



Preliminary report: Key findings

For 150 years, Scripture Union has been sharing the good news with children and young people. From the first spontaneous beach missions in Llandudno, to the award-winning gaming app *Guardians of Ancora*, Scripture Union has been committed to pioneering new ways of introducing children and young people to Jesus. Since launching *The 95 Campaign* almost twelve months ago, we've been trialling and evaluating many new types of mission across England and Wales. A full report from that period will be available very soon, collating our observations along with insights gathered from conversations with many of you. In the meantime, we're pleased to be able to share some key findings from our preliminary evaluations so you can put the recommendations into action straightaway.

PRAY

Teams that reported prayer support were more likely to report success in meeting their objectives. We believe that God answers prayer, so no surprises there!

There is also a psychological impact of having a hope that difficulties can be overcome, and knowing that others are supportive of the work.

Teams reported that prayer resulted in changes in behaviour and attitudes, and the provision of finances and volunteers.

Prayer support was frequently cited as a means of widening the base of people involved in the mission. It is an opportunity for those who can't help practically (often because of physical conditions or working hours) to be involved.

Prayer support from a wider group raised the profile of mission within the Christian community.

RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

We can't overestimate the importance of researching and understanding the context.

The socioeconomic status of the area had significant implications on the mission's timings, location, duration and level of parental involvement.

Mission that addressed the needs of the families as well as children were often able to maintain long-lasting relationships.

Missions that were responding to social local needs were also often given opportunities to extend their reach and received support from external agencies.

Many localities had pockets of poverty but community missions frequently connected with only one group – either the affluent or the deprived. Few activities connected with both groups; the ones that did tended to be educational or specialist interest.

AGREE OBJECTIVES AND HAVE A CLEAR VISION

Teams that had set objectives and had a shared vision were more likely to meet objectives.

When you think about it, it's obvious that you're more likely to achieve something when you know what you're aiming for. Ensuring that there is clarity and agreement about the vision is key.

Teams frequently had very limited finances and people-power. It was therefore important that objectives were clear so that work could be prioritised effectively.

Teams that were well-prepared felt more confident about what they were doing and were more likely to report that they had met their objectives.

FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS OVER THE PROGRAMME

Missions that built in time to focus on building relationships rather than an activity-filled programme gave more opportunities for children and young people to explore faith and respond.

Many successful projects included a residential event as part of their programme to enable more quality time together.

Large scale one-off or annual events required significant input and effort to organise. Whilst these events were memorable for children and young people, they tended to remember the experience of the event rather than the relationships.