

# Skate Park Proposal

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Construction of a  
Skate Park and youth centre  
in Phuket  
Thailand

2011

Submitted by:  
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Part of the New Life Foundation

## Executive Summary



SHE (Self Help and Empowerment) was started in 2006 by co-founders Mark and Sharon Biddell. SHE works with women and children marginalized and at risk with the majority working in the bars and commercial sex industry of Patong. . *SHE* is presently helping women at risk by operating a centre which offers a safe environment, vocational training in jewelery making, baking, education programmes, counselling, rehabilitation and sustainable employment opportunities. Since starting *SHE* they have helped well over 150 women by giving either employment, a new skill set, a home or help to reunite them with their families

*SHE* now wants to help the youth that live in Phuket have a safe place to go away from the temptation of drinks and drugs that are on offer around every corner. A place where they have ownership to “hang out” and relax and make friends, learn a sport and have a healthier lifestyle.

***We want to meet all these needs by building Phuket's first Skate Park!***



## The Proposal at a Glance

### Project title: Phuket Skate Park.

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#### Project Goal:

- To construct and manage a skate park and youth centre in Phuket.
  - To run the skate park with young adults that will be good role models to our youth.
  - To give parents peace of mind knowing their teenagers are off the streets in a safe and secure environment.
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#### Expected Outcomes:

- Youth will learn an new and competitive sport that is currently unavailable in Phuket.
  - Healthier and happier children
  - Decrease in crime and vandalism bought about through boredom.
  - Decrease in youth turning to drink and drugs.
  - Decrease in gangs of youth skating on the streets and private property
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**Project Duration:** 4 months construction Phase.

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#### Budget summary:

SHE requires **900,000.Baht** (\$30,000USD) for the construction of the skate park  
SHE will lease 1 rai (1/2 acre) of land on a long term contract.  
SHE will contribute project management throughout the construction phase.  
SHE will manage the park on an ongoing basis free of charge

## Need Assessment

Our needs assessment for the project was completed for us when we saw an 11 year old boys plea for a skatepark in the Phuket News article *“Talented skater makes appeal for support”* SHE was touched by Waroon's plea for support and so we offered to help to make this dream a reality. The Phuket News wrote a second article asking again for help from local businesses *“Skate dream a step closer”* which is below:

“Eleven-year-old skater **Waroon Deesombat’s** dream of a skate park in Phuket may come true after a non profit group put their hand up to support the idea, and is now looking for sponsors to help fund the project.

Last month 11-year-old Phuket student and passionate skater Waroon Deesombat was featured in The Phuket News appealing for a skate park to entertain youth and keep them out of trouble. His pleas to several local authorities fell on deaf ears, but his story prompted Sharon Biddell from the Self Help and Empowerment charity (SHE) to want to help. SHE is a non-profit group which helps women and children at risk in Phuket and Thailand, including many involved in the sex trade. “When we read Waroon’s story, my 20-year-old son said he also believed Phuket was in desperate need of a skate park,” Mrs Biddell said.

Her husband and organisation co-founder Mark agreed, and said the project would be great to ensure children had people around who cared for them, and for parents to know where their children were. It may also help prevent children turning to drugs. “Phuket is a beautiful tourist attraction that is being developed quickly and is internationally known as a place of beauty and relaxation. The increase in industry and wealth coming in to the area brings with it an increase in crime, drugs, and illegal activity,” he said.

The couple said they were now exploring options of a site for the proposed skate park (somewhere in the wider Phuket Town area) with the help of Waroon’s family. All the group needed now was a cash injection from keen sponsors.

“SHE has a plan and a vision to reach out and help the community create this haven for skaters. We are looking for partners who share this vision and desire with us to give the youth a place of safety and, in the long run, an alternative to taking to the streets to make friends and skate. “We would be able to staff the skate park with volunteers that care about the community and the well-being of the skaters. The skate park would be open in the evenings and give the youth a place to come after school activities have finished for the day,” Mrs Biddell said.

Mrs Biddell said allowing the island’s youth to step up and have their voices heard would give them a sense of purpose.

“Consider this an investment into the future of our community, of our youth, and of Thailand,” she said. “If we believe our future is in the generation that we are raising we need to stand up and invest in them by acknowledging their ideas and dreams.

“Waroon will soon be the new generation of leaders in Thailand. He is standing up and is making a suggestion by requesting that a skate park be constructed in the area. He sees the poor decisions that people are making in society and he has a desire to create a safe environment where they are able to work towards a skill. “If we can create a community for the youth and keep them busy then they will not turn to drugs, alcohol or the streets. A skate park would create a community for the youth, somewhere to make friends that are like minded and dedicated to the sport.”



## Project Objectives

### Why are skateparks beneficial to communities?

There are many benefits to skateparks. They provide community value in five significant ways;

#### Social Benefits

- Skateparks provide a place for kids who aren't attracted to traditional team sports a place to go and express themselves in an individual and athletic manner. Getting kids, particularly at-risk kids, involved in a personal and esteem-building activity like skateboarding helps them build the confidence to do well in other aspects of their lives.
- Skateparks provide a place for local youth to meet, socialize, and develop friendships based on a common, healthy interest. The bonds of friendship based on a mutual interest in skating often last a lifetime.

#### Health and Developmental Benefits

- Providing recreational opportunities to young children helps them develop healthy, active lifestyles, and the growing popularity of skateboarding is encouraging more and more people to go outside and roll. On average skaters are between 12 and 17 years old. These are formative years in a youth's life and developing a habitual desire for physical recreation is essential to a healthy future.
- Skateboarding is physically active and requires, at times, great concentration. It encourages children to spend time outdoors, tests their endurance, sharpens their senses, and develops their creativity. Skateboarding requires no coaches and suggests no standardized approach to riding a skatepark. Skaters are free to ride in their own way, to their own abilities, and encouraged to pursue their own style of skating. Many people who started in their teens still enjoy skateboarding well into their 50s.
- Youth in low-income areas are particularly prone to health issues related to lack of exercise due to the expense of equipment and travel, or lack of leisure time. For these communities a local skatepark becomes an effective tool that teaches healthy, athletic living at an impressionable age.

#### Public Comfort and Safety Benefits

- There is not one skatepark in the whole of Phuket, actually the nearest is as far as Bangkok. That means the vast majority of skaters are skating in the streets. Over 90% of deaths involving skateboards in the U.S. occur outside of skateparks. Most of these tragedies also involve a motor vehicle. Skateparks, even the more challenging ones, are far safer than kids rolling through busy streets. Phuket's rise in skaters may incur the same drastic results as the United States if we don't provide our youth with a purpose built place to skate, roller blade and stunt BMX riding.
- Skateparks provide a place for local youth to practice their tricks. This means that they're not skating in areas where they are seen as a nuisance, a menace, or causing damage to structures. Skateboarding ordinances and other deterrents generally fail to significantly mitigate skating in inappropriate areas. Drawing the activity to appropriate areas allow other preventative measures to be more effective.

- In addition to the direct health benefits, research even suggests that skateboarding can help keep teens out of trouble. A 2006 study found that skateboarders are less likely to smoke cigarettes, have sex, and skip school. (“Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior Patterns are Associated with Selected Adolescent Health Risk Behaviors,” *PEDIATRICS*, Vol. 117 No. 4, April 2006)

## Economic Benefits

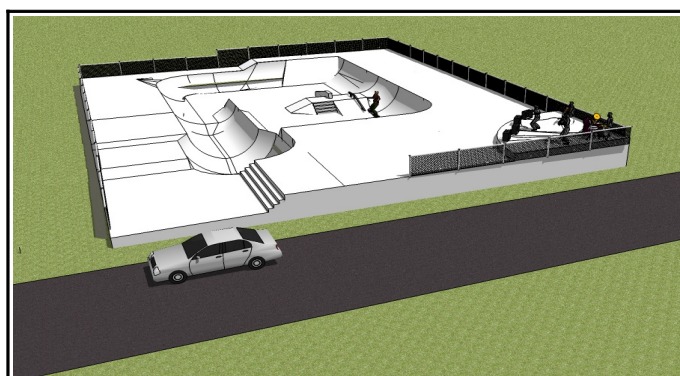
- It is hoped that the Skate Park will be able to provide local employment opportunities.
- The construction work alone will benefit local contractors and suppliers.
- We do not have any specific studies on the economic impact of skateparks on communities. But from the feedback Tony Hawks Foundation receive from municipal skatepark managers, skateparks do seem to have a positive effect on businesses in the surrounding area. When a skatepark opens, it tends to draw folks from the outlying communities to come bring their children to the skatepark, do some shopping, maybe have lunch, etc. Skateparks attract patrons to local businesses who might not otherwise be in the area.
- Skateboarders are tenacious and will go wherever the compelling terrain is.

## Community Development Benefits

- When parks are built right--with local skater input and involvement throughout the process--those youth develop a sense of ownership, pride, and community engagement. The very existence of the park is the result of their hard work and interaction with the broader community. Phuket skate park will be built with the input and design ideas of our local skaters.
- Skateparks allow the broader community to see the skateboarding youth for what they truly are: ***Passionate, dedicated athletes that voluntarily seek out physical recreation.***

Most communities with new skateparks are surprised to see how popular and positive the facility is and regret not making it larger.

- Without skateparks, skateboarders are often treated as pariahs and repeatedly told to leave the area. In some areas they must deal with law enforcement for doing something that they feel is essentially harmless. The cumulative effects of this treatment instill a sense of disconnection to their community. This regrettable cycle creates at-risk youth and is easily preventable through the creation of a local skatepark. When the youth are treated as criminals, they often become criminals which they carry into adulthood.



## Description

The Skatepark will be made up of the following components on 1 rai (½ acre) of land situated on a main bus route:

1. Shipping Container 1-Coffee & snack shop
2. Shipping container 2-Skate equipment hire, sales and repairs.
3. Shipping container 3-Indoor games room and first aid facilities.
4. Wooden stage for live music performances & competition hosting
5. 50ft (15.24m) x 70ft (21m) concrete skate park
6. Wooden ramps and skate rails
7. Seating area.

## Budget Narrative

The following budget is for the construction phase only and not the ongoing costs of the skatepark. We aim to raise the construction costs from within the local business community of Phuket.

Investors who help finance the initial construction phase will receive free advertising at Phuket Skate Park enabling companies to help their community whilst helping themselves.

The ongoing costs of running the Phuket Skate park will be generated as below

- Additional sponsorship / advertising.
- Sponsored competitions and events.
- Income generated through the sale / hire and maintenance of Skate equipment.
- Entrance fees.
- Skate school lessons.
- Income generated through the snack shop.

SHE will provide project management to oversee and guide the construction phase of the project. Mark Biddell has a degree in construction and spent 20 years managing large commercial projects in London and more recently has constructed a number of projects in developing nations.

SHE has a draft design for the new Skate park but will involve all local stakeholders in the final design process as well as using proven designs from other overseas skate parks.

Overseas volunteer teams and local skaters will help with painting and general finishing works.

SHE will provide an ongoing commitment of volunteer staff to manage and maintain the project.

## Skate park construction Budget

shipping container 1, 2 & 3	70,000.bht each Total;	210,000.bht
Toilet & shower facilities		30,000bht
Rental helmets, kneepads & Boards		50,000bht
Concrete skate park		290,000bht
7ft high metal fencing		
Incorporating space for advertising and covered seating area for spectators		270,000bht
Lighting for night time use		50,000baht
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>For the basic construction cost.</b>	<b>900,000. bht</b>
<b>Optional roof</b>		
Roof over full park area is preferred due to Thailand's heat and heavy rain fall. \$17,000		500,000bht
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>		<b>1,400,000.bht</b>

*SHE is willing to invest in the future of our next generation are you willing to join us?*

