

Akademi 'Who We Are' project press release November 2011

"I have learnt how we can use creativity to support our children" - Participant (Adult/ Parent), Who We Are

"Saturdays are now fun!" – Participant (Child), Who We Are

"I have been doing better at school" – Participant (Child), Who We Are

"I Have learned so much about how my children learn in a public environment" - Participant (Adult/ Parent), Who We Are

In September 2011 Akademi was awarded the Inspire Mark for their 'Who We Are' project by the London 2012 Inspire Programme. The London 2012 Inspire programme recognises innovative and exceptional projects that are directly inspired by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Akademi's vision for 'Who We Are' was to create time and space for families to learn together, have fun together and explore their cultural histories together. Families across Barnet and Brent celebrate their unique, culturally diverse Capital through a series of creative learning sessions which reflect London's rich cultural identity in the range of cross-art forms offered, such as: dance, performing arts, story-telling, visual arts, textiles, crafts and music.

The programme is funded by Big Lottery to work with some of the most disadvantaged families with children between the ages of 9 to 11 years from BAMER communities in the boroughs of Barnet and Brent.

As well as learning new skills in a range of art forms, participants play important roles in shaping the project with Akademi artists, inspiring them to take ownership of the project; feel empowered in making a positive for themselves, their families and their peers; develop communication and interpersonal (social) skills as well as emotional literacy.

Parents and carers have taken roles and responsibilities such as translators, outreach workers and support staff so that they feel they have the opportunity to develop skills and progress alongside their children. This framework has proved integral to the success of the project. As has our strong model partnerships which have allowed us to gain a deep understanding of family needs and create an active support network with and for them which also teaches us as an arts organisation why the arts and cultural activity benefits some of the most disadvantaged local communities. Each week families reflect on their achievements and add to family journals to capture their memories and celebrate new skills learnt.

Watch our film [here](#) or request a DVD from jess@akademi.co.uk; 0207 691 3210