

# READING TACKLES ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

MAKING YOUNG PEOPLE PART OF THE SOLUTION - NOT THE PROBLEM

**SAY YES**<sup>TM</sup>  
SOCIAL AWARENESS YOUTH ENTERPRISE SCHEME

## CHALLENGING AND ENABLING THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF READING TO SOLVE ANTI-SOCIAL ISSUES

### PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Say Yes Challenge in Reading was a partnership between Connect Reading, The BG Group, Uniting Reading and Thames Valley Police.

The Challenge also involved many local businesses, including Microsoft, University of Reading, Wavelength, Making Change Stick and Business Growth Practice.

The young people involved came from a variety of organisations across Reading, and the Challenge specifically targets those young people who are disengaged or disaffected, NEETS groups and young people at risk of offending.

### UNITING READING

BG GROUP



the business community  
partnership for Reading

Forty-five young people from Reading became part of the solution, rather than the problem, as they worked in small groups to identify specific issues of crime and anti-social behaviour.

The groups, working with the support of local business people who acted as mentors, created a business solution to address those anti-social problems identified. The young people, aged between 13 and 17 channelled their energy into making a difference to their community and enhancing the lives of people in the area.

The funders and supporters of the Say Yes Challenge saw a real opportunity to divert young people from potential crime whilst at the same time up-skilling them to assist in their future education and employment.

*"The judges were overwhelmed by the quality of the ideas, the hard work and the presentations put together by the young people. They were all outstanding and acted as fantastic ambassadors for young people across the town. We wish every one of them all the very best in their future endeavours."*

**Michael Coughlin**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Reading Borough Council**

The Say Yes Challenge achieves significant outcomes to deal with issues of anti-social behaviour, crime and youth nuisance through active citizenship and social enterprise. Just one achievement from the Reading Challenge includes an increase to 68% (prev 18%) of young people understanding the affects of crime and anti-social behaviour on communities.

Tackling anti-social behaviour and youth nuisance remain top priorities for the Government and Local Authorities. Communities and individuals alike are being actively encouraged to work together to reduce the number of incidents, embrace active citizenship and move towards a culture of respect.



Photo shows Chief Superintendent Christopher Shead, Thames Valley Police, with one of the winning groups.



## Outcomes

The Reading Say Yes Challenge has been an outstanding learning experience for the young people and not only did it provide the much needed insight into many aspects of running a business for the social good, but it was also a great personal development opportunity. The young people valued and enjoyed the Challenge and were able to recognise the range of skills that they had developed, including written and verbal communication, presentations, working with others, problem solving, creativity, as well as collecting, analysing and presenting information.

In addition, thirty of the young people were awarded credits towards a recognised qualification. The Challenge engaged them and enabled them to be self-directional and self-motivated; it gave an opportunity for them to build their confidence and self-esteem, whilst at the same time doing something for the social good.

*I have more knowledge on how to stop anti-social behaviour in Reading and more confidence to share ideas on how to stop anti-social behaviour.*

**Stephane**

*I have gained more self-confidence and better understanding learnt from past mistakes.*

**Aaron**

*Thank you for all that you have done - for the time and help you have given us.*

**Nathaniel**

*Everyone involved in the project has felt extremely proud to be part of something so memorable and life changing."*

**Clare Wright, Managing Director, Connect Reading**

*Our students have achieved above their expectations. They have been challenged, engaged, motivated and succeeded. A wonderful initiative with fantastic results.*

**The Bulmershe School**

*The girls were selected as they had various emotional and social difficulties and some had very low self esteem. They have achieved so many things; working together despite differences of opinions, persevering and not giving up when the pressure got to them, and engaging really well in the Challenge and showing enthusiasm and dedication.*

**Reading Girls' School**

*It has been fascinating to watch this group of young people with all the issues they have grow and want something better for themselves. This has been the most incredible 12 week journey of highs and lows but wow what a journey!*

**Mentor, Microsoft**

*If I have made just one of those young people think for one moment that maybe they would like to put in that extra effort to find a good job and know that they are capable of that then all the effort is worthwhile."*

**Mentor, BG Group**

## Say Yes Challenges

The Say Yes Challenge, designed by **Say Yes UK**, is a unique mix of business and enterprise education combined with the real life social issues facing young people today. Every Challenge is tailored to meet the needs of the local community and to complement local strategies. At the centre of the Challenge is the concept of genuine youth empowerment through an active citizenship and a social enterprise approach.

[www.sayyesuk.com](http://www.sayyesuk.com)

If you would like to discuss the possibility of running a Say Yes Challenge or would like further information, please call, email, or log on to the Say Yes website.

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