

SHOWCASING AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMME PRACTICE

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This learning brief was produced by The Learning Trust in partnership with the Sozo Foundation, Boost Africa Foundation, Butterfly Art Project, Cool Play, and Thuma Mina. It emerged from a Community of Practice (CoP) hosted by the Sozo Foundation in the Western Cape, aimed at showcasing effective programme models that drive impact.

BUILDING SAFE SPACES AND STRONG FUTURES IN VRYGROND

The Sozo Foundation, based in Vrygrond, Western Cape, is pursuing the dream of establishing a high school to provide a safe, nurturing environment for learners. Serving a community of 45,000 people in just 1 km², Sozo contends with challenges like gang recruitment and limited safe spaces.

They emphasise knowing their "why" and maintaining adaptability through community-driven staffing, wellness-centred approaches, and strategic partnerships.

Their use of effective software systems for operations and tracking data ensures cost-efficiency and impact. Through careful monitoring and evaluation (MEL), Sozo remains committed to ongoing learning, improvement, and the pursuit of long-term, meaningful change for its learners.

As ASPs we know that we cannot do everything ourselves. We often don't have the expertise or time to offer our learners all the programmes they want and need.

The topic of this CoP was chosen to help ASPs connect with other organisations and identify models that could be adapted and incorporated into their programmes to enrich the experience for children and youth and drive learning outcomes.

Key Takeaways to improve your after-school programming include:

- Create safe and supportive spaces
- Develop skills through personal reflection
- Foster creativity without fear of mistakes
- Focus on relationships and emotional awareness
- Understand your "why" and adapt programmes and models to your context



BOOST AFRICA: FOSTERING OPTIMISM AND EMPATHY IN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

[Boost Africa Foundation](#) is based in Du Noon, Cape Town. Their model mobilises local Moms to provide after-school storytelling activities for grade 4-7 to develop their emotional intelligence. The key elements of their model are:



Building Optimism and Empathy:

Introduce optimism and hope into learners' lives by observing and understanding each child's needs and help create a sense of belonging.



Safe Learning Environment:

create a safe space where learners feel supported. This is achieved through activities like check-ins, using simple cues like colours or facial expressions to communicate emotions.



Personal Connection and Encouragement:

Boost's model encourages using personally relatable stories, linking them to the learners' experiences, and engaging through voice and tone. Sitting at eye level with children ensures a sense of equality, fostering open communication.



Affirmations and Inclusivity:

Boost Africa uses positive affirmations, such as claps, clicks, or simple expressions of gratitude. Every answer is acknowledged to create an environment where "there are no wrong answers."



Reflective and Thoughtful Dialogue:

Activities include asking children about family routines and encouraging them to share personal reflections. This helps learners connect with themselves and others, understanding that people can be different without being "better or worse."

“Providing a consistent daily rhythm where a caring adult checks in with every child fosters a feeling of safety and stability.”

— Elbie Postma Botha
Boost Africa Foundation

COOLPLAY: SO MUCH MORE THAN SPORT

CoolPlay offers sport for development programmes after school for learners aged 5 – 18. The programme gives young people access to positive adult role, constructive peer relationships and are encouraged to take on new challenges and develop valuable life skills. This is done through a specialised curriculum that develops social and emotional learning. Some key elements include:



Skill and Character Building:

CoolPlay's model revolves around defining skills and characteristics. Learners reflect on what they admire in others and discuss those traits to build self-awareness and character.



Reflective Thinking: The programme encourages learners to think internally about their strengths and abilities. Questions like "What do you think makes this the strongest?" Bradwin, Coolplay, prompt reflection, which helps to build strong, resilient individuals.



Internal Locus of Control: A core idea is fostering an "internal locus of control," encouraging learners to realise that traits like discipline, determination, and knowledge are internal assets that cannot be taken away from them.



Role Models and Inspiration:

Learners identify role models, explore their characteristics, and discuss how they can embody those traits. This approach helps them set personal goals and builds motivation.



“What do you think makes this the strongest?”

— Bradwin Louis
CoolPlay

BUTTERFLY ART PROJECT (BAP): CREATIVITY WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

BAP's mission is to support children's healing from trauma through art. Their model is designed to ensure maximum impact in the lives of children through guiding and supporting adults to be trained Community Art Facilitators. Key elements of their therapeutic art model are:

- **Creative Freedom:** BAP promotes creativity without judgement, using the principle that "there is no right or wrong in art." This encourages children to express themselves freely.
- **Blind Drawing and Creative Expansion:** Activities like drawing with eyes closed, then expanding on the drawing with colours and filling the page, help children move beyond perfectionism and explore creativity in a relaxed way.
- **Access to Resources:** BAP provides games and activities online, regularly updated to keep content fresh and engaging. These activities encourage creativity and help learners develop confidence through artistic expression. You can access them at this [link here](#).

“There is no right or wrong in art”

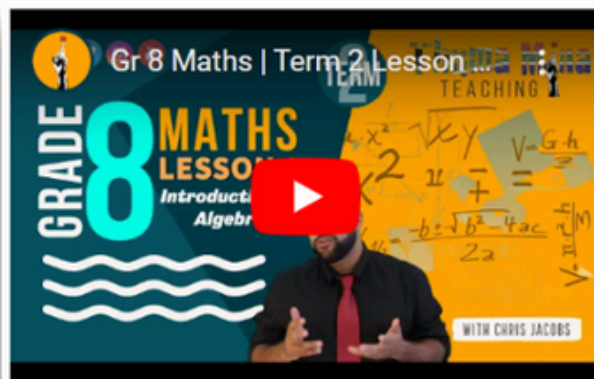
— Zaid Philander
Butterfly Art Project



THUMA MINA: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT MODEL

Thuma Mina seeks to improve South African education and close the inequality gap by enriching teaching and learning through captivating video-lessons and materials for Grade 7-9. These free, easily accessible videos and activities can be accessed online by schools, ASPs, and individuals. Important aspects of their model include:

- Community-Led Support:** Thuma Mina's model is built on empowering communities by actively involving learners, their families, and local stakeholders in the development of educational materials.
- Joyful Learning:** They emphasise the importance of making learning fun and relatable. Their captivating videos are created by high-performing teachers who understand the learners' needs and how they learn.
- Checking for Understanding:** Their videos are designed to be watched and engaged with. Alongside the videos they provide activity sheets and quizzes that keep learners interested, and help to check their conceptual understanding before moving on



Lesson 1: Introduction to Algebra

Lesson 1 Activity



Lesson 2: Like Terms

HOW THESE MODELS CAN BE APPLIED IN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

1. **Safe and Supportive Spaces:** Create an environment that emphasises empathy, regular check-ins, and positive affirmations to help children feel secure and valued.
2. **Internal Character Building:** Focus on helping learners identify skills and qualities they admire and develop an internal foundation of resilience and determination.
3. **Embrace Creativity:** Incorporate creative activities that remove the pressure of perfection, allowing learners to express themselves without the fear of making mistakes.
4. **Personal Connections:** Use learners' personal stories and experiences to create relevant, engaging content that connects them emotionally to the programme.



The most important takeaway is that there are hundreds of models and curricula out there. Explore these models and reach out to other organisations to engage in how they implement their programmes. There might just be a collaboration opportunity, or resources available, or a new supportive friendship awaiting you!

This learning brief was produced in partnership with:



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