

Report



Graffiti Club March 2013

The great thing about Graffiti club is how it takes something normally labelled as antisocial behaviour and turns it on its head to be a positive artistic activity within the framework of the Factory Skate Park Youth Programme. The club provides a space where the children are given the materials to explore and develop their ability at graffiti art and it shows them there is a place for that kind of art. This club was a very popular club because of its links with the skating culture, so it is something the children label as cool and a club that is always full, and the children that get a space are very excited to there.

The art of graffiti is about celebrating individuality, it is a way of branding yourself and expressing yourself, so there were parallels

between some of the things the children who attended media club had learned, which similarly focussed on using design and creativity to celebrate their personality. Some of the children started more confident than others, but each child soon learned that their contribution was as valuable as those next to them. We encouraged the children to work as a team on bigger sections of the wall and individually on their own designs to develop different areas of their interpersonal skills. They would listen and communicate with each other as they all worked on the same working space and shared the same equipment and this was rewarding to see.

The children were always excited to participate in graffiti club. Although there was a always supervision from the youth leaders and help was given when asked or needed, we tried to keep the space open and free for the children to express themselves and see what surfaced from that. They used ranges of colours, different textures and patterns, some sprayed words like 'Love' and 'wild', some sprayed logos, some sprayed their name and others built up pictures to make a scene. It was great to see their personalities, interests and talent come out in the work they did and they were always excited to show it off to their peers and family which showed a huge contrast in their confidence levels between coming into the club and going out.

This club was expressive and fun. It gave the children a chance to use materials they might not have used before or might not be able to afford. It was a club that looked positively at the art of graffiti as a means for expressing individuality and it reinforced the value of artistic skill within the community. It created a foundation of confidence and self belief in the children to go forward and develop those creative skills in their future, in a world that uses and values design and creativity everywhere we look.

