WORLD LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE
CLUB DE MADRID

The Shared Societies Project:
Leadership for Dialogue, Diversity and Social Cohesion

Building a world safe for difference

Replicable example of practice

Commitment IX

Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity and support local communities in exploring their identity, sharing their experiences with other identity groups and working together with those groups on common concerns

Suggested Approach:

- Provide resources for the creation of local community organisations and for their activities to promote self awareness within communities and engagement with other communities.
- Encourage cultural activities that explore issues of concern about relationships between different identity groups.
- Initiate awareness programmes to encourage respect for difference. It should highlight the positive features of pluralism and diversity and the obligations of living in a shared society and building a shared future.
- Develop and promote the implementation of awareness programmes on the nature of racism and sectarianism and how they can be combated at an individual and group level throughout all levels of society.

Charlton Athletic Race and Equality (CARE) Partnership

Country: England

Background

- In a challenging economic climate where efficient use of resources is essential, collaborative working has become increasingly important for delivering services and activities.
- South-east London, where the Project is based, has a very mixed population and has experienced recurring racial tension.

Goals

- To build strong, active and inclusive communities, through sport, art and new social media.
- To promote social inclusion, tackling inequality and discrimination.

- To develop community interaction and dialogue by uniting people from different backgrounds, particularly from disadvantaged communities.

Method

- CARE has been offering its program since 1992, giving young people, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, the opportunity to interact with people from different backgrounds.
- It origin was a partnership between Charlton Athletic (a English league football club and the local authority.
- CARE provides a full program of courses and activities aimed at promoting social inclusion, tackling inequality and discrimination, and building community cohesion through sport, art and media.
- CARE gives young people, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, the opportunity to interact with people from different backgrounds. Opportunities range from accredited sports coaching qualifications and film production to women's football and digital photography.
- CARE's annual football tournament gives individuals the opportunity to form teams, regardless of their background, and brings together around 200 young people every year, from 17 national and ethnic groups.
- CARE offers a variety of interactive courses in arts and drama, as well as multimedia and digital technology, which have proved to be a useful platform for cross-cultural interaction. Participants produce a variety of drama productions, films and art exhibitions.

Impact

- The CARE Partnership develops community interaction and dialogue by uniting people from different backgrounds and has proven invaluable to community engagement and inclusion.
- CARE is recognized as an example of 'best practice' by the UK Commission on Integration and Cohesion and was also commended by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights who stated: "CARE plays a crucial role in helping to tackle social exclusion…and build positive relationships between people from different backgrounds."
- An evaluation of CARE's arts program, which works with 19 different ethnic groups, found that 78% of participants felt that they had a better understanding of people in their local community because of the program. Several participants reported gaining confidence and having met people they would not normally meet.
- A recent project, working with young people who were not in education, employment or training, resulted in 60% of participants gaining opportunities in one of these areas and was recognized as one of the 'best performing programs' by the London Development Agency.

- The essence of CARE's innovative program is perhaps best captured by a participant who explained that: "The most important thing I learned was how different communities can work together."

Establishing conditions

- Greenwich Council and Charlton Athletic Football Club established a ground-breaking partnership -the first collaboration between a UK local authority and professional football club.
- Charlton Athletic was keen to develop its community outreach activities.

Comments

- The project provides a platform for cross-cultural communication, which is essential for changing attitudes and values necessary to facilitate positive interaction; all this while helping young people to gain confidence and develop practical skills and qualifications.
- The CARE Partnership model has proven crucial to providing a flexible approach and delivering positive benefits for local communities.
- Sport has enormous potential for building bridges between communities and team sport in particular, can help to develop social networks, forge friendships, and overcome differences by promoting mutual understanding.

References

CARE Partnership: http://www.cact.org.uk/item.php?cid=4&id=12

A film is available at: http://www.pointblanklearning.com/courses/film/film-making-course/film-production-young-people.php