

BOUNCE

AN EVALUATION FOR OILY CART

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Oily Cart: 'BOUNCE'

1 INTRODUCTION

Oily Cart, established 32 years ago, creates highly interactive and multi-sensory theatre for very young children under six and young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) and/or an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

This report focuses on an evaluation of Oily Cart 'BOUNCE' performances, drawing on audience feedback to explore:

- i. The extent to which BOUNCE was relevant, engaging and beneficial for children with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) as well as children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
- ii. The ways in which BOUNCE had been perceived as being relevant and engaging;
- iii. The specific ways in which BOUNCE had fostered beneficial changes in young people's behaviour, mood, or general responses;
- iv. The extent to which BOUNCE had influenced the practice of teachers, carers and parents, in the classroom and/or at home;
- v. The specific ways in which BOUNCE had been perceived as beneficial to the practice of teachers, carers and parents.

2 METHODS

An audience feedback questionnaire comprised four key questions relating to 1) the relevance of the show in terms of meeting the needs of the target audience; 2) the extent to which young people had been engaged in the show; 3) the extent to which the show had fostered beneficial change amongst the young people who attended; and 4) the extent to which the show had been beneficial for practice in the classroom and at home. The four key questions were framed as Likert scales, with five response categories ranging from negative to positive.

In addition to the Likert scales, each question was accompanied by a space where questionnaire respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their answers, providing examples and detail that would help Oily Cart to understand the processes by which BOUNCE had or had not been effective in achieving the company's aims and objectives. There was also a space for general feedback.

All of the quantitative data were entered into SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics were produced. The qualitative data were entered into NVivo, a qualitative analysis software tool. A framework of themes was developed, emerging from the qualitative responses.

3 PARTICIPANTS

Forty feedback questionnaires were completed by adults accompanying young people at BOUNCE performances. Twenty responses were from those who attended the BOUNCE performance for young people identified as ASD, while 22 were from those who attended the BOUNCE performance for young people identified with PMLD.

Twenty responses were from teachers or carers accompanying pupils at performances in eight schools, while 17 were from teachers, parents or carers who accompanied young people at performances held in six other performance venues. Five did not state whether they attended at a school or another venue.

The feedback responses represented accompanying adults for a total of 100 young people who participated in a series of BOUNCE performances. Amongst those young people, the majority (67) were aged between 5 and 10 years old. The remainder included nine children aged four or younger; nine children aged 11 – 15; and 15 young people aged 16 or older.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 RELEVANCE OF BOUNCE

All of the questionnaire respondents who responded to this question indicated that the show was relevant to the needs of their children. The majority (85%) indicated that it was 'completely relevant' (Table 1).

Table 1: Relevance of BOUNCE

		Do you think this show was relevant to the needs of your children?		
		Relevant	Completely relevant	Total (100%)
	ASD Bounce	4	16	20
		20.0%	80.0%	
	PMLD Bounce	2	19	21
		9.5%	90.5%	
Total		6	35	41
		14.6%	85.4%	
Did not answer				1

The key characteristics of the show that contributed to its relevance were:

- BOUNCE was **child-led and responsive**
- BOUNCE was **interactive**
- BOUNCE was **personalized**
- BOUNCE met the **multi-sensory** needs of the audience participants
- BOUNCE had an **appropriate structure**

INTERACTIVE

Great to see the team weren't afraid to get so involved with the children.

The staff were absolutely outstanding. They acted with the pupils as if they had known them for years.

Characters were fantastic and the music was very effective to engage the children. They were in tune with the children and knew when to change and adapt the music and content to the children.

The multi-sensory experience was highly valued. This was delivered with an excellent range of appropriate resources and:

- Effective use of **music**
- Effective use of **visual stimuli**, including colourful lighting, costumes and video
- **Physical stimulation** provided through stretching and bouncing

RELEVANCE

Very interactive and child led. Adults were responsive and took time with pupils, catered to all senses.

My son has multi-sensory loss and the sensory component of it was great for him. He responded really well to it and would have loved it to have

MULTI-SENSORY

Lighting, sound, rhythms, sensory experience was amazing.

The sensory toys (springs, balls, bath puffs) were great for him to play with prior to the performance and the singing in the performance really engaged him, not to mention the torches and of course the trampoline.

Very effective combination of music, lighting and movement. Perfect for our son.

4.2 ENGAGEMENT IN BOUNCE

A large majority (93%) of respondents indicated that the young people they had accompanied to BOUNCE had been very engaged with the performance (Table 2). Just one respondent to this question indicated a ‘neutral’ response; as compared with 39 who indicated they had observed positive engagement.

Table 2: Engagement in BOUNCE

		Do you think this performance engaged your students			Total (100%)
		Neutral	Quite engaged	Very engaged	
Questionnaire version	ASD Bounce	0	1 5.3%	18 94.7%	19
	PMLD Bounce	1 4.8%	1 4.8%	19 90.5%	21
Total		1 2.5%	2 5.0%	37 92.5%	40
Did not answer					2

ENGAGED

My son enjoyed it so much. I was quite emotional over his engagement and reactions.

Very engaging for our children – a wonderful range of activities from calm to bounce. Something for all.

4.3 BENEFITS FOR THE BOUNCE AUDIENCE PARTICIPANTS

Questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they thought BOUNCE had been beneficial for their students. Thirty-six individuals responded; of these, 32 indicated that the performance had been ‘very beneficial, while just four said it had been ‘quite beneficial (Table 3).

Table 3: Benefits for BOUNCE participants

		Was this performance beneficial to your students?		Total (100%)
		Quite beneficial	Very beneficial	
Questionnaire version	ASD Bounce	2	15	17
		11.8%	88.2%	
	PMLD Bounce	2	17	19
		10.5%	89.5%	
Total		4	32	36
		11.1%	88.9%	
Did not answer				6

Several positive changes were noted. The accompanying adults reported that the young people:

- Became more **calm**
- Became **happy and joyful**
- Responded with **positive communication** and interaction
- Were **focused and alert**
- Demonstrated sustained **concentration**

Very beneficial for our young children- a chance to express themselves with your help in their own creative way. No judgments. Thank you so much.

POSITIVE RESPONSES

Noticeably calmer and also alerting for some students. Staff commented on how communicative the students were when they were engaging in activities.

Very alert and wide-eyed after performance!

Kept their attention for the full time.

The children were calmer. The pupils that don't normally respond to things showed happy reactions. Thank you for an amazing experience.

4.4 IMPACT ON PRACTICE

Twelve respondents indicated the extent to which they thought BOUNCE had impacted on their practice. Of these, nine said it had been very beneficial and three said it had been quite beneficial (Table 4).

Table 4: Impact on practice

		How beneficial did you find the performance to your practice?		Total (100%)
		Quite beneficial	Very beneficial	
Questionnaire version	ASD Bounce	1	3	4
		25.0%	75.0%	
	PMLD Bounce	2	6	8
		25.0%	75.0%	
Total		3	9	12
		25.0%	75.0%	
Did not answer				30

Key areas of impact were:

- BOUNCE was **inspirational**
- BOUNCE provided **ideas** for multi-sensory activities
- BOUNCE **modeled activities** using a range of **accessible resources**

IMPACT

I would love to work in a similar way with some of the students I teach – inspiring.

This performance showed me how the simplest techniques can be so effective. More music, more sensory activities for certain children.

Good reminder of intensive interaction.

Yes, some great ideas on sensory resources and engagement.

It has made me reconsider practice for both ASD and PMLD.