Winning Scotland Foundation
Helping young people be their personal best

FAO: Clerk to the Committee

Health and Sport Committee: Sport for Everyone Inquiry 7th February 2017

Winning Scotland Foundation welcome the inquiry into participation in sport and would like to provide information that the Committee may find useful.

Winning Scotland Foundation was formed in 2006 by Sir Bill Gammell. Our vision is that all young people in Scotland achieve their personal best in life. Our mission is to create a culture that instils resilience, self-belief, determination and raises attainment and confidence. We work with partners across education, communities and sport to provide opportunities for young people to learn these crucial skills and competencies. Sport not only provides a great vehicle for developing life skills, it also contributes to the Curriculum for Excellence and Raising Attainment for All so has both health and education strategic links. More information about how we've made a difference to young people in Scotland can be found our Annual Review 2015-16.

We believe that increasing participation in sport is not as simple as removing barriers (whether these be perceived or actual). A huge number of factors come into play with regards to individuals' behaviours and attitudes to sports participation. Young people's experiences of sport at school is also hugely important whether that be in PE classes or taking part in school clubs or teams. Although our target audience is ultimately young people in Scotland, we work with, and deliver to, those people who influence our youngsters (parents, teachers, coaches and club leaders).

For more people in Scotland to enjoy active and healthier lives there needs to be a shift in attitudes, we want to see a positive ethos around sport with parents engaged and supportive, and education providing great sporting experiences and promoting that young people can enjoy sport given the right support, encouragement and beliefs.

We believe that there has to be the right environment and culture in place for people to take part in and enjoy sport, alongside the more practical aspects of participation (such as facilities, affordability etc).

People's past experiences of sport have a great impact on their future participation, and the participation of their children. If we can create great experiences for our young people today, there is more likelihood of them continuing to be involved in sport in the future… and, in turn, for their children to enjoy sport.

We use several different approaches to provide opportunities for young people to enjoy and learn from sport. These include working with more formal sports clubs through to informal community activities:

1. Our Positive Coaching Scotland (PCS) programme focuses on creating positive learning environments for young people in sport. If children have a great experience of sport, enjoy it, have fun and spend time with their friends, they are more likely to continue to remain in the sport throughout later years. To create fun and enjoyable sporting environments we work with coaches, club leaders, teachers and parents as well as the young people themselves.
2. North Glasgow 2014 legacy programme was focused on increasing early years’ physical activity in a local community. This programme used a more basic approach of addressing barriers that people had to participation and had varying levels of success.

3. Our Mindset in Education project is being used by some schools in their PE department. This project helps develop growth mindsets in young people where they have a love of learning new things, don’t give up when faced with challenge or failure and appreciate that hard work will help them achieve success.
1. **Positive Coaching Scotland (PCS)** is a national programme that aims to create positive learning environments for young people in sport therefore increasing their likelihood of staying in sport and reaping the many life lessons that taking part in sport can give them.

The programme focuses on developing coaches, parents and club leaders and so far with our partners (sportscotland who now lead the national role out, Scottish FA and Scottish Rugby) over 90,000 have gone through workshops and training – many local authorities have built it into their staff job descriptions (e.g. East Renfrewshire).

An early adopter of the programme was Spartans Community Football Club in Edinburgh. The club uses PCS to create a positive learning environment for the whole club by working with parents, coaches and young people. They told us about what they like about their club:

"If I miss an open goal, like I did today, then my team will say 'it's fine' and that's encouraging." Howie

"My team mates are always looking after me when I'm playing football, they're always there for me." Adam

"My Dad teaches me in the back garden, it's quite fun." Rory

Hillfoot Rugby Club in Tillicoultry is another great example of a club that has used PCS to increase participation. The club focuses on the young players having fun and ensuring that everyone gets the opportunity to play in games, in a recent match all 25 boys in the team managed to get some time on the pitch. By focusing on developing the junior section of the club, they have also seen an increase in participation in the adults section.
2. **North Glasgow – Glasgow 2014 legacy programme**

We have worked with NG Homes since 2012 developing access to sport in the lead up to 2014 and continue to work with them and local schools on an early year's physical activity programme. NG homes is the social landlord for the Possilpark and Springburn areas of Glasgow.

To increase participation in sport, the project provided many free sports taster sessions for the community up to and beyond 2014. These included cricket, table tennis, swimming and more. The project surveyed people in the community to find out what their barriers to sports participation were, the main ones were accessibility to facilities (both price and transport) and also psychological barriers that much of the public and private provision of sports facilities were not perceived by the community as being ‘for them’.

The swimming project is one example that shows there are no quick fixes to the actual and perceived barriers. Free swimming lessons were offered to nursery children and their parents. However, due to many parents themselves not being able to swim they felt that they couldn't take their child swimming and wouldn’t take up the opportunity of the free lessons available to them.

The Friday Night Club was one success from the programme. The club is free for children and their parents to attend, they can take part in all sorts of activities (not just sport) and parents also have the opportunity to learn skills such as computing. This video showcases the benefits the children, parents and club leaders have sustained from the club: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdu7OVXvZ_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdu7OVXvZ_0)

We are presently working on a project with the Springburn Learning Community (also supported by Glasgow City Council support for the Connections resource pack) working with nurseries and primary schools targeting programmes of physical activity at 3-7 year olds by upskilling classroom teachers and nursery assistants to run enjoyable and developmental physical education approaches – this is based on work we supported in Edinburgh ‘getting kids active every day at school’ and active families nursery programme developed in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council.

The key learnings from these projects were:

- To give head teachers support to think about how they use their school facilities to get the most from timetabling PE and physical activity across the school and the curriculum
- To get teachers confident in delivery through training and resource packs.
- To involve parents/cares by inviting them to sessions and issuing physical homework.
Charlie, Keely and William are all five-year-old Primary 1 pupils from Saracen Primary School in Glasgow. They take part in physical education (PE) lessons developed by our Active Early Years PE project. The project supports primary teachers so they feel confident delivering great PE lessons which the children enjoy and combine with other learning such as numeracy and literacy.

Keely told us that she liked running about and jumping over the puddles made from bibs, she counted four puddle jumps.

Charlie remembered that you have to warm up before PE to “make your heart beat faster so that you can run faster”.

William really likes doing lots of activities at home like going out on his bike, he told us about what he was going to do after school that day: “I’m going to go up the big hill and do roly-poly’s all the way down and get all mucky with my cousin.”

They then told us that “we like doing exercise as it makes you fit and strong and healthy and good!”

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3. *Mindset in Education*

Several schools are using growth mindset approaches in their PE departments, where the focus is on effort and enjoyment.

Approaches such as ‘golden bibs’ for individuals who have put in the most effort and recognising ‘high-triers’ remove the attention from scoreboards and winning onto trying your hardest and learning new skills.

For further information about the work of Winning Scotland Foundation, please contact Morag Arnot, Executive Director, 0131 455 9750 or morag.arnot@winningscotlandfoundation.org