

## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

### FINAL REPORT

March 2009



Checkers work in progress performance at BE Camp (13/11/08 Echidna Gully) Photo by Wendy Kimpton

*Checkers* built bridges of awareness and knowledge between the teenage cast and crew and people in mental health rehabilitation, BE leaders and the cast and crew (young people from very different backgrounds), BE leaders and mental health professionals, school audiences and mental health awareness, public audiences and mental health awareness, and created an artistic product that can stand alone on its own artistic merit as well as be an invaluable tool for effecting change.

*Checkers* is a play about the young people in an Adolescent Psychiatric Unit (APU). It is based on the novel of the same name by John Marsden and has been adapted for the stage by Martin Mantle. It is the first time that John Marsden has allowed someone else to adapt one of his novels for the stage. *Checkers* was a collaboration between Stage One Creative and Beyond Empathy, with additional input from the Hunter New England Health Service and the Benevolent Society's Personal Helpers and Mentors Program.

The play was used as a tool to connect young people, both cast and audience, to experiences of mental illness and what those experiences might look like. Using a cast of young people drawn from the local community created a connection point to the school audiences, who were in the same age

## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

bracket. The BE leaders, also young people, deepened the knowledge and understanding of mental health issues through discussion groups after the performance. The experience of Checkers was a performance by young people for young people with discussions facilitated by young people, which was highly effective in engaging the young audiences and conveying important information about mental health in an interesting and, at times, humourous way. Incorporated into the discussions was a fun game involving flip cards, which gave information about where to go to find help or to find out more information. The adults involved offered the young people guidance and support through the process. The beneficiaries were not only the audiences, but also the young actors and BE leaders, who developed and deepened their own understanding of mental health issues and their manifestations.



Checkers' cast in rehearsal with Martin Mantle (25/09/08 Stage One Creative, Armidale) Photo by John Hamilton

The play was directed by Martin Mantle (Stage One Creative and an experienced theatre practitioner), assisted by Phoenix Valore (Beyond Empathy). The story centres on a character simply known as the Girl. While her story is the central thread of the play, the stories of the other young patients of the unit are also woven into its fabric. Some of the mental illnesses referenced in the play (although not necessarily named) are obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia and anorexia, as well as attention deficit disorder. A common link between them is the sense of responsibility each young person carries for incidents or circumstances that are out of their control. This facet of the story was focussed on, as it is a common experience among young people. The play deliberately

## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

avoided stereotypical portrayals of mental illness and looked instead at the surprisingly normal face mental illness can wear.

Through flashbacks to incidents that have happened to the Girl, her story unfolds. The action moves between the APU and the Girl's life prior to the APU. Apart from the actor who played the Girl, the other actors played between 4 and 8 characters each.



Minna Lethbridge talking to the cast, with Brittany Roach listening. (25/09/08 Stage One Creative, Armidale) Photo by John Hamilton

The central aim of the Checkers project was to create an arts-based tool and a community cultural development process to raise awareness of youth mental health issues. The starting point was the young cast. Minna Lethbridge, 15, came and discussed her experiences of anorexia nervosa and bulimia with the cast, giving them invaluable insight into how these illnesses manifest and what the experience of being in a psychiatric institution and attending group therapy sessions is really like. She also gave all the cast copies of a speech she gave in Melbourne during Eating Disorder Week, which highlights some of the thought processes involved when one is caught in the grip of mental illness. Cathy Hunt, School-Link Coordinator, Hunter New England Area Health, also organised for Ben Swanson, who has Bipolar Disorder, to visit the cast. Ben was diagnosed at the age of 19, but with hindsight can see that symptoms of the illness began to manifest much earlier. He manages his illness effectively with medication now. He was able to give valuable insights into the experience of living with a mental illness and of his experiences in psychiatric wards, which confirmed the veracity of a number of situations in the play

## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

The first performance of *Checkers* was held at the BE Leadership Camp in November 2008. The Checkers crew found it a very helpful experience which gave them insights into the piece in performance, which they were then able to use to hone the play in the final rehearsals. It was a work-in-progress performance (without props or costumes) and the rather nervous cast handled the non-conventional performance space and an audience, most of whom were unused to theatre performances and therefore unaware of theatre conventions, admirably. Audience members came and went during the performance and small children wandered onto the 'stage', but the cast were unfazed by it all. They were also thrilled to be able to then stay and watch the indigenous men's dance and, when Clinton Lamb (BE emerging artist – indigenous dance) asked the women to get up and do their dance, the girls from the cast were the first to get up! Experiencing the dance, a short 'freak show' by Gordo (David Gamsby-Gorton, circus arts and 'freak show' professional), and a spontaneous hip hop dance workshop with BE Leader, James Taurua, made a big impression on them. It also led to James approaching me and expressing his interest in being involved in *Checkers*.



Imogen Holman as the Girl and Brittany Roach as Checkers performing at BE Camp (13/11/08 Echidna Gully) Photo by Wendy Kimpton

The subsequent three weeks of final rehearsals fine tuned *Checkers* into a quality stage performance. The cast and director appreciated the opportunity to 'try out' the play with an audience, which is an opportunity rarely afforded in the theatre. The chance to perform and then have a number of rehearsals to incorporate what was learnt from that experience into the final product was invaluable. The cast themselves showed an ability to analyse their performance in



## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

general and individually and its strengths and weaknesses which was remarkable for their age and contributed towards their professional approach to the production. The total number of rehearsals was 28 (68 hours): 22 x 2 hrs + 6 x 4 hrs. 80% of the cast attended all the rehearsals they were scheduled to attend.

Given that *Checkers* deals with young people and mental health issues, it was decided to incorporate discussion groups on mental health after the performances in the schools. The aim of these was to provide information to young people about what is mental health / mental illness, what are possible manifestations of mental health / mental illness, and where they could turn for help if they or one of their friends or family showed symptoms of mental unwellness. It was decided to ask six BE Leaders to participate in training and co-facilitating these discussions groups to develop their leadership skills and own awareness of mental health / mental illness. The six BE Leaders participated in training workshops on 4 and 5 December, facilitated by Cathy Hunt of the Hunter New England Health Service. They were:

- Rusty Bennett (Lismore),
- Sarah Bennett (Lismore),
- Amy Hahn (Illawarra),
- Raphaela Rosella (Rosie) (Nimbin),
- James Taurua (Illawarra), and
- Adam Williams (Inverell/Armidale).

The workshops covered general information about mental health / mental illness, general leadership skills, general information on facilitating discussion groups, specific issues for discussion groups on *Checkers* and trial runs. The mental health workers who contributed to the training workshops and/or helped to facilitate the discussion groups in schools were:

- Cathy Hunt, School-Link Coordinator, Hunter New England Health (HNEH)
- Dr Stan Bolden, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – Armidale
- Matt Parsons, Personal Helpers and Mentors - Armidale, The Benevolent Society
- Helen Carter, Occupational Therapist HNEH & part of the team working on the Youth Mental Health Model
- Warren Isaac, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Tablelands Mental Health Service & HNEH
- Sam Carter, PRA (Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association)
- Jodie Shipp, HNEH, Clinical Psychologist with Child, Youth and Family Service
- Grue Smith, OT student from Western Sydney Uni

The BE Leaders were 'buddied' up with a mental health professional for the discussion groups in the schools. Although some found the task daunting at the outset, all of them developed confidence through the process and two BE Leaders were confident enough to run discussion groups without a 'buddy' on the second and third days.

*Checkers* concluded a successful performance run of 4 school performances and associated discussion groups and 3 public performances on 13 December, 2008. The four school performances ran over three days with a total number of 248 students attending the performances and discussion groups.

- Monday, 8 Dec: Duval High School – 34 students attended.

## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

- Monday, 8 Dec: Armidale High School – 88 students attended.
- Tuesday, 9 Dec: O'Connor Catholic College – 59 students attended.
- Wednesday, 10 Dec: Guyra Central School – 67 students attended.

The three public performances of *Checkers* (11, 12 and 13 Dec) were attended by 150 audience members.

Phoenix Valore, Project Coordinator



Checkers cast applauding the audience at the end of the performance (13/11/08 Echidna Gully) Photo by Wendy Kimpton



# Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

## EVALUATION

### 1. CAST

Number of cast & crew: 9

Number of respondents: 7

<p>Did your knowledge of mental health / mental illness change as a result of being involved in Checkers?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>How did it change?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> My knowledge has improved.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My knowledge has stayed the same</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>Did your involvement in Checkers affect your outlook on life?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes.....</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes – on mental illness.....</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>43%</b></p> <p><b>43%</b></p> <p><b>14%</b></p>
<p>How?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positively 'I feel more confident / knowledgeable / aware'.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Negatively 'I feel more confident / knowledgeable / aware'</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hasn't changed.....</p>	<p><b>86%</b></p> <p><b>14%</b></p>
<p>How important was the involvement of the BE Leaders in Checkers to your experience?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very important.....</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Important.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant</p>	<p><b>71%</b></p> <p><b>29%</b></p>
<p>Why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because in the discussion groups kids related to them and they spoke from experience. They were integral to the Checkers performances in schools.</li> <li>• They put a human face on issues we were dealing with. Plus they're lovely people.</li> <li>• Their personal experiences and their knowledge (facts &amp; figures) took it to a whole new level, especially sitting in the discussion groups.</li> <li>• Without them it wouldn't have been what it was – really important to have young people to talk to young people about mental health issues.</li> <li>• They were able to share their knowledge with us.</li> </ul>	

# Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They're closer to our age bracket, so it was easier to make a connection with them. It was easier for them to explain concepts to us and make them understandable. In the school groups, they made a better connection to the kids = more effective.</li> <li>• It wasn't important to Checkers the play, but it was important to the school performances. It helped the play be better understood and accepted by school audiences to have the discussions groups with the BE leaders afterwards.</li> </ul>								
<p>Are you still in contact with any of the BE Leaders?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>✓ Yes.....</td> <td><b>86%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ No.....</td> <td><b>14%</b></td> </tr> </table>	✓ Yes.....	<b>86%</b>	✓ No.....	<b>14%</b>				
✓ Yes.....	<b>86%</b>								
✓ No.....	<b>14%</b>								
<p>How important were the talks by Minna and Ben to your understanding of mental illness?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>✓ Very important.....</td> <td><b>71%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Important.....</td> <td><b>29%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	✓ Very important.....	<b>71%</b>	✓ Important.....	<b>29%</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant		<input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant	
✓ Very important.....	<b>71%</b>								
✓ Important.....	<b>29%</b>								
<input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant									
<input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant									
<p>Why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They shared their real experience openly – therefore was critical.</li> <li>• They put a human face to the concept of mental illness.</li> <li>• They had the biggest impact on me of the whole experience. It made it real and raw.</li> <li>• I learnt the most from talking to people who have experienced mental illness and were able to share their actual experiences rather than theories.</li> <li>• They made mental illness more real rather than just in theory.</li> <li>• Ben - you could gauge his reactions to the diagnosis and progression of his illness, which gave a real life connection to the experience of mental illness.</li> <li>• Gave a sense of reality to the experience of mental illness - to the subject of the play.</li> </ul>								
<p>How important were the talks by Minna and Ben to your understanding and development of your character?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>✓ Very important.....</td> <td><b>29%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Important.....</td> <td><b>43%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Neither important nor unimportant.....</td> <td><b>14%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Unimportant.....</td> <td><b>14%</b></td> </tr> </table>	✓ Very important.....	<b>29%</b>	✓ Important.....	<b>43%</b>	✓ Neither important nor unimportant.....	<b>14%</b>	✓ Unimportant.....	<b>14%</b>
✓ Very important.....	<b>29%</b>								
✓ Important.....	<b>43%</b>								
✓ Neither important nor unimportant.....	<b>14%</b>								
✓ Unimportant.....	<b>14%</b>								
<p>Why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped in giving psychological background to my character.</li> <li>• I didn't get my character at all until I met Ben.</li> </ul>								

## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My character didn't really relate to either Minna or Ben.</li> <li>• Their experiences weren't directly relevant to my characters, but any experience leaves you better equipped to play the character afterwards than before.</li> <li>• They were not directly relevant to my character.</li> <li>• Ben - His feelings and responses to his illness helped me understand how my character should react to the other characters.</li> </ul>								
<p>How important was the performance at the BE camp to the development of Checkers?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>✓ Very important.....</td> <td><b>57%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Important.....</td> <td><b>43%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	✓ Very important.....	<b>57%</b>	✓ Important.....	<b>43%</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant		<input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant	
✓ Very important.....	<b>57%</b>								
✓ Important.....	<b>43%</b>								
<input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant									
<input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant									
<p>Why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First performance, saw what worked and what needed work.</li> <li>• It was the first time I saw it as a coherent play. Good response from the audience was inspiring.</li> <li>• First time we had an audience. It helped prepare us for audience reactions. They were very supportive and gave us good feedback.</li> <li>• First performance in front of an audience. Made us get our act together and have something worthwhile to show them. Showed us what worked &amp; what didn't. Appreciative &amp; supportive audience, who gave us positive feedback after the performance.</li> <li>• It was an opportunity to see how an audience would react, which you can't get in rehearsal.</li> <li>• It allowed us to gauge the response of an audience and to use that to refine our performance.</li> <li>• Tough audience, but good learning experience.</li> </ul>								
<p>Would you be interested in being involved in other Beyond Empathy projects if the opportunity arose?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>✓ Yes.....</td> <td><b>100%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	✓ Yes.....	<b>100%</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> No					
✓ Yes.....	<b>100%</b>								
<input type="checkbox"/> No									

Total number of rehearsals was 28 (68 hours): 22 x 2 hrs + 6 x 4 hrs.

80% of the cast attended all the rehearsals they were scheduled to attend.



Armidale, July – Dec 2008

## 2. BE LEADERS

Number of BE Leaders involved: 6

Number of respondents: 6

<p>Did your knowledge of mental health / mental illness change as a result of being involved in Checkers?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes.....  <input type="checkbox"/> No  <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>How did it change?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> My knowledge has improved.....  <input type="checkbox"/> My knowledge has stayed the same  <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>Did your involvement in Checkers affect your outlook on life?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes.....  <input type="checkbox"/> No  <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>How?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positively 'I feel more confident / assured / knowledgeable.....  <input type="checkbox"/> Negatively 'I feel less confident / assured / in control'  <input type="checkbox"/> Hasn't changed</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>How important was the involvement of the Checkers cast to your experience?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very important.....  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Important.....  <input type="checkbox"/> Neither important nor unimportant  <input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant</p>	<p><b>83%</b> <b>17%</b></p>
<p>Why?</p>	<p>They were the people delving into the characters in the play and because the characters all had mental health issues, talking to the cast about how they were working with these characters helped deepen the whole experience.</p> <p>Because I'm now friends with all of them and I find it easier to talk to people I don't know. Good to know they wanted to be part of the discussion groups and not just act in the play.</p> <p>Story of mental illness.</p> <p>They could explain the characters and the intricacies of the play. There was a real sense of family amongst us all.</p> <p>Deepened my awareness of mental health issues.</p> <p>They're inspiring young people, who're pursuing dreams. Meeting new people.</p>	

# Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

<p>Are you still in contact with any of the Checkers cast?</p>	<p>✓ Yes..... ✓ No.....</p>	<p><b>50%</b> <b>50%</b></p>
<p>How useful were the training workshops in preparing you for the discussion groups?</p>	<p>✓ Very useful..... ✓ Useful..... <input type="checkbox"/> Not useful</p>	<p><b>67%</b> <b>33%</b></p>
<p>How do you think they could have been improved?</p>	<p>Shorter sessions over more days to have more time to digest the information. To be shown the basics of how to run a workshop first and then cover the mental health content. Hearing first hand account of the experience of mental illness.</p>	
<p>Did your involvement in Checkers affect your leadership skills?</p>	<p>✓ Yes..... <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><b>100%</b></p>
<p>How?</p>	<p>Showed me that I had the possibility and capability to do it. I was listened to in the discussion groups as a leader. Had to step up to leadership role &amp; take on that responsibility Improved them dramatically – more confident to speak in front of people. Improved my confidence and gave me a sense of doing a job. Boosted my confidence, especially talking in front of people and groups. More confidence, learnt to trust my capabilities to take on something new in a new area for me.</p>	



Armidale, July – Dec 2008

### 3. MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Number of Mental Health Workers involved: 8

Number of respondents: 3

<p>Did your knowledge of using arts based processes change as a result of being involved in Checkers?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes..... <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>How did it change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated an alternative way and a more energetic way of reducing stigma and increasing awareness of mental health issues in young people.</li> <li>• Have previously been involved in art and music as arts based processes in therapy, but not drama.</li> <li>• Use of actors to portray a lived experience of mental illness rather than approaching consumers having to speak was very interesting concept.</li> </ul>	
<p>Would you incorporate the use of arts based processes in your work?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes..... <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>Would you like to know more about arts based processes and the BE model?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes..... <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>How useful were the training workshops in preparing the young people for the discussion groups?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very useful..... <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Useful..... <input type="checkbox"/> Not useful</p>	<p>33% 66%</p>
<p>Would you be interested in collaborating in other Beyond Empathy projects?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes..... <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of my role as a Mental Health Support worker is to educate and provide information on mental health issues with the goal of reducing stigma and creating greater awareness. Future projects which I could get my clients involved in would be great and I am looking forward to Piecemeal.</li> <li>• My role in this process was only very small, as it was the first week of my new job and I came along to the training workshops at the last minute. I think the workshops were very good, but I think it is difficult to incorporate content and process into such a short time. If the young leaders have not yet fully understood the information around mental health themselves, it can be difficult to go through the process of leading others to think about and discuss these things. Perhaps</li> </ul>		



## Checkers

Armidale, July – Dec 2008

information sessions could be given first, with time for the young leaders to consolidate this information, then run training around facilitating workshops for other young people separately??

- I think the training workshops were very useful in providing BE leaders with some skills and confidence to run own workshops, however modification of the content would be advised i.e. more focused on running a group, how to get people to talk, dynamics of a group. Comments from BE leaders indicated some may have still felt out of their depth still.

Maybe workshops more focused on going through a group and role playing this.

I also thought the discussion group with school groups needed to be smaller and age ranges to not vary so much within the groups to promote more open discussion and be able to target age of group better.

## Checkers

### BE Leaders' Workshop Pre- and Post- Questionnaire 2008

(Data collected and collated by Cathy Hunt and Hunter New England Health)

#### 1. How would you rate your knowledge of mental illness?

Pre Workshop	Non existent	Non existent	Not Bad	Confident	Very Confident
		4	1		
Post workshop	Non existent	Non existent	Not Bad	Confident	Very Confident
			1	4	

#### 2. Where would you rate your communication skills? \*

Pre Workshop	Non existent	Non existent	Not Bad	Confident	Very Confident
	1		2	1	2
Post workshop	Non existent	Non existent	Not Bad	Confident	Very Confident
			1	4	1

#### 3. How confident do you feel to speak with young people about mental illness?

Pre Workshop	Non existent	Non existent	Not Bad	Confident	Very Confident
	1			3	1
Post workshop	Very unconfident	Not confident	Unsure	Confident	Very Confident
				4	1

**4. How confident do you feel to run the/a discussion group?\***

<b>Pre Workshop</b>	<b>Non existent</b>	<b>Non existent</b>	<b>Not Bad</b>	<b>Confident</b>	<b>Very Confident</b>
		1	1	3	
<b>Post workshop</b>	<b>Very unconfident</b>	<b>Not confident</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Confident</b>	<b>Very Confident</b>
			1	4	1

\* Some leaders voted twice for this question

## Post-Workshop Questionnaire Survey Questions

1. What changes have you noticed in your level of confidence?
  - a. To be able to talk to strangers and communicate very well, feeling comfortable.
  - b. Much difference.
  - c. It's improved.
  - d. More willing to improve when I have to.
  - e. It's gotten better.
  - f. I have a way better understanding.
  
2. What changes have you noticed in your level of understanding and knowledge about mental health, mental illness and running groups?
  - a. Lots.
  - b. It's better.
  - c. Just a little more confident.
  - d. Very good.
  - e. Well everything I have learned and just how simple it is.
  
3. Which experiences and/ or activities did you find least helpful?
  - a. Talking about 'boring' stuff not interesting.
  - b. N/A.
  - c. None.
  - d. Was all good.

4. Which experiences and/ or activities did you find most helpful?
- a. The debriefings
  - b. Xo...it was good, I had fun.
  - c. Games/ open talks/ singing...just thanks for the opportunity xx
  - d. Games and rewards.
  - e. All activities.
  - f. Activities and games

NB: There are only five (5) complete surveys, as one pre-workshop questionnaire is missing. So, there are five (5) pre-workshop questionnaires and six (6) post-workshop questionnaires.

## Out of the Blue: six monthly milestones and KPIs

### CHECKERS – OUT OF THE BLUE, ARMIDALE (Phoenix)

25/02/09

Key Project Task and critical milestones: <u>Out of the Blue</u>	July 08	August 08	Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09
Finalise participating communities (Armidale Tamworth Bowraville Nambucca Box Ridge Lismore, Kempsey, Purfleet)	✓						
Begin CCD and develop community partnerships (includes identifying local artists etc)	✓						
<b>Out of the Blue Workshop program begins ...</b>							
Key Project Task and critical milestones: <u>Out of the Blue</u> (continued)	July 08	August 08	Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09
Armidale, Tamworth, Nambucca, Illawarra		Casino, Kempsey, Taree LGA					
Referral meetings with partner agencies – participants introduced		✓					
Community screenings of BEs work to introduce concepts and ways of working – includes physical circus workshops as soft entry point. <b>N/A</b>							
Trialling of art forms in the community with participants to decide main arts driver (film, music, dance, performance). <b>N/A</b>							
Participants supported by community partners to attend cross form art workshops working beside professional BE artists creating 'product'. <b>N/A</b>							
<p>NB: Workshops include young people working one on one with artists exploring their own stories related to the Out of the Blue issues (AOD and mental health) and developing and presenting these stories in their own way (through film, dance, digital stories, etc). Community support workers work alongside the artistic team supporting participants; assisting referrals and making links for participants to access appropriate support services. The focus remains on giving young people a voice and a 'reason to participate' as opposed to fixing the problems they present with. Young people may participate in several artforms to create one off products or work as a team to create one product with more depth (i.e. short film, performance piece, promotional /awareness campaign). Where possible links will be made to existing services (Links to Learning, etc) to create pathways back into community participation.</p>							

Out of the Blue Workshop program begins ...							
Key Project Task and critical milestones: <u>Out of the Blue</u> (continued)	July 08	August 08	Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09
Armidale, Tamworth, Nambucca, Illawarra	Casino, Kempsey, Taree LGA						
Artists and support workers mentor participants to present their stories (this may include how to present the issues, confidentiality, etc). It may include editing work for private and public presentation. <b>N/A</b>							
In house public presentations of work and peer reviews.					✓ at BE camp		
Second edits in workshops and planning for community presentation.					✓	✓	
Preparation for community presentations (includes invitation lists, developing the story, undertaking CCD and participants executing presentation).							✓
Soft Entry point arts workshops. <b>N/A</b>							
Media story / promotion each community. <b>3 x newspaper articles: Armidale Express &amp; Armidale Independent.</b>					✓		
Intro Training session 1 for DoCS (support) workers – assessing needs and planning. <b>N/A</b>							
Training session 1: DoCS (support) workers. <b>N/A</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressing needs;</li> <li>Into to the BE Model and practice Stage 1;</li> <li>Working through project scenarios, thinking outside the box and non welfare approaches to entrenched welfare related problems);</li> <li>Trialling BE tools;</li> <li>Mentoring one on one for support workers by BE leaders (participants of previous BE projects);</li> </ul>							

**Key Performance Indicators: Out of the Blue**

**CHECKERS – OUT OF THE BLUE, ARMIDALE (Phoenix)**

**25/02/09**

Outcomes sought	Indicative KPI (to 30/01/09)	Steps to be take to achieve KPI	Actual KPI (to 30/01/09)
Art products including literature, dance, visual arts, digital arts, music and performance that effectively communicate the issues explored in the project to broad audience.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 quality arts products produced pa.</li> <li>15 x 1 week workshops and 5 public outcomes.</li> <li>Number of products produced in collaboration with local artists.</li> <li>Performance and audience numbers at high profile public venue and audience feedback.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of arts workshops by professional artists over a two year period.</li> <li>Continued development of local products through workshops with artists.</li> <li>Out of the Blue narrative film project in development</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x quality art product produced, <b>Checkers (4 school performances, 3 public performances)</b></li> <li>28 workshops/rehearsals (68 hours): 22 x 2 hrs + 6 x 4 hrs</li> <li>1 – <b>Checkers with playwright/director Martin Mantle and Stage One Creative</b></li> <li>3 x public performances at the Auditorium, Armidale, to 150 audience members. <b>NO audience survey done.</b></li> </ol>
Increase participant skills to deal with drug and alcohol misuse and other anti-social behaviours. <b>N/A</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants indicate a 50% increase in ability to regulate own AOD usage.</li> <li>Participants demonstrate a 45% increase in engagement in alternative activities/services supporting intervention with AOD misuse and anti social behaviour.</li> <li>Participants indicate a 60% increase in knowledge about local support for AOD and mental health issues.</li> <li>Participants indicate a</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of peer to peer programs directly with participants and in collaboration with agencies.</li> <li>Delivery of mentoring/training sessions with agencies in the utilisation of arts intervention strategies. (creation of 'better' access for long term disengaged)</li> <li>Development and delivery of effective and accessible information within arts and media</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ol>

Outcomes sought	Indicative KPI (to 30/01/09)	Steps to be take to achieve KPI	Actual KPI (to 30/01/09)
	<p>60% increase in strengthening of relationships with AOD and mental health support workers attributed to direct involvement in the project.</p> <p>5. Participants indicate a 30% increase in new pathways other than anti social behaviour (TAFE)</p>	<p>product related to AOD use and mental health issues and support. BE 'brokers' relationships with AOD and mental health workers through arts based workshops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalised partnerships with TAFE and alternative Education pathways (Links to Learning) as part of project delivery.</li> </ul>	
<p>Increased awareness and capacity about mental health issues among peers.</p> <p>Increased ability to identify and respond to own mental health issues.</p> <p><b>*The data presented here only represents the data collected from the BE leaders (see attached summary) involved, as to date I have only received data for 2 out of the 9 cast members. I will add that data when I receive it.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants indicate a 50% increase in knowledge about issues related to mental health (what it is and its effects).</li> <li>Number of awareness raising arts products produced and breadth of circulation (in media and public domain)</li> <li>65% of participants indicate changes in positive outlook whilst being involved in the project.</li> <li>30% of participants indicate lasting change (beyond 3 months) in positive outlook attributed to Out of the Blue involvement.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of new products produced by</li> <li>Participants' about AOD abuse and issues surrounding mental health that can also be used for media campaign.</li> <li>Project launch November 2008</li> <li>Media campaign implemented with DoCS in April 2009.</li> <li>Specific mental health performance piece developed with referral group, working with mental health workers. Staged in Armidale.</li> <li>Development of 1 new arts initiatives locally targeting young people at</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>100% of participants indicated an increase in knowledge about issues related to mental health</b></li> <li><b>1 x play (Checkers) circulated in 4 local schools and 3 public performances.</b></li> <li><b>100% of participants indicate changes in positive outlook whilst being involved in the project.</b></li> <li><b>It is less than 3 months since Checkers was completed, so too early to assess this.</b></li> <li><b>Not assessed.</b></li> <li><b>Not assessed.</b></li> </ol>

Outcomes sought	Indicative KPI (to 30/01/09)	Steps to be take to achieve KPI	Actual KPI (to 30/01/09)
	<p>5. 35% indicate increased levels of participation in community attributed to involvement in Out of the Blue.</p> <p>6. 45% of participants with mental health issues (identified) seek intervention and support locally.</p>	<p>risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health workers involved in workshops, participating in arts activities with participants continue therapeutic relationships outside of workshops.</li> </ul>	
<p>Increase in participants' use of support services for AOD and mental health issues. N/A</p>	<p>1. # Number of participants (known to have AOD/mental health issues via referrals) seeking intervention and support from local services via the project.</p> <p>2. Mental Health workers indicate 45% increase in new referrals for one on one support.</p> <p>3. 60% of AOD and mental health workers indicate stronger sense of connection with clients (new) via Out of the Blue.</p> <p>4. 45% increase in participants identifying they have a problem with AOD and mental health issues and seek intervention more than once.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Health workers build relationships with participants via workshops – take referrals. Information circulated through workshops.</li> <li>Mental Health workers build relationships with participants via workshops – take referrals. Information brought to workshops.</li> <li>Young people build relationships with new AOD and mental health workers through workshops and attend support sessions away from project workshops. BE facilitates and supports via BE youth support position. Records</li> </ul>	<p>1. 2. 3. 4.</p>

Outcomes sought	Indicative KPI (to 30/01/09)	Steps to be take to achieve KPI	Actual KPI (to 30/01/09)
		<p>kept.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish measures that monitor changes in participants' personal trajectory.</li> </ul>	
<p>Increase in local support services trialling of non welfare interventions to work with young people with AOD issues and mental health</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of services using BE processes in core delivery of their programs.</li> <li>Number of individuals representing services attending BE training through leadership program.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing partnerships for project delivery with TAFE and Links to Learning programs to deliver arts based intervention projects with our target group.</li> <li>Workshops provide space to involve workers. Workers supported to trial BE processes.</li> <li>Targeted training for workers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Too early to establish. Also, only 3 out of 8 questionnaires to partners have been returned to date.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> </ol>
<p>Develop new leadership skills.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Leadership camps delivered annually.</li> <li>Number of participants attending BE leadership camps each year. 30% increase in new participants annually.</li> <li>Number of participants working in leadership role on Out of the Blue project.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BE Leadership Camps delivered</li> <li>BE offers three traineeships for young people with outstanding leadership qualities.</li> <li>Support of participants in delivery of peer to peer mentoring and delivery of own small projects.</li> <li>Opportunities for young people to work alongside the BE team in community in Out of the Blue</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li><b>6 BE Leaders worked in a leadership role in Checkers co-facilitating mental health discussion groups with local mental health workers.</b></li> </ol>

Outcomes sought	Indicative KPI (to 30/01/09)	Steps to be take to achieve KPI	Actual KPI (to 30/01/09)
		workshops.	
Increase collaboration between support services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 50% increase in collaboration between local services initiated through Out of the Blue (as part of the project delivery)</li> <li>2. 65% services indicate improved levels of collaboration as a result of Out of the Blue.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities provided for AOD and mental health workers to participate in workshops both as participants (writing workshops for example) and as support workers. Agencies collaborate in development of launches and public outcomes mentored by BE team.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Too early to establish. Also, only 2 out of 7 questionnaires to partners have been returned to date.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
Create sustainable arts processes and support to deliver BE processes locally	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5 participating agencies delivering BE type projects as part of Out of the Blue.</li> <li>2. Production of the BE wAy toolkit and development of BE training program launched.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BE supports agencies to develop proposals to deliver arts practices as part of specific agency core delivery.</li> <li>• Development continues - writing and content drafted and edited. Design begins.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Too early to establish. Also, only 2 out of 7 questionnaires to partners have been returned to date.</b></li> <li>2. <b>N/A</b></li> </ol>