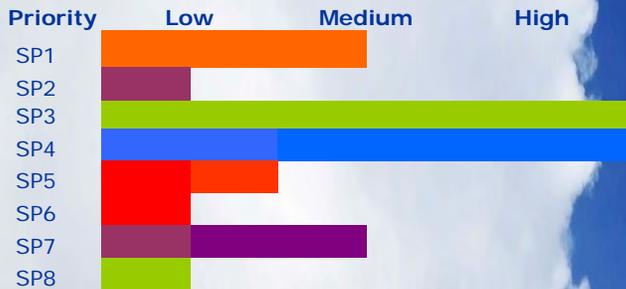


Relevance to CYPP Strategic Priorities



Children's Trust
Cornwall

Stories of Your Success

PYRAMID KERNOW
by Petrina Missions



What did you do ?

Pyramid is a well-established and evaluated programme for use in primary schools and the early stages of secondary school. It aims to identify children who are facing difficulties in their social and emotional development, focusing on those who are quieter, shy or more withdrawn and who tend to internalise their difficulties. No other intervention is available to address the issues that these children face and over the years Pyramid have been able to show the positive long term impact that this simple but very effective programme has on the lives of the children involved.

During 2009-10 Pyramid Kernow have successfully supported the running of 26 pyramid clubs across Cornwall and have supported over 250 children in these clubs. The therapeutic after school clubs offer a safe haven for children amid the hustle and bustle of the busy school environment. They provide fun and support for a group of children that are often overlooked – the quieter children who don't make a fuss or draw attention to themselves, but who are not entirely happy or doing as well as they could in school. Pyramid clubs are designed for children of all sorts of ability and background and use a systematic approach to ensure that the children who need support are identified early so that the support given is low-key and non-stigmatising.

Club leaders are recruited, trained and supported by Pyramid Kernow. They come from many backgrounds and include people of all ages, from year 10/11 mentors, general volunteers and/or adult school staff. They are carefully chosen and have enhanced CRB clearance. They are fully trained to develop the confidence of the children who attend and to generate enthusiasm and friendships. Many of our volunteer club leaders show a very high level of dedication and commitment to the programme by continuing to volunteer year after year. A Professional development programme is in place to support our very experienced team and provides continued development of skills each year.



How long did the project take to implement ?

Pyramid Kernow works on a yearly cycle, with new agreements with schools being set up in the autumn term, accumulating in the identification of children and the training of club leaders ready for clubs to begin in the spring or summer terms. Feedback and analysis of the scheme takes place during the summer term and feeds into an annual report, published in October each year. Pyramid Kernow has been established in Cornwall since 1999.

Who were the key partners ?

Our key partners are, 'Continyou' who are national Pyramid's umbrella organisation and provide us with a regional development manager and support us with national developments and occasionally funding. Crucial to our development is the Pyramid multi-agency steering group, who oversee and actively support the work of Pyramid Kernow, agencies involved include schools, integrated services and family services. The steering group support is crucial in ensuring the continued development of the scheme.

Many other services within Children, School and Families support and work in partnership with us, including Behaviour Support, Education Psychology Service & Health (including TaMHs & Healthy Schools). Cornwall Learning and Out of hours learning, including Quality in Study Support continue to use our training programmes and also advise and support the work we do. Support from the voluntary sector has been important in the organisation and specialism of recruiting and supporting of volunteers.

What challenges did you overcome ?

Funding, co-ordinator employment security and the recruitment of volunteer club leaders have always been a challenge for Pyramid Kernow. Following the initial pilot in 1999, Pyramid Kernow has been supported by yearly acquired funding from various funds available through Cornwall Council - Children, School and Families. A full time co-ordinator had been employed on a temporary contract to match the funding stream.

Volunteer Club leaders have to be sourced through many avenues – volunteer bureaux, schools, word of mouth or retention of previous volunteers. Clubs are unable to run unless 3 suitable volunteers per club are available.

Pyramid Kernow has eventually this year secured continued funding (although this will be greatly reduced over the next few years) and the co-ordinator now has a permanent contract. Schools quickly found that to guarantee a club running it made sense to source their own team leaders from their own school – these are often made up of staff, governors or parents. These types of club leaders make up the majority at present.

Pyramid Kernow have over the last few years increased revenue for the scheme by developing a highly acclaimed training programme. Plans are in place to develop and increase this training programme over the next few years.

What made this project a success ?

I believe that some of the main reasons that the scheme has been so successful is that it firstly targets an audience that few others do, it is a quality service that has strived to raise standards and maintain consistency throughout.

We have a clear and strong ethos that enables everyone who works as part of our team to have a clear vision of our outcomes. The team themselves are involved in every aspect of development and delivery and feedback and evaluation form a major part of the work carried out.

Pyramid Kernow has a very experienced project manager who is passionate about all aspects of the project and who strives to form partnerships that enhance and enable the development of the project for the future.

What difference has the project made?

Results of children attending these clubs show that almost all show some improvement in their confidence, self-esteem and attainment levels during and following the clubs. Many leave the group having made new friends and more willing to try new things. Some children show no further concern for their social and emotional health and go on to reach their potential in school and in life. Children unwilling and unhappy about attending school – following the club - are seen smiling and eager to get into class. Some long term studies have been done and these evaluations show that the effects of a pyramid have had positive long term effects on the attitudes and beliefs of many of the children and young people attending. Club leaders that have been involved have reported that they have had their own confidence and self esteem raised too and have used the experience and training to enhance CV's and gain new or more responsible jobs and promotions.



Over the last year Pyramid have been directly involved in training over 200 school staff and other professionals who work in various ways with children and their families. Pyramid receives very positive feedback from the training sessions and our programme of training is in great demand.

In December 2008 Pyramid Kernow became the first scheme of its kind in the UK to gain a 'quality in study support' kite mark at advanced level. Pyramid Kernow are rightly proud of the recognition and are working hard to support others to achieve their own recognition, whilst developing a robust programme that stays relevant for an ever changing future.

For more information:

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