

Review and evaluation of two community delivered DARE programmes; DARE to be You and DARE to Move On

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The following is a summary. If you would like to receive the full report please contact Adela Jones, Programme Coordinator, email dare002@dare.org.nz or phone 04 238 3400.

Evaluation Objectives include:

- To review and evaluate current programme goals, materials, practice and processes of two DARE community delivered programmes; DARE to be You and DARE to Move On.
- To review programme logic and evaluate whether the goals of the programmes are being met by the programme documentation and teaching materials.
- To evaluate whether programme content is appropriate and relevant to the target group
- To consider whether the programme have the potential for positive long term outcomes.

Overview of the DARE Programmes

A range of life skills identified by UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO are the foundation skills taught within two community delivered DARE programmes, DARE to be You and DARE to Move On. These organisations list the ten core life skill strategies and techniques as: problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication skills, decision making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationships skills, self-awareness building skills, empathy and coping with stress and emotions.

The DARE to be You programme focuses on topics towards self esteem, family issues, cultural diversity, disability and conservation. The DARE to Move On programme explores identity, peer pressure, trust, revenge, consequences, responsibility, powerlessness, assumptions, truth, expectations, and inner strength.

Substantive Review: Evaluating both programmes against contemporary research and literature.

The review concentrates on research findings and clinical reports that examine effective interventions for youth, including consideration of treatment components and aspects of programme delivery to establish the relevance and appropriateness of the goals, methods and materials of the two DARE programmes.

The review focuses on 6 aspects related to effective intervention for youth identified as being: risk assessment, criminogenic needs, responsivity, modality of treatment, programme integrity, community location.

Risk is generally constructed around the assessment of static and dynamic factors.

- Static factors cannot be changed once they occur, early intervention can prevent some of these factors (such as engagement on criminal behaviour). The content of the DARE to be You and DARE to Move On programmes have the potential to teach young people skills and provide them with knowledge to better equip them to deal with emotions and situations and change the 'at risk' trajectory that they were on.
- Dynamic risk factors, may also be related to repeat offending, and are the target of intervention as they are responsive to change. Dynamic factors targeted by both the DARE programmes reviewed appear consistent with literature and research recommendations in this field.
- The concepts around risk and resiliency or protective factors are critical to strengths-based interventions for youth such as those provided by the DARE programmes. These programmes clearly target factors identified in research literature for youth generally and youth estimated to be at low risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Need

The strengths-based approach model – Good Lives Model – emphasises reducing risk by providing individuals with the means (through knowledge and skill) to attain basic human needs in socially appropriate and personally meaningful ways. Consistent with this more holistic approach, the DARE programmes focus on the exploration of contextual factors, meanings attributed to life events that occur in the novel, core beliefs, problem-solving skills. And, in line with the GLM and cutting edge approaches to mental health issues, both the DARE programmes reviewed include a significant emphasis on strengths.

Modality of Treatment

- Best practice interventions with youth target the youth's social perspective-taking skills, belief systems and any anti-social or offence supportive attitudes or cognitions. Interpersonal communication skills are also a focus of group intervention programmes. The group intervention programmes address issues of interpersonal communication styles, family and peer relationships, affect identification and recognition, anger management techniques, problem solving abilities, attitudes and values.
- The DARE to be You programme is extremely strong in all of these intervention components. Similarly, the DARE to Move On programmes includes cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) components within interventions.

It is suggested that the level of social support established within the youths' community is a crucial factor in the maintenance of skills acquired. This means that school-based delivery of programmes may be especially appropriate in targeting school attendance and achievement, bullying, self-esteem, anger management, friendship and relationship issues and identity issues. The delivery of the DARE programmes within the community setting is clearly a strength of these interventions and likely to be linked to more positive outcomes.

Programme integrity and professional ability of those delivering the programme are strengths of the DARE to be You and DARE to Move On programmes. Accreditation of staff, ongoing training and supervision are all essential components to maintaining the high standards achieved by this provider.

Community Location

Already offered within the community, the DARE to be You and DARE to Move On programmes are likely to be more effective than those offered in residential settings. In addition, most of these programmes are provided in school settings further increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes relating to this context (such as school attendance, achievement, self-esteem, truancy, pro-social behaviours and attitudes.)

Bibliotherapy

The DARE programmes use a bibliotherapy approach to facilitate change in identified risk and protective factors. Bibliotherapy refers to the process of sharing stories with individuals, families or groups to facilitate insight into personal difficulties and provide opportunities for emotional growth. Bibliotherapy has been shown to be an effective intervention for developing empathy and reducing aggression in boys with aggression and affect problems – often considered a difficult to work with and highly resistant population.

Groupwork undertaken within a bibliotherapy framework can be used to facilitate the process of expressing emotions such as sadness, hurt, anger and promote affective change, normalise problems, develop personal insight and achieve growth, make sense of the trauma or aversive life experiences, work with resultant core beliefs, provide information, develop solutions to problems, and develop skills and strategies to deal with situations.

DARE to be You:

The DARE to be You programme is targeted at 'youth' and 'youth at risk' from 10 years of age.

- The programme structure and logic is sound and largely consistent with a risk, need, responsivity + Good Lives Model (GLM). This can be considered to be the primary change model of the programme. A bibliotherapy approach, within a groupwork framework, is employed as the primary method of delivering the programme. Again, the structure and content is consistent with relevant research and literature.
- The programme meets the set objectives, and the emphasis on diversity is strong and integrated. This is a significant strength of the programme.
- The programme is well structured and has a very detailed manual ensuring programme integrity. Because DARE to be You is facilitated by trained professionals the quality of programme delivery is likely to be of a high standard.
- Evaluation feedback appears extremely supportive of the effectiveness of this intervention with evaluation reports detailing significant changes and positive outcomes for many participants following completion of the programme.

Strengths of the DARE to be You Programme:

- The programme meets the set objectives, and the emphasis on diversity is strong and integrated.
- Targeting interventions to areas that have been identified in relevant research and literature as being likely to reduce the likelihood of initial engagement in problematic, anti-social or offending behaviour (prophylactic interventions) by young people and reducing likelihood of ongoing engagement in these behaviours by youth 'at risk'. This is a significant strength of the programme.
- Structured programme and detailed manual documenting intervention goals and expected outcomes, as well as session structure and activities.
- The standard of training of facilitators and accreditation processes employed. Engaging skilled professionals to deliver the programme is likely to enhance the quality of the programme content and competent management of process issues including any safety concerns.
- The holistic and environmental focus of the DARE to be You programme includes a focus on issues such as conservation and pollution. The DARE programme components probably extend beyond Ward's GLM intention that interventions are responsive to 'environments the person is likely to be living once they complete the programme', but they are nonetheless consistent with this model, and challenge other programmes to respond in this truly holistic way.
- Involvement of significant others can increase the likelihood of successful outcomes of programmes for children and young people. Parents can be invited to the challenge activities for practical purposes but also to celebrate the successes and achievements of the child or youth. Parents may also attend a celebration session to make participation and successful conclusion to the programme by the participant.
- Potential to participate in the DARE to Support Your Kids parent programme during the time the child or youth is participating in the DARE to be You programme.
- Delivery of the DARE to be You programme in the school or local community is also a significant strength and more likely to produce change than institutionally delivered programmes.

DARE to Move On:

The DARE to Move On programme is targeted at 'youth at risk' from 14 years of age.

- The programme structure and logic is sound and largely consistent with a risk, need, responsivity + Good Lives Model (GLM). This can be considered to be the primary change model of the programme. A bibliotherapy approach, within a groupwork framework, is employed as the primary method of delivering the programme. Again, the structure and content is consistent with relevant research and literature.
- The programme meets the set objectives, and the emphasis on diversity is strong and integrated. This is a significant strength of the programme. The programme is well structured and has a very detailed manual ensuring programme integrity. Because DARE to Move On is facilitated by trained professionals the quality of the programme delivery is likely to be of a high standard.
- Evaluation feedback appears extremely supportive of the effectiveness of this intervention for youth and evaluation reports detailing significant changes and positive outcomes for many participants following completion of the programme.

Strengths:

- The novel Smashed is outstanding and the supporting artwork is splendid.
- Generally and specifically targeting interventions to areas that have been identified in relevant research and literature as being likely to reduce the likelihood of initial engagement in problematic, anti-social or offending behaviour (prophylactic interventions) by young people and reducing likelihood of ongoing engagement in these behaviours by youth 'at risk'. This is a significant strength of the programme.
- Structured programme and detailed manual documenting intervention goals and expected outcomes, as well as session structure and activities. The manual is easy to use and information is easily accessible which is likely to contribute to maintaining programme integrity.
- The programme meets the set objectives, and the emphasis on diversity is strong and integrated.

- The standard of training of facilitators and accreditation processes employed. Engaging skilled professionals to deliver the programme is likely to enhance the quality of the programme content and competent management of process issues including any safety concerns.
- Involvement of significant others can increase the likelihood of successful outcomes of the programme. Parents can be invited to the challenge activities and to celebrate the successes and achievements of their youth.
- Potential to participate in the DARE to Support Your Kids parent programme during the time the child or youth is participating in the DARE to Move On programme.
- Delivery of the DARE to Move On programme in the school or local community is also a significant strength and more likely to produce change than institutionally delivered programmes.

General

It seems appropriate and relevant that participants could take part in DARE to be You then DARE to Move On to build on previously learned messages and skills. This would provide opportunity to consolidate earlier learning and extend this in a new context.

It would be possible to run the groups in quick succession with the same participants where a more intensive intervention is desired, and in other situations they may be staged across the school curriculum with DARE to be You offered from Year 6 and DARE to Move On from Year 10.

At DFNZ's request, recommendations for future programme development have been included.

About the Reviewer

Nikki Evans, MA (Psychology), DipSOWK (Distinction) has been a teaching academic since 1998 and is the Director of the Bachelor of Social Work Programme, School of Social Work and Human Services, University of Canterbury. Her research interests include the study of male and female perpetrators of sexual abuse; youth health and mental health; youth violence towards parents; women's health and reproductive health issues; narrative therapy; sexuality and social work practice. Nikki is currently completing a doctoral research project on social support issues and impacts on families of youth who have sexually abused.

Nikki was employed as a Senior Specialist Clinician for STOP Adolescent Programme in Christchurch where she worked predominantly with young people who had engaged in sexually abusive behaviour.

Nikki has recently published the first book in a series of therapeutic stories for children, *Eloise's Excellent Experiment* (2008) and has contributed to books, written journal articles and presented refereed conference papers.