

Open Space Technology

Innes Asher facilitated setting forum topics and leaders

Leader: Barbara Lambourn.

Topic: Work through/critically assess the recommendations for alleviating child poverty from the Every Child Counts Summit.

- Points of activism:
 - Continue to build alliances/inform/encourage: local government, arts, media, churches
 - Reframe debates eg tax reform; make voices heard
 - Submissions beyond NZ eg UK Child Poverty Bill with CPAG (NZers not aware)
 - Strategic alliances: Growing up in NZ, a longitudinal study of 7,000 families will provide information to drive policy change and influence questions
 - Cost of poverty needs attention and awareness eg submission to Tax Working Group, website, public meeting 1 December.
 - Reframe the tax debate with a child focus & clear expectations
 - Responsibility of all eg climate change will compound poverty issues
 - Lobby for the creation of Minister for Children role - senior ranking, with a budget.
 - Child Impact Assessments - OCC monitor
 - Core benefits increased
 - Set legislated targets for elimination of child poverty by 2020 (as UK Bill)
 - Media: uncover poverty effects eg art; Photovoices; move beyond blaming victims
- Key learnings:
 - Media: share messages; shape script eg film "Once were warriors" showed how "art" can change the way a social problem is viewed: making audience see and think about impact of violence on the family and how women/children become trapped in the cycle; hope, too, it stopped audience from assuming that it was the victim's fault.
 - Photovoices
 - Find champions/inter-agency beyond the sector
 - Pass on activist skills
 - Get angry/make a noise

Leader Taaz Harrison

Topic: Practical programmes to teach children how to grow food

- Points of activism:
 - food brings people together
 - all schools could have gardens
 - Gardens promote life-long learning as well as health
 - Knowledge of growing food gives children power
 - gardening promotes caring for the environment; nurturing; and co-operation
 - it takes trees 2-3 years to bear fruit, but vegetables and herbs grow in a season
 - research: see if this is happening in any schools eg Otahuhu Intermediate School
 - approach major plant producers/garden centres for donations
 - Engage local govt; Maori TV; have inter-school garden competitions
- Key learnings:
 - need to engage school principals and BoTs
 - Need a marketing tool to capture interest and support of parents and school staff
 - start with quick-growing high-success plants eg lettuce, tomatoes, potatoes
 - could be an activity to attract community volunteers into schools
 - This can be done. There is no excuse not to do it.

Leaders: Sue Bradford and David Kenkel

Topic: How do we regain influence over how we make sense of the world, or media strategies

- Points of activism:
 - Need for communication spaces and generative spaces
 - Be strategic and practical as well as honest and ethical and practical
- Key learnings:
 - Present alternatives
 - Use some tools of the right
 - Branding (ethically) is ok if we choose the words
 - Be driven by vision framed in our own words
 - Seek meta-narrative of better future

Leader: Nicola McDonald.

Topic: Whanau ora strategies to mobilize and impact on child poverty

- Points of activism:
 - Healthy whanau are engaged in decisions
 - Generate hope through a community vision
 - Unified and multi-disciplinary messages: consistency
 - Unified and multi-disciplinary actions: sustainability
- Key learning:
 - Health of our mokopuna is a gauge or measure of the health of our communities



Leader: Josh Paki.

Topic: Taking art/graffiti as a tool for growing community and communication

- Points of activism:
 - Use Smith's 14 lessons to advance alternative education, especially for Maori boys.
- Key learnings:
 - Graffiti as legitimate expression of creativity and identity and belonging;
 - course availability created by delegation of authority;
 - need for enduring presence, funding, and space;
 - Kaikohe experience led to shared understandings between shop-owners and artists and to artists valuing education.

Leaders: Karen Davis & Kate Peirse.

Topic: Climate change/climate justice

Question: what is the fundamental link between climate change and social justice?

Answer: addressing both issues requires a solid community foundation. We need to promote communal values and develop communal resources at local and national levels to halt climate change, and further social justice.

- Points of activism: How do we combine child poverty activism and climate change activism?
 - Campaign for a comprehensive home insulation policy
 - Campaign for lower tax for the lower socio-economic brackets, with the money gap being filled by heavy polluters
 - Set up communal gardens / fruit trees / organic food co-ops in schools
NB Auckland University's Sustainability Network is a working model of this
 - Make a noise and get angry about social justice for future generations: those children who aren't born yet, but will have to deal with the most drastic effects of climate change. Note also our Pacific neighbours who will feel the effects more immediately: rising sea levels = possible influx of refugees
- Key learnings: Child poverty restricts children's access to necessities. To improve access to housing, food, medical care etc we can:
 - increase parents' incomes (through tax breaks, increased benefits, higher min. wages)
 - provide those necessities at a subsidised rate / for free