

Youth Studies Australia

VOLUME 30 NUMBER 2 JUNE 2011

Oral sex / Improvisation / Stigma /
Ethics / Cooperation / Pressure / Service
access / e-mental health / Parental
consent / DRUMBEAT / Professional
behaviour / Depression / Refugee
homelessness



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations



Youth Studies Australia

Youth Studies Australia is an international journal that is dedicated to practical, academic and multi-disciplinary analysis of young people, youth service provision and youth work. The journal invites submissions from researchers, scholars and practitioners that provide theoretically informed and empirically based analyses of applied youth development practice, specific issues involving young people, the youth affairs field,

and innovative interventions in working with young people across a wide range of social institutions. Submissions should be of relevance to practitioners and academics concerned with the health and wellbeing of young people in the 12 to 25 years age group. The journal aims to present youth issues and research in a way that is accessible and reader-friendly, but which retains scholarly integrity.

Editors

Academic editor

Steven Threadgold
The University of
Newcastle

Managing editor

Sue Headley
University of Tasmania

Deputy editors

Kate Gross
Caroline Mordaunt
University of Tasmania

Jane Burns
Inspire Foundation

Tim Corney
Incolink

Jen Couch
Australian Catholic
University

Ann Dadich
University of Western
Sydney

Robyn Dixon
The University of Auckland

Michael Emslie
RMIT University

David Farrugia
The University
of Melbourne

Alan France
The University of Auckland

Andy Furlong
University of Glasgow

Ian Fyfe
The University
of Edinburgh

Ken Harland
University of Ulster

Anita Harris
Monash University

Lyn Harrison
Deakin University

Ian Hay
University of Tasmania

Geoff Holloway
Australian Research
Alliance for Children
and Youth

John Howard
University of New
South Wales

Peter Kelly
Deakin University

Alistair Lemmon
Charles Sturt University

Lloyd Martin
Praxis Network

Philip Mendes
Monash University

Pam Nilan
The University
of Newcastle

Jon Ord
University College
Plymouth St Mark
& St John

Megan Price
BoysTown

Jeremy Prichard
University of Tasmania

Debra Rickwood
University of Canberra

Kitty Te Riele
University of
Technology Sydney

Howard Sercombe
University of Strathclyde

Erica Smith
University of Ballarat

Heather Stewart
Centre for Multicultural
Youth

Steven Threadgold
The University
of Newcastle

M.C. (Greetje) Timmerman
University of Groningen

Ariadne Vromen
The University of Sydney

Joyce A. Walker
University of Minnesota

Ruth Webber
Australian Catholic
University

Rob White
University of Tasmania

Ani Wierenga
The University
of Melbourne

Victor Wong
Hong Kong Baptist
University

Dan Woodman
Australian National
University

Paul Wyles
Office of Children,
Youth and Family Support,
ACT

Johanna Wyn
The University
of Melbourne

International Editorial Board

Sarah Baker
Griffith University

Andy Bennett
Griffith University

Judith Bessant
RMIT University

Rosalyn Black
The Foundation for Young
Australians

Vaughan Bowie
University of Western
Sydney

Robyn Broadbent
Victoria University

Joanne Bryant
University of New
South Wales

Patrick Burke
Youth Work Ireland

Contents

- 9 **Practice notes / DRUMBEAT**
In search of belonging
Simon Faulkner
- 15 **'It feels good'**
Australian young women's attitudes to oral sex
Liz Hammond, Jane Estoesta, Erin Passmore & Jackie Ruddock
- 22 **'My life just went zig zag'**
Refugee young people and homelessness
Jen Couch
- 33 **Depression stigma in Australian high school students**
Nicola Reavley & Anthony Jorm
- 41 **Evaluation of an online youth ambassador program to promote mental health**
Nicola Beamish, Philippa Cannan, Hakuei Fujiyama, Allison Matthews, Caroline Spiranovic, Kate Briggs, Kenneth Kirkby, Caroline Mobsby & Brett Daniels
- 48 **Researching employment relations**
A self-reflexive analysis of a multi-method, school-based project
Paula McDonald & Tina Graham
- 57 **Practice notes / A code of ethics for youth work?**
Notes for a national discussion
Ann Davie

- 2 **Editorial**
A different drum
- 3 **Special feature**
Improving regional Australia for youth
- 4 **Peak news**
- 6 **Profile**
Benson Saulo
- 7 **Review**
- 8 **Youth matters**
- 60 **Abstracts**
- 64 **Youth initiatives**
Young people in an economic downturn

All papers published in *Youth Studies Australia* are peer reviewed unless otherwise indicated.

Notes for contributors

Youth Studies Australia is a quarterly peer-reviewed journal that welcomes papers on all aspects of Australasian young people. The journal aims to present youth issues and research in a way that is accessible and reader-friendly, but which retains scholarly integrity.

Papers are reviewed internally, then peer-reviewed, if they pass internal review. Peer

review is optional for papers submitted to the column 'Practice Notes', which contains articles of particular relevance to practitioners working directly with young people.

Contributions should conform to the *YSA guidelines* (<http://www.acys.info/ysa/submissions>). In general, manuscripts should not exceed 4,000 words (including tables, references and headings). Text style should conform to the

Style manual: For authors, editors and printers (5th or 6th edition) with references presented in the author-date system. Manuscripts should be submitted via email (contact details p.2).

All contributors must read the *Youth Studies Australia licence agreement* (<http://www.acys.info/ysa/submissions>) carefully. If all the authors accept the condition of the licence, they must sign it, make a copy for their records

and return the original (contact details p.2).

Rights: Contributors to *Youth Studies Australia* retain copyright of their original work. *YSA/ACYS* holds copyright of the published version and reserves the right to reproduce all *YSA* material on the website of the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies and to collect copying fees in relation to all or part of any *ACYS* publication.

DRUMBEAT

In search of belonging

DRUMBEAT is a flexible program that combines experiential learning with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and engages young people and adults who may be anxious or resistant to 'talk based' therapies. The DRUMBEAT program is taught to young people and adults across Australia in schools, youth services, drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities, child protection residential facilities, mental health services, refugee trauma associations and prisons. Participants lift their self-esteem, learn to work cooperatively with others and are exposed to the therapeutic and recreational benefits of music. The program is a useful tool, effective at engaging a wide range of young people and practical in its application.

by Simon Faulkner

For people around the world, a positive connection to others in the community is a critical element for both the health of individuals and the meaning and happiness they get from their lives (Bruhn 2005). From our earliest days as infants, and throughout our lives, social connections play a critical role in our sense of security, place and belonging (Tavecchio & van IJzendoorn 1987).

For young people in Australia, the generic term "alienated" is widely used as a recognised "risk factor" for a range of problematic social outcomes including criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, and self-harm (Loxley et al. 2004). As the complexity of society increases, more and more people, young and old, are struggling to gain control over the meaning and direction of their lives and find their place and sense of belonging in the communities that surround them (Zubrick et al. 1997).

In 2002 I found myself in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia working as a youth worker and addictions counsellor with many young people struggling to find their place in the world around them. The Wheatbelt is a large region lying between Perth and Kalgoorlie, approximately the size of the state of Tasmania. It is the home of the Noongar and Yamatji Aboriginal peoples who make up close to five per cent of the population. Regional Australia encapsulates many of the issues that lead people to struggle for a sense of belonging and

connection to community. Many people have moved to the Wheatbelt region to avoid the complexity of city life, to find cheaper housing or to obtain manual labour on farms. Often they find themselves isolated, lonely and with limited access to support services (Hugo & Bell 1998).

Other issues prevalent in the Wheatbelt region that contributed to a growing case load for me and other human services workers in the area were the large numbers of broken families – where one or both parents were absent or facing significant social challenges of their own. Racism and poverty were also common stigmatising factors that led to increased social isolation for many people. My own experience in moving from Melbourne away from family and friends mirrored many of the issues faced by my clients – a lack of support networks and feelings of separation from those around me.

How DRUMBEAT works

In 2003, frustrated with my attempts to work with local youth through a range of talk-based therapeutic approaches, I began developing the Holyoake DRUMBEAT (Discovering Relationships Using Music – Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes & Thoughts) program. Holyoake's work with people and their families dealing with the negative impact of drug and alcohol use is based around social learning theory and Albert Bandura's (1977) work on the influence of the social environment on behaviour. DRUMBEAT was devised using the same theoretical premise and focused on exploring relationship issues, in particular the factors that contribute to healthy and supportive relationships. This process was to be encapsulated in a fun and creative music program where the emphasis was on teamwork and cooperation, and the primary learning strategy was experiential.

Social learning outcomes derived from the program emerge from a range of different elements. The process of playing drums with others in a cooperative spirit is, like other team programs, therapeutic in itself, particularly when supported by the positive role modelling of facilitating staff. The drum has

traditionally been a healing instrument and in many cultures is used as means of community building – drumming ceremonies involve the whole community and bond people through ritual and celebration. The physical release of striking the drum is also cathartic, enabling the participant to release feelings through a safe medium.

Key to the DRUMBEAT program's effectiveness in promoting behaviour change and reducing social isolation is the discussion element of the program. Drumming reduces anxiety and engenders trust far quicker than many other forms of therapy (Freidman 2000). This effect in turn leads to a greater willingness by participants to share their thoughts and opinions about the subject matter that arises as part of the program syllabus. Relationship themes are drawn from the drumming exercises using analogy and metaphor in order to trigger dialogue. Themes include rhythm and its impact on our lives, harmony, peer pressure, dealing with emotions, communication, identity and social responsibility.

The importance of improvisation

One of the overriding themes in DRUMBEAT is "finding your place in your community"; a challenge for all of us at different times in our lives as we move between different relationships, jobs, abodes etc. Over the course of the program (10 sessions), participants move from playing set pieces to improvisation. As they learn how to play together without instruction, they examine the skills required, as well as the challenges involved in connecting to others and what might prevent them integrating successfully. These concepts apply equally to other social situations where people have to work together in community, whether that be as part of a family, school, workplace or town. This approach (improvisation) allows the individual to express themselves uniquely, but at the same time find a common connection so that the music is in harmony. Emphasis is placed on the importance to communities of drawing on the individual strengths of all members, but at the same time accepting common goals and responsibilities.

TABLE 1 Rosenberg self-esteem scale scores, prior to and post completion of the DRUMBEAT program

Self-esteem scores	Mean	Standard deviation	Range
Prior to completing the DRUMBEAT Program (n = 179)	20.61	5.19	6–30
Post completion of the DRUMBEAT program (n = 150)	23.92	4.19	14–30

TABLE 2 Behavioural incident data of a serious nature provided by teachers from school records prior to and during the DRUMBEAT program

Behavioural incidents	Mean	Standard deviation
Term prior to participation in DRUMBEAT	2.38	6.70
During participation in the DRUMBEAT program	1.24	3.43

TABLE 3 Social development program evaluation for each student post completion of DRUMBEAT program

Measure of social development	n	Minimum score recorded	Maximum score recorded	Mean	Standard deviation
Self-esteem	169	4	10	6.87	1.53
General mood	169	4	10	6.86	1.45
Group participation	169	4	10	6.79	1.64
Relationships with peers	169	3	10	6.66	1.44
Relationships with adults/teachers	169	3	10	6.58	1.41
Focus and concentration	169	4	10	6.50	1.45
Emotional control	169	4	10	6.31	1.41

Note: 1 = detrimental change, 5 = no change and 10 = the most positive change.

Source all tables: Ivery et al. 2009

The emphasis on improvisation is of fundamental importance in allowing for individual expression at a developmental time (adolescence) that for many participants is often associated with great turmoil around issues of identity. This focus allows the individual to gain new confidence in their ability to be themselves and still connect with others. Music programs are now common in the field of social or personal development; however, many of these rely on teaching young people set parts and fail to promote creativity. These programs leave young people with high self-esteem, but not with the skills to adapt to new situations. Once the music leader leaves, the students are often lost and unable to play music with others

independently, and the opportunity for music as recreation disappears.

Beyond the DRUMBEAT program

The aim with DRUMBEAT is for each participant to leave the program with the confidence and skill set to find their place in any music (community) group – so that their interest in music can lead to an ongoing recreational relationship with music based on community drum circles. Holyoake has been instrumental in setting up these circles in community centres including youth centres and community mental health centres. The program draws attention to the potential of this same skill set to assist the

Mental health issues are closely associated with many of the alienated behaviours seen in disaffected young people.

individual to adapt and connect to community settings across the life span.

DRUMBEAT training

The DRUMBEAT program is in use across Australia and New Zealand with over 1,500 facilitators having completed the three-day training program since its inception in 2004. This training is accredited as part of a Certificate IV unit in group skills. As well as instruction in DRUMBEAT theory and activities, participants in this training look closely at developing the therapeutic relationship and dealing with challenging behaviours. These two topics utilise the experience of all group members to identify key behaviours associated with success. The DRUMBEAT program is a useful tool, effective at engaging a wide range of young people and practical in its application. It is, however, only a tool, and the key to its success is the skill of those wielding it and their ability to work positively with their clients and adapt the program content to the needs of their group and their own strengths.

What DRUMBEAT has achieved

Evaluation has been built into the program with a range of questionnaires and data collection documents developed in order to monitor the program's impact on participants. This type of action research has led to numerous changes over the history of the program to better tailor the activities to the needs of clients and the required learning outcomes. A number of research studies have been carried out on the program including a large study completed in 2009 by The University of Western Australia's (UWA) School of Population and Health (Ivery et al. 2009). This project looked at the impact of the DRUMBEAT program on 190 students in 19 schools across Western Australia, including several in remote and regional areas.

Young people who participated in the UWA study all presented with numerous risk factors, including recreational drug use, truancy, histories of abuse and neglect, violent behaviours, withdrawn behaviours, anxiety and depression. Approximately 30% of

students were of Aboriginal descent and four specialist migrant schools were also part of the study. The remaining schools participating in the project were government primary schools (n = 10) and government secondary schools (n = 5) (Ivery et al. 2009).

The results from this study showed an average increase in self-esteem of 10% (see Table 1), and a significant reduction in behavioural incidents (suspensions) (see Table 2). In addition, student engagement (attendance at DRUMBEAT sessions) was 93%, with some students remarking "we only come to school for DRUMBEAT", and student satisfaction was rated at 99%. Reports from other teachers – independent of the program, but who interacted with DRUMBEAT participants in other parts of their school lives – reported improvements in relationships with peers, increased focus and concentration in other school activities and improvements in levels and stability of overall mood (Ivery et al. 2009) (see Table 3).

This evaluation also included a large qualitative component with interviews conducted with 15 school facilitators regarding change and influence emanating from the program and overall impressions of the impact of the program. Facilitators reported improvements in participants' abilities to work as team members, increased levels of responsibility and empathy and a new openness in discussing problems. Responses were consistent with statistical evidence in observations of increased self-confidence, increased sense of pride and belonging. Teachers observed increases in participation, cooperation and increased levels of social confidence (see Table 3) (Ivery et al. 2009).

DRUMBEAT and mental health

The DRUMBEAT program has also been closely evaluated by a number of mental health services working with both young people and adults. Mental health issues are closely associated with many of the alienated behaviours seen in disaffected young people. The incidence of mental illness for young people is the highest of any age group, and for those people who go on to have serious mental

health issues over the course of their life span, almost 75% will have had an initial episode during their youth (Kessler et al. 2005).

The likelihood of mental health problems arising increases as young people move from childhood through adolescence to early adulthood. Approximately one in four to five young Australians are likely to suffer from a mental health problem, with the most common issues being substance abuse/dependency, depression, anxiety, and eating disorders (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW) 2003). Although there is a high prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders, only a subset of these require treatment by a specialist mental health service. Many could be treated far more effectively and efficiently by the primary care sector, particularly by an early intervention approach (McGorry, Parker & Purcell 2006).

The findings from the research studies conducted into the use of DRUMBEAT with people presenting with mental illness included improved levels of mood and reductions in anxiety. Self-reports and interviews with case managers and clinicians provided data that showed high levels of client satisfaction (100%), improved mood states (60%), increased levels of focus and commitment (60%), reductions in anxiety (80%), improved self-esteem (60%) and improved physical health (60%) (Featherstone 2008). Qualitative feedback noted brighter and more reactive affect, laughter, and a heightened level of participation compared to other group programs being offered at the facility (Atefi, Churchward & Faulkner 2007).

The focus within DRUMBEAT on healthy relationships and connection to community is also highly relevant to people living with a mental illness. These individuals often struggle, because of the symptoms of their condition, to form healthy relationships and commonly find themselves isolated and unable to form long-term and enduring relationships with others (Morgan et al. 2007).

DRUMBEAT and other music programs

DRUMBEAT is not an African drumming program, but one strong theme connecting DRUMBEAT and African drumming

programs is their use of music as a form of community building. In many ways the western tradition of music has produced an elite class of performer, which means that many people are increasingly deprived of the opportunity to engage in recreational music-making (Nzewi 2007). Music is a business, and with that comes the scenario of music as competition where only perfection is acceptable. In Africa, music has always been about community and participation for all. The concept of the soloist is a western introduction into African musicology (Nzewi 2007). Fewer than 25% of young people have access to music programs in schools (Australian Music Association 2005), though the significant benefits of involvement in music, especially in relation to education and social outcomes, have been demonstrated repeatedly (Hallam 2009).

Conclusion

Alienation, isolation, separation and loneliness are issues that most members of society deal with at different times of their lives. When they are long lasting, and the individual lacks the support or confidence to move out of these situations and find connection and a sense of belonging, they can become debilitating, and all society pays the cost. The cost of housing one young person in a juvenile detention centre for 12 months is over \$50,000 (Civil Liberties Australia 2011) – multiply that by the hundreds or perhaps thousands in detention, in rehabilitation, in hospitals etc. and the enormous price society pays is evident, and this cost continues to escalate.

The main price, however, is not the cost in dollar terms, but the loss of the potential that each of those ostracised individuals has to offer our communities, if only we and they together could find a way of harnessing it. DRUMBEAT is designed to give young people the skills to reconnect and find their place, and celebrate the richness of diversity while understanding our obligations to each other in community. There is an African saying, "every time a person leaves the village, the whole village suffers". In Australia we are often happy to exclude those individuals who

AUTHOR

Simon Faulkner is the developer of the DRUMBEAT early intervention program and an addictions counsellor specialising in group work. He is currently manager of DRUMBEAT for Holyoake, The Australian Institute for Alcohol and Drug Addiction Resolutions. For 12 years he practiced in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia working predominantly with young Aboriginal men.

don't fit the mould, who challenge us or who are just too difficult to handle. This is not a long-term solution, as the burgeoning prison population demonstrates – a better aim is to work towards integrating as many people as possible, taking advantage of their unique contributions, help them find their place and, through their contribution, develop a richer and more tolerant society.

References

- Atefi, N., Churchward, L. & Faulkner, S. 2007, 'A formative evaluation into the use of the DRUMBEAT program with clients in the early discharge program at Swan Mental Health Services', unpublished report for North Metropolitan Area Health Service.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2003, *Australia's young people: Their health and wellbeing*, AIHW, Canberra.
- Australian Music Association 2005, *Submission to House of Representatives Inquiry into Education and Vocational Training*, retrieved from: <<http://www.aph.gov.au/House/committee/evt/teachereduc/subs/sub064.pdf>>.
- Bandura, A. 1977, *Social learning theory*, General Learning Press, New York.
- Bruhn, J.G. 2005, *The sociology of community connections*, Springer, Kluwer Academic Publishers Group, Amsterdam.
- Civil Liberties Australia 2011, *And still the prison population rises*, retrieved from: <<http://www.cla.asn.au/0805/index.php/articles/2009/and-still-the-prison-population-rises>>.
- Featherstone, J. 2008, 'A formative evaluation of the therapeutic intervention DRUMBEAT with patients from the Department of Psychiatry at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital', unpublished report for Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital Psychiatric Department, WA.
- Freidman, R.W. 2000, *The healing power of the drum*, White Cliffs Media, Reno, Nevada.
- Hallam, S. 2009, *The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people*, paper commissioned by the Performing Right Society, retrieved from: <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/Year_of_Music.pdf>.
- Hugo, G. & Bell, M. 1998, 'The hypothesis of welfare-led migration to rural areas: The Australian case', ch. 6, in *Migration into rural areas*, eds K. Halfacree & P. Boyle, Wiley, London.
- Ivery, P., Wood, L., Rosenberg, M. & Donovan, R. 2009, *An evaluation of a therapeutic intervention using music "DRUMBEAT" discovering relationships using music – beliefs, emotions, attitudes & thoughts, with alienated youth*, Health Promotion Unit, School of Population and Health, The University of Western Australia, Perth.
- Kessler, R., Bergland, P., Demler, O., Jin, R. & Walters, E.E. 2005, 'Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication', *Archives of General Psychiatry*, n.62, pp.593-602.
- Loxley, W., Toumbourou, J.W., Stockwell, T., Haines, B., Scott, K., Godfrey, C., Waters, E., Pattern, G., Fordham, R., Gray, D., Marshall, J., Ryder, D., Siggers, S., Sanci, L. & Williams, J. 2004, *The prevention of substance use, risk and harm in Australia – a review of the evidence*, Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- Morgan, C., Burns, T., Fitzpatrick, R., Pinfold, V. & Priebe, S. 2007, 'Social exclusion and mental health, Conceptual and methodological review', *The British Journal of Psychiatry* n.207, v.191, pp.477-83.
- McGorry, P., Parker, A. & Purcell, R. 2006, *Youth mental health services*, Australian Psychological Society, retrieved from, <http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/youth_mental_health/>.
- Nzewi, M. 2007, 'Ensemble of merry voices: Nagging public consciousness', in *Celebrating musical communities: Proceedings of the 40th anniversary national conference*, 6–8 July, eds A. Stanberg, J. McIntosh & R. Faulkner, Australian Society for Music Education, Nedlands, WA, pp.26-31.
- Tavecchio, L.W.C. & van Ijzendoorn, M.H. 1987, *Attachment in social networks*, Elsevier Science Publishers, Amsterdam.
- Zubrick, S.R., Silburn, S.R., Gurrin, L., Teoh, H., Shepherd, C., Carlton, J. & Lawrence, D. 1997, *The Western Australian child health survey: Education, health and competence*, Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Institute for Child Health Research, Perth, Western Australia.