Ripple Effect
- Helped us Break the Cycle
- And get our work at the heart of the agenda on Radio 4

The Problem

- *Re-offending costs the taxpayer £11 billion each year*
- Over 47% of adults are re-convicted within one year of leaving custody. This rises to over 70% for young people
- Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales had a parent in prison at some point.
- 65% of boys who had a father in prison will go on to offend themselves

About St Giles Trust

- First established as a homelessness charity in 1962, started working in prisons in late 1990s.
- Developed peer-led services using serving prisoners to provide support to other inmates to address a huge unmet need for support amongst the prison population
- These services were developed further and translated into the community to work with ex-offenders
- Over 16,000 receive support from St Giles Trust each year. Our peer-led approach – using those who have been there and done it - underlines all of our services. 80% of our frontline staff are former clients.

The need for the October Club's support

- St Giles Trust's growing profile and demand for our services
- Involved in the first-ever Social Impact Bond at HMP Peterborough
- Our approach is heralded by then Justice Secretary Ken Clark as the model he would like to see adopted to tackle re-offending
- Evaluations into the impact of our work demonstrate we deliver £10 in cost savings for every £1 invested in our work and reduce re-offending by an additional 40%
- Public spending cuts have left huge gaps in support and services.

The SOS Project

- Tailor-made support providing exit-strategies away from crime and gang lifestyles
- Started in Southwark in 2006 led by a reformed ex-gang member
- Trained, reformed ex-offenders provide peer-led, credible support

This key difference in SOS means it reaches those young clients many other services can't...

Why SOS Needed the October Club's Support and How it Helped

- Increased demand for SOS outside of the communities we were currently able to provide the service – particularly to fill gaps left in cuts to statutory services
- **Impact – SOS now works across London supporting an active caseload of 100-150 clients at any one time. Previously just operated in Southwark, Croydon and Kensington and Chelsea supporting around 50-60 active case load.**
- We needed to have the resources to train more young clients as peer supporters to help others transform their lives
- **Impact – SOS team have trebled in size and there are now 31 staff - paid and trainee volunteers - who will provide intensive, one-to-one tailor-made support an average of 30-40 clients each year**
- 2011 saw the worst riots across UK towns and cities since 1981.
- **Impact – SOS now carrying out specialist work with young people involved in riots in Croydon – one of the areas worst affected**
- Rising tides of youth unemployment and prevailing economic conditions mean that many young people remain locked out of the workforce and are losing hope
- **Impact – 85 young clients were supported into education and training and 12 held down long term employment (all of whom were considered some way from being 'job ready')**

Why SOS Needed the October Club's Support and How it Helped

- Clients often came from offender families therefore we needed to work with the whole family to break cycles of re-offending.
- ***Impact– pioneering work based on theories of Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) being carried out by SOS founder Junior Smart. NVR gives parents the tools to challenge negative behaviour in a non-violent, peaceful manner even when situations become heated.***
- Key staff on the team needed the support and training to develop the project in other areas
- ***Impact – the original founder of the SOS Project – is now Business Development Manager on SOS and has played pivotal role in developing the service. Recent developments include him delivering specialist training to professionals on how to work with young people involved in gangs. Elroy Palmer – originally a caseworker in SOS – is now Team Leader overseeing our gangs intervention work in West London leading a small team. Their legacy will be passed on as we are developing the next generation of Juniors and Elroys.***

James's Story

- Grew up in West London. Parents both had drug problems and separated when James was young.
- Expelled from primary school and arrested after attacking a teacher and another pupil.
- Starts secondary school and drifts into gang activity. Involved in violent robberies and emerges as a gang leader. Further arrest leads to him being taken into care.
- Despite his chaotic background, James manages to prepare for GCSEs. At this time a man working in the care home James is resident in is arrested for sexual abuse. James discloses he has been a victim of it but finds it very difficult to talk about.
- At this point, his offending escalates resulting in a string of short term prison sentences, ASBOs and supervision orders. James is deemed a PPO (Priority and Prolific Offender).
- Aged 18, he temporarily stabilises after his girlfriend gives birth to their child. However, after a street fight he is sentenced to 18 months in custody.

James's Story

- He is referred to SOS on his release from prison. Initially dismissive of the support on offer, our caseworker continued to engage James until he started to open up.
- Underneath the violence and bravado was a lost and confused young man suffering the after-effects of an abusive childhood.
- SOS helped build James's confidence and keep him motivated with the long-term aim of getting into a job. This involved completing in-house employability training and support in looking for suitable work.
- He has since found a job through the project, has a permanent flat and has a stable relationship with his girlfriend and child. Recognising his potential, his employers have fast-tracked him onto a management programme.
- He says: "All those years and all the services I have been through, only SOS really knew me and what was needed. I have a job, flat and my own family. I don't know where I would be without them."

Patrick's Story

- 19 years old and lived on a South London estate affected by gang crime. Gets involved in crime and eventually sentenced for his part in a street robbery
- Meets Junior whilst serving his sentence.
- Supported by Junior on release from prison to resettle in the community
- Things going well but re-offended and returned to custody
- Junior maintained contact with him during his latest sentence
- Offered further support on release , particularly in relation to jobs and training
- Five years on since he first met Junior, he is crime-free and actively seeking employment

Says: “If I hadn't met Junior I'd be in prison, on hard drugs or dead.”

What other people say

"It is noted that there are very few people who work in this field who would be able to engage with J and maintain contact with him for the six hours it took to identify his accommodation. It must have been exhausting and called upon all your required skills. The Probation Service felt you were outstanding in the method of communicating and engaging with a relatively challenging 20 year old."

Letter of thanks to SOS Caseworker from Delivery Manager for local authority Gangs Unit

"SGT is doing inspirational work in breaking the cycle of re-offending. The centre piece, or crown jewel, of SGT's work is their peer advisor programme. Reformed ex-offenders receive top quality training to give support to others leaving prison."

Chief Superintendent

October Club's support has helped us attract several new partners for SOS including:

- Nomura
- Westminster Integrated Gangs Unit
- Metropolitan Police Safe and Secure Foundation
- Renewed interest from the Barrow Cadbury Foundation
- Private philanthropists in West London
- Chelsea Academy

The development of the project has also meant that the longer-term future of SOS is now sustainable whereas previously short-term funding for it had been a real issue.

Thank you

ON BEHALF OF ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN HELPED BY ST GILES TRUST OVER THE PAST YEAR WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE OCTOBER CLUB. YOUR SUPPORT HAS MADE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF HUNDREDS OF OUR CLIENTS, PREVENTED FUTURE VICTIMS AND SAVED MANY YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DESCENDING INTO AN INESCAPABLE CYCLE OF CRIME, DISADVANTAGE AND DISPAIR.