

The therapeutic use of dance as a meaningful occupation;

With potential to address health inequalities of
black and ethnic minority adolescent females.

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Overview

- Background
- Health promotion
- Occupational Science: a unique perspective
- Dance as a “meaningful occupation”
- BME female adolescents an “at risk population”
- Research Proposal
- Conclusion

Background:

- Elective placement in voluntary sector
- Interest in Occupational Science and Health Promotion
- Personal interest and active involvement in dance
- Completion of certificate course in Dance Movement Therapy

Health Promotion

“...the process of enabling people to increase control over and help improve their health”

(WHO 1986 p.1)

- Move beyond the over emphasis on changing individual behaviours and lifestyles

(Mayo 2000)

- A more holistic approach to health promotion of young people is required

(Aggleton et 1998)

Occupational Science

- “Occupation Focused” approach to health promotion (Wilcock,2006)
- Need to address physical, mental, social and occupational well being
- Address particular risks to individuals' and communities' health
- Occupational risk factors: Imbalance, deprivation and alienation apartheid and injustice (Wilcock1998, 2006,Pollard et al 2006)

Dance as a “meaningful occupation”

“The body is an instrument of expression and a vehicle for discovery.”

(Fidler 1999, p.127)

- Unique properties: physical exercise, self expression, potentially offers “Flow experience”
(Csikszentmihalyi 1990)
- Dance has transforming potential (Huston 2006)
- Dance as an expression of identity (Poyce 2002)

BME females adolescents

- Exposed to health inequalities due to their “social identity” and “lived experience”
- Period of adolescence “turbulent teens”
- Culture and Identity important issues to consider
(Boas 2006, Watson 2006)
- Dance can enable BME females to explore and express their sense of identity and belonging
(Aken 2006, Kaiser 2006)

Research Proposal

- Pre-existing group of BME female adolescents (12-15yrs)
- 6 month programme
- Dance and learning/discussion group sessions
(Clark et al 1997)
- Ethnographic case study design
(Singer 2006)
- Observation, interviews, fieldwork diaries and use of reflexive approach
(Finlay 1998)

Conclusion

- Need to address risk factors for BME female adolescents
- Meaningful Occupation can promote health from a holistic viewpoint
- Dance has the potential to effectively promote health and well being by nature of its unique properties

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