

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Greenwich
Unit of Assessment: (UoA 4) - Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience
Title of case study: Combating antisocial behaviour and pupils raising aspirations
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Reducing youth anti-social behaviour and raising young people’s educational aspirations are international priorities. Research carried out by the University of Greenwich has provided the basis for policy development on participation in higher education and has informed policy makers’ views about, and practitioners’ work on, anti-social behaviour in schools in the UK and more widely. The impact through partnerships with a local authority and a charity are also described, involving use of an assessment toolkit called the Emotion, Behaviour, Aspiration Toolkit (eBAT) to address factors that limit the aspirations and social mobility of young people. The work is located in the university’s Research Centre for Children Schools and Families, which has become a centre for research on anti-social behaviour:</p> <p>http://www2.gre.ac.uk/about/schools/health/research/healthsocial/ccsf.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Antisocial behaviour is the focus of political and media attention; reducing anti-social behaviour and raising young people’s achievements and aspirations are main priorities for policy makers. Between 2002 and 2005 Professor Pam Maras from the University of Greenwich was awarded funding under the government initiative, ‘Excellence in Cities’, to conduct a longitudinal study of 2,731 school students’ attitudes toward higher education [3.1]. The study was underpinned by Pam Maras’ previous work which found teachers were more concerned about children’s behaviour than special educational needs [3.2], and was linked to a programme of research by Pam Maras and colleagues at the University of Greenwich on aspirations and identity of young people with and without behavioural difficulties [3.3].</p> <p>The main findings showed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. young people’s differential identification with peers, family and school was related to their self-concept, attributions about school and subsequent behaviour and aspirations toward undertaking further and higher education and training on leaving school 2. the strength of young people’s social identification with peers, family and school changed in mid adolescence, when identification with school and family became weaker and identification with peers became stronger 3. the effects of this on young people’s current and future behaviour and aspirations, and potential effects on mental health in adulthood. <p>Of particular interest was the finding that most young people become more negative generally in mid adolescence. This was described by Pam Maras and colleagues at Greenwich as the ‘Year 10’ effect [3.4] and has been shown to occur in the UK and more widely; for example, in work by Pam Maras with colleagues in Australia [3.5] and China [3.6]. This negativity reduced as the adolescents got older – at about 16 or 17 years - except in children with Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, a finding linked to future depression in adulthood. Adolescents’ negativity was found to be related to how strongly they identified with their peers, family and school and to affect self-concept and aspirations. These findings have implications for policy and practice aimed at raising aspirations and reducing antisocial behaviour, particularly as many interventions are implemented during the age sensitive times described in Pam Maras’ work – ie Year 10 (14-15 years of age). Three related practical implications arise out of Pam Maras’ research programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Young people’s behaviour problems may be linked to special educational needs, and in such cases it is not appropriate to deal with anti-social behaviour <i>via</i> a discipline route. 2. Interventions need to vary in relation to the types and causes of difficulties, which are multi-faceted and complex and need to be evaluated on their effectiveness.

Impact case study (REF3b)

3. Schools and those working with young people need to take account of child development and age-related changes (such as the ‘Year 10 effect’). Because of these changes, interventions involving out of school activity that broaden experience and involve peers are most likely to have impact on adolescents’ behaviour and aspirations.

A psychometric measure called ‘**about me**’ was developed as part of the research programme to measure children’s self-concept and social identity. The ‘**about me**’ measure was incorporated into a tool-kit called the ‘Evaluation Behaviour and Aspiration Toolkit’ (**eBAT**), which is available for use by practitioners to assess the effectiveness of interventions. **Pam Maras** has recently been awarded a grant of £25,177 from the Higher Education Initiatives Fund to develop the ‘eBAT’ which is located in the **Research Centre for Children Schools and Families** (see also REF3a, REF5, <http://www2.gre.ac.uk/about/schools/health/research/healthsocial/ccsf/resources>)

3. References to the research (REF1 submitted staff in **bold**, **REF2 Output)

- 3.1 Maras, P.** (2007). “But no one in my family has been to University” Aiming Higher: School students’ attitudes to Higher Education. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 34(3), 69–90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF03216866>
- 3.2 **Maras, P.,** & Brown, R. (2000). Effects of different forms of school contact on children’s attitudes toward disabled and non- disabled peers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70(3), 337–351. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1348/000709900158164>
- 3.3 **Maras, P.,** Brosnan, M., Faulkner, N., Montgomery, T., & Vital, P. (2006). “They are out of control”: self- perceptions, risk- taking and attributional style of adolescents with SEBDs. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 11(4), 281–298. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13632750601043861>
- 3.4 **Maras, P.,** Carmichael, K., Patel, S., & Wills, J. (2007). “The trouble with Year 10.” 13 – 16 year old school students’ attitudes to higher education. *Social Psychology of Education*, 10(3), 375–397. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11218-007-9016-0>
- **3.5 Bornholt, L. J., **Maras, P. M.,** & Robinson, R. A. (2009). “I am–we are”: personal and social pathways to further study, work and family life. *Social Psychology of Education*, 12(3), 345–359. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11218-008-9085-8>
- **3.6 **Maras, P.,** Moon, A., & Zhu, L. (2013). Chinese and British adolescents’ academic selfconcept, social identity and behaviour in schools. *BJEP Monograph Series II, Number 9- Psychology and antisocial behaviour in school*, 1(1), 93-122

Evidence of research quality: research papers arising out of this work have been published and cited widely and findings presented by invitation at international congresses including in South Africa, China, Australia and SE East Asia. A full list can be found at:

<http://www2.gre.ac.uk/about/schools/health/about/departments/psycoun/staff/pam-maras>.

4. Details of the impact

The programme of research described in this case study has resulted in three forms of impact:

1. Contributions to policy development, eg invited contribution to the UK House of Commons Select Committee and policy recommendations by an Australian charity (The Smith Family)
2. The outcome of partnership projects, and practitioners’ use of the eBAT toolkit
3. Media and public engagement.

1. Contributions to policy development in UK and more widely

i. House of Commons Select Committee inquiry on Behaviour and Discipline in Schools

Pam Maras drew on findings from this case study to inform a response she co-authored from the British Psychological Society to the above inquiry. She was subsequently invited to be a witness and provide oral evidence drawing on findings from the case study to the Select Committee Inquiry on 13 October 2010. The first report of the inquiry, and the government’s response, addressed points raised by Pam Maras. For example, the report notes: “As [Professor Pam Maras] told us,

schools find it very difficult to interpret SEN policies in relation to behaviour, because, of course, behaviour is also dealt with through disciplinary action." The Government's response was linked to further points raised by Pam Maras (see p19, p9 and 30, p14), and a subsequent green paper on special educational needs and disability stated "a clear expectation that schools should invest in training their staff on identification of special educational needs and on links between special educational needs and behaviour", a point further stressed in the government commitment to "improving the initial training of, and continued professional development opportunities for teachers to make sure that the right focus is given to developing their knowledge of special educational needs and behaviour".

Pam Maras' evidence that there was a potential link between behaviour difficulties in adolescence and mental health problems in adulthood was also picked up in the government green paper, which stated: "Many young people with behavioural issues or SEN also have mental health problems. Schools face major challenges in securing specialist and therapeutic services in order to make accurate assessments of need and to implement appropriate interventions." The green paper proposed: "The Department of Health and the Department for Education should pilot, with a number of Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships, a mechanism by which they can commission CAMHS services accountable to them locally." (Paragraph 133) (see 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8)

ii. Westminster Briefing

Following the inquiry, Pam Maras took part in an invited Westminster Briefing on 14 July 2011 on 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools: New Strategies and A New Approach to Improve Standards'. Attendees included policy makers, head teachers and others involved with behaviour in schools (copy of invitation available).

iii. Policy recommendations by an educational charity in Australia (The Smith Family)

Pam Maras' programme of research underpinning this case study has also been utilised by an Australian NGO, 'The Smith Family', in recommendations in a report on school and communities' roles in enabling students to achieve their educational aspirations (see 5.9).

2. Engagement with external partners and use of 'about me' and eBAT

The following three examples of partnerships all utilised the eBAT toolkit:

i. The CROIS project

Findings from this case study informed an EU funded two year intervention called the CROIS project with schools and young people in the UK and France (<http://www.crois.eu/>) led by Pam Maras, which put in place activities to address factors that limit youth aspirations and social mobility. Non-academic partners in schools and policy were involved and there were significant changes in the aspirations of over 120 French and UK adolescents (see 5.10).

ii. Partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich Behaviour and Attendance Partnership

A collaborative project began in 2011 between **Greenwich Behaviour and Attendance Partnership** and Pam Maras. Drawing on research underlying case study, Pam Maras' research team worked with the Behaviour and Attendance team to enable them to work in an evidence-based way whilst maintaining a high quality service. The eBAT was made available to the team as a means of measuring the impact of interventions pre and post provision, in order to demonstrate the extent to which needs and targets were met and problems addressed (see 5.4).

iii. Greenwich Mencap 'GreenLights' project

GreenLights is a support service run by **Greenwich Mencap** for families of young people aged between 5 and 18 who have either a learning disability, a learning disability and autistic spectrum condition, or a learning disability and additional behavioural difficulties. Drawing on research outlined in this case study, Pam Maras' research team has been working in partnership with Greenwich Mencap for 18 months to demonstrate the effectiveness of GreenLights, including utilising the eBAT tools for pre and post testing intervention measures, and developing a programme to train people to administer the GreenLights project and improve its sustainability.

Impact case study (REF3b)

Initial work was funded by a National Lottery award to Greenwich Mencap. Pam Maras has been awarded an Innovation, Diffusion and Excellence award in Healthcare Education and Training from South London Health Authority (£43,577) to disseminate outcomes of the partnership (see 5.2).

3. Media and public engagement

Public engagement and dissemination are important features of both Pam Maras' research programme and that of the **Applied Psychology Research Group (APRG)** at the University of Greenwich: examples of this can be found in media activity and engagement with a wider audience including via a twitter feed: https://twitter.com/RC_CSF, user-friendly reports and partnership involvement which are publicised on the **Research Centre for Children Schools and Families website**. Findings of the research programme on which this case study is based have been shared via paper and virtual media, as well as in broadcast media in UK and more widely. For example, Pam Maras was interviewed by the Chinese Broadcasting Company, in 2008, on this work and was an invited panel member on Radio Russia on April 4, 2012, to discuss equipping those in the teaching profession to be able to work with the wide range of issues relating to students with behaviour problems (see 5.3).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

Corroborative contacts

- 5.1 Greenwich Mencap – letter available
- 5.2 Chinese Broadcasting Company – letter available
- 5.3 Voice of Russia Radio – letter available
- 5.4 Royal Borough of Greenwich Behaviour and Attendance Service – letter available

Sources to corroborate impact

- 5.5 British Psychological Society evidence to the House of Commons Education Select Committee Inquiry into Discipline and Antisocial Behaviour in Schools
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmeduc/516/516we04.htm>
- 5.6 Video link to oral evidence and transcript of that evidence, documented throughout, beginning on pEV1. House of Commons Education Committee (2010). Behaviour and Discipline in Schools. First Report of Session 2010–11. Video of evidence on Wednesday 13 October 2013: <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=6670> transcript of that video: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmeduc/516/10101301.htm>
- 5.7 Report of the House of Commons Select Committee inquiry into Behavioural and Discipline in Schools referred to above (5.6) Volume I: together with formal minutes. Published on 3 February 2011 by authority of the House of Commons. London: The Stationery Office Limited. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmeduc/516/51602.htm>
- 5.8 Government's Response to the Report of the House of Commons Select Committee inquiry into Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, which addresses two points linked to those raised by Pam Maras (detailed in s 19, p9 and 30, p14) can be found in the appendix to the above document (House of Commons Education Committee (2011). Behaviour and discipline in schools. First report of session 2010-2011. Volume I: Report, together with formal minutes. London. The Stationery Office).
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmeduc/1316/1316.pdf>
- 5.9 Williams, I. (2011). *Preparing students for the transition to work or further study. Engaging students: Building aspirations*. Sydney: The Smith Family. Recommendations and implications for policy and practice are detailed in the report summary (p6, paragraph 3). Williams, I. (2011).
<http://www.thsmithfamily.com.au/~media/Files/Research%20and%20Publications/Research%20and%20Advocacy%20PDFs/Research%20and%20Evaluation%20page%20PDFs/engaging-students-summary-2011.ashx>
- 5.10 The CROIS project: <http://www.crois.eu/> and <http://www2.gre.ac.uk/about/schools/health/research/healthsocial/ccsf/project>.