

Summary of Evidence – Holyoake’s DRUMBEAT[®] Program

Holyoake’s DRUMBEAT[®] program began as a pilot in 2003 and has included action based research as part of its format since its inception. This study summarises some of the key research findings, including six published, peer reviewed journal articles, numerous organisational evaluations and the informal studies completed by senior DRUMBEAT facilitators as part of their accreditation.

School Based Research

Published in the Journal of Public Mental Health, Vol 12, No 2, 2013

- Positive changes were observed on several measures, including a 10% increase in self-esteem scores by program completion. School data showed a decrease in reported behaviour incidents for 29% of participants. The teacher feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with observed benefits including positive changes in behaviour, outlook on future opportunities, willingness to learn and follow instructions, confidence, interactions with others, sense of pride and belonging and group cohesion

Published in the Journal Reclaiming Children & Youth, Vol 21, No 3, 2012

- Over 2,000 students assessed in schools across Australia with statistically significant improvement in group members’ relationship with peers and other adults. Many facilitators reported an increased sense of belonging, & community connection for their DRUMBEAT students. Improvements also recorded in self-esteem, emotional regulation and group cooperation.

Published in the Journal Children Australia, Vol 37, No 1, 2012

- 60 primary school students participating in DRUMBEAT increased their scores over a range of social indicators that act to increase connection with the school community. The results included a 16% increase in self-esteem, reductions in absenteeism of an average of five days over the course of the intervention, improvements in levels of cooperation for 60% of participants and a 96% student satisfaction rate.

Published in the Journal of Indigenous Education, Vol 39, 2010

- This study was of 190 students in 20 schools, 40% of whom identified as Aboriginal. Results showed increases in self-esteem of 15%. Behavioural incidents (suspensions) were reduced for 27% of participants and 33% reduced their level of absenteeism. Student satisfaction with the program was consistently over 90%.

Mental Health & Complex Needs Research

In-house paper for the Psychiatric Assessment Unit at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital, Featherstone, 2008.

- DRUMBEAT delivered to inpatients in the Psychiatric unit. Improvements were noted in mental clarity, mood, and social confidence. One participant reflected on the programs ability to quell unwanted thoughts and provide a mindfulness that reduced her anxiety. Patients also commented on an improved sense of belonging and enjoyment of the group experience. Clinicians involved with attending patients commented on increased confidence, more animated body language, and improved cognitive benefits.

Currently In Press – University of Auckland – study on the impact of DRUMBEAT with ‘special needs’ children in a New Zealand Primary School.

- Children attending DRUMBEAT with Autism, Asperger’s, ADHD, ODD and selective mutism.
- Data collected from students, parents & teachers. Finding concluded that after ten DRUMBEAT sessions all of the students exhibited positive changes in at least two of the four behavioural areas highlighted in the research. These included defiant behaviour, breaching rules, self-management of behaviour and respect for others & property

In-house paper for Swan Districts Mental Health Services, delivered as paper to the occupational Health Conference, Perth, 2007.

- DRUMBEAT program delivered as part of an early discharge program. 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%). 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.

In house paper prepared for the North Metropolitan Health Service, 2009

- DRUMBEAT program delivered in community setting with the long term mentally ill. Improvements in confidence and self-esteem were reported as were reductions in anxiety and stress. Participants reported feeling more confident around others, less self-conscious and more able to deal with personal problems since starting the program.

Child Trauma & Refugees Research

Report on the introduction of DRUMBEAT into residential homes for The West Australian Department of Child Protection, 2013; In-house paper.

- Young people involved in the sessions reported improvements in happiness and reductions in anxiety and frustration following completion of the sessions – although levels of change were small they were consistent across all houses. Outcomes included: Improved self-regard, increased confidence, increased levels of self-awareness. Noted reductions in anxiety and frustration followed involvement in the sessions with parallel increases in happiness.
- Successfully introducing the DRUMBEAT program into these group homes was often a challenge due to the low skill level of residential staff and the extreme behaviours of many residents. Key factors attributed to success included open communication between Manager, house staff, and participants, consistent facilitators with rosters purposefully re-arranged to meet this, flexible structure but learning aims covered, staff organised and prepared for the session weekly and a positive attitude and an understanding of the therapeutic factors of group work.

Report on the impact of DRUMBEAT in schools working with newly arrived migrant youth, in house paper for the Holyoake Institute, 2006.

- 95 students across three ESL campuses (Primary & High school). Young people facing a range of issues including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Witness to violence, Deceased parent, Isolation/Alienation. Noted outcomes included increases self-esteem,

improved mood, reduction in inappropriate behaviour and higher levels of cooperation in the classroom.

Prison Based Research

Currently In Press – University of Western Australia – study of the impact of DRUMBEAT on the mental health of prisoners, 2013.

- 114 prisoners, across seven prisons; 45% Aboriginal. Results indicated that DRUMBEAT improved mental wellbeing, psychological distress and resilience of prisoners. Mental wellbeing for DRUMBEAT prisoner participants was significantly higher ($p < .001$) after the program. This positive improvement was maintained three months post-program (compared to pre-program; $p = 0.014$). Psychological distress scores were significantly lower ($p = 0.001$) at post-program than at program start.

In-house paper prepared for the Alice Springs Correctional facility, 2010.

- 98% of prisoners in this study were of Aboriginal descent. Feedback included improved relationships with other prison staff, improved levels of emotional regulation, increased engagement in other mainstream prison programs, increased self-regard, improved levels of focus and concentration and improved mood within jail.