PROJECTION DIRECTIONS

How to Re-Create and Expand Projection in Your Org, School, or Community

Projection Creator, Aleah Starr

Make a Statement: Projection is an artistic model that allows those who use it to interact with challenging personal material in a creative way and to speak out anonymously about an issue that matters to them. Follow these easy step-by-step instructions and you can use Projection to address issues such as eating disorders, media stereotypes, bullying or harassment, alcoholism, domestic violence, dating and relationships, or any of the "isms" and "phobias" that live in our schools and communities, like sexism, racism, or homophobia.

Projecting, Step-By-Step:

1. *Decide on an issue:* What issue do you want to confront head on? What struggles surface repeatedly in your organization, school, or community? What stories are people dying to tell? What issues do they want to discuss? What stereotypes do they want to talk back to? The best way to find out is to ask, listen, and observe.
2. *Call for Submissions:* Once you've chosen an issue, you'll need to decide on a "prompt". At the SPARK Summit, we used the prompt: "If you could talk back to media, what would you say?" Aleah's original project on eating disorders asked, simply, "What's your story?" Remember that you can only project so many words on a T-shirt, so we recommend you send out a call for 6-10 word responses to your prompt. If you want to invite richer stories, let people know you will select a short piece of their story to project. Encourage people to submit in whatever form they

feel best captures the nature of their experience (i.e., statements, poetry, illustrations, etc). If they choose a song lyric or a selection from a published poem or bit of prose, ask them to submit the author too.

3. ***Create a Safe System for Submissions:*** The fact that all submissions to Projection are anonymous is an incredibly important part of the project. Make sure that you establish a secure system for collecting submissions (i.e., a mailbox in a protected area or a process that ensures anonymity, such as passing out identical sheets of paper to be folded and dropped, unsigned, into a hat) before you ask people to contribute.

4. ***Recruit Photographers:*** Recruit youth artists from within your school, org, or from the surrounding community to volunteer as Projection photographers. Photographers should have access to a digital camera.

5. ***Recruit Models:*** Encourage students or youth members to support their peers and adults to support youth in their school or organization by volunteering to be "canvases" for those who have submitted their stories, thoughts, and feelings. It is important to stress that models do not need to have a personal investment in the issue at hand in order to participate. Remind all participants to wear white shirts to the open studio event. You may want to purchase a few inexpensive white T-shirts in different sizes to have on hand, in case your models forget.

6. ***Collect and Prepare Submissions:*** In order to project the submissions onto the bodies of the models, all testimonials must be uploaded into a Microsoft Word document. In preparation for the open studio event, copy and paste individual submissions into text boxes so that the writing can be moved "to fit the model" while he or she is being photographed.

7. ***Host an Open Studio Event:*** A Projection open studio event requires an overhead projector and the participation of all models and photographers. Models attend the event wearing white t-shirts and pose in front of the projected text to be photographed. Photographers and assistants move the text submissions on their screens to best fit the bodies of the models. If your topic is sensitive, has the potential to trigger an emotional response or invites questions, it is also strongly advised to invite local experts or therapists to speak on behalf of their organization and present those in attendance with information and resources.

8. Finally, create a PPT slide show of your photographs to show the school or community. Be sure to gather informed consent forms from your contributors and your models beforehand. You might also want to create and show a video of your images using an inexpensive video platform like Animoto: http://animoto.com.

That's it! Project from your organization, school, or community, and send us your fave photos, along with the "prompts" you used so we can post them for all to see!