



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

Street Games

A report into young people's
participation in sport



Neighbourhood
Renewal Unit



Preface

Young people tell us they would welcome the chance to take part in more sport because they enjoy it and because they accept the health message: physical activity is good for you. Those living in deprived communities often also tell us they have nowhere to go and nowhere to play. Street Games is a response to this challenge.

Street Games is different to most organised sport and shows the benefit of a relaxed approach. It is free from the rules and regulations of more formalised competition. Although high quality adult supervision and leadership are the keys to success, the emphasis is on promoting a good atmosphere and fun. Without those ingredients Street Games would have less chance of winning the commitment of the participants.

Street Games in London demonstrated that well delivered sport will do more than encourage young people to take part in positive activities. Coaches used the respect the young people gave them (earned through being good at their job and living locally) to ensure participants' improved as players and grew as team members. By the end of Street Games the young people were punctual and co-operating effectively with each other and with strangers.

Street Games also show that with enthusiasm and initiative sport can be delivered in almost any setting. Street Games does not need a grand venue. Indeed, in Newcastle's West End and in Hartlepool activities were run in the back alleys that separate rows of terraced houses. In Southwark, scraps of tarmac were the venues for football coaching. The Salford survey shows that neighbourhood open space is still the venue of choice for the majority of young people despite the successful work of the Council and NDC in promoting young people's use of Leisure Centres.

Street Games networks are spreading across the country. We encourage you to find out if getting involved can make a difference to community life in your area.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Rooker', with a horizontal line underneath.

Rt Hon Lord Rooker
Minister of State for Regeneration
and Regional Development

Introduction

This report is about Street Games, an initiative to get young people involved in regular sporting activities. It tells you about the Street Games held in London and the North East over the 2003 summer holiday and the Young People's Sporting Needs Survey that was carried out in the Salford New Deal for Community area.

Street Games bring a host of benefits. They:

- provide positive activities for deprived communities and a route into sustained and regular sport
- help renewal agencies to communicate with young people about their sporting needs and other lifestyle issues
- develop local leadership, citizenship or coaching skills within communities
- create opportunities to represent neighbourhoods in leagues and competitions, to meet new people and go to new places.

How Street Games started

The thinking behind Street Games came from a highly successful and innovative football tournament organised in April 2003 by the Football Association, Government Office for the North West and the regional New Deal for Communities. Their idea was to run a sporting event for young people in renewal areas, bringing together the worlds of sport and renewal. It was taken up in different ways in London and in the North East. Both models for Street Games successfully attracted young people who enjoy football or basketball, but who were outside the structures of organised sport. Other young people who do very little sport joined in.

The North East Games

The North East Games were funded by a £25k grant from the Football Foundation. Football, basketball, dance and a climbing wall were on offer and non-sports agencies like youth clubs and Youth Offending Teams were invited to join in the daylong games. The North East Steering Group chose this route with one eye on the after-effects of the Games, which they hoped would lead to ongoing investment in the sporting needs of their users or clients.

A survey by Northumbria University encouraged the young people to identify their needs. As with their London counterparts, this survey confirmed that informal sport is frequently played on convenient but inadequate surfaces such as the tarmac in front of garages or supermarket car parks. Many of the young people wanted to compete for teams in leagues close to home, to have a go at different sports and to have trips away to try less accessible sports. The research highlighted safety concerns: a large number worry about their own safety when using parks or designated play areas near to their homes. You can read more about the survey results in this report.

The London Street Games

The London Street Games were organised by the Peabody Trust and the London Sport Action Zone (SAZ). They were the mirror image of the North East Games. As there was a longer lead-in time, specially selected and experienced soccer coaches had time to organise football teams representing 18 of the most deprived estates in Lambeth and Southwark. Many of the coaches came from the estate itself, or nearby: they were the key to the success of these Games. They coached on the estate during each week of the holidays and organised the participants into teams to compete in a Finals Day at a local park. The Lambeth and Southwark Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP): (Funds to provide activities for young people at risk of offending) paid for some of this work.

London Games were evaluated by Sandy Craig of Leisure Futures. This shows that the London Games did engage with marginalised young people and that with the right follow-up they could be the first step to marginalised young people benefiting from positive contact with the mainstream. The Peabody Trust now intend to invest in what is best described as a 'scrutiny panel' of young people looking at leisure provision in their area. Hyde Housing is joining in with this project.

Street Games: the value to renewal

The London evaluation showed that the Games contributed to community capacity building, quality of life and cohesion:

- new people were drawn into leadership activity
- participants said they enjoyed the organised sports sessions that became a feature of community life over the holiday. Locally recruited coaches won the respect of young people and provided positive role models
- The Games successfully brought together teams from rival estates and the participants themselves said they enjoyed meeting people from outside their natural neighbourhood. The Games also did well to attract over 50% of participants from black and minority ethnic communities.

However, for the Games to make a lasting contribution, there must be continued investment and follow up work.



image: www.wiredesign.com

Street Games: the value to community safety

A few older non-participants said that they felt the 'temperature' on their estates had dropped because the young people were involved in purposeful activities. This is important for renewal. Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour is exceptionally corrosive and undermines renewal efforts. If small interventions like the Games makes people feel better about their neighbourhood then this is something to build upon. Such a view echoes research carried out in Sport Action Zones where 70% of the population felt that sport for young people most likely to offend would contribute to community safety.

The evaluation points out that while on the football pitch the young people were not making a nuisance of themselves. However, it is important to remember that not all the young people who were attracted to Street Games were likely to offend or guilty of anti-social behaviour.

This notion of 'sport as a diversion' is long established. However, well delivered sport can be more than a diversion and The Home Office Drugs Directorate funded Positive Futures programme counsels caution in this way of viewing sports interventions. Positive Futures worry that too linear a claim for the impact of sport on diverting offending behaviour will dash expectations. They advise that 'the lens be turned' to those features that sport undeniably does do well and essentially this is about engagement. Sport is exceptionally well placed to 'catch' disadvantaged young people who slip through other safety nets and win their interest. This engagement opens up opportunities for further engagement where the appropriately trained coach is on hand to help the young people to find the support, services and opportunities they need. Such sport may also help combat alienation or estrangement.



image: www.wiredesign.com

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) which identifies ‘Risk and Protective Factors’* that underpin the offending, has a similar view on the matter. Most immediately important to us are the Risk Factors, ‘alienation and lack of social commitment’ and ‘impulsivity’. The Games cut against these Risk Factors with situations that demanded and received controlled behaviour and stimulated social commitment by asking the young people to represent their estate. The Games also showed a commitment to the young people.

The most important (to us) Protective Factors which the YJB identifies are, ‘social bonding, and the promotion within the family, school and community of healthy standards... Thus... community leaders who lead by example and hold clearly stated expectations regarding... young people’s behaviour are helping to protect them against risk. Opportunities for involvement, social and reasoning skills and recognition and due praise are also crucial protective factors.’ Street Games provides such community leaders, praise, involvement and recognition.

*Risk and Protective Factors
www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk

Street Games: the value to health

The Department of Health promotes one hour of moderate physical activity 5 days a week for young people. The Games provide a forum for this type of exercise. However, the evaluation showed that while less than half of the participants were involved in organised sport a good number played sport informally. We believe the Street Games coaching sessions were a better aerobic workout than the street corner soccer. We also assume that this positive contact with organised sport can militate against the tendency to drop-out of physical activity at about the age of 16, if that is, appropriate follow through from the Games is organised.

The evaluation shows that participants raised their level of soccer skills and as the weeks went by grew more willing to accept the rules and norms of an organised game. Essentially, they were socialised into codified sport and getting better at it. It seems reasonable to assume that being comfortable in an environment and knowing your way around its rules and norms can all contribute to feeling confident enough to keep on playing and even try out new opportunities. We conclude that the Games can be a route into ongoing activity provided it is built into the programme and not left to chance.



image: www.wiredesign.com

Street Games: Next Steps

The Games have shown they can attract young people in renewal areas to organised sport and can help non-sporting agencies meet their aims. Plans for the future include the following ways of expanding and improving the Games.

- a. The Mayor of Southwark, Councillor Columba Blango will fund Easter to autumn activity on twice the number of estates and in more sports. PAYP have agreed to fund the infrastructure of the Street Games for the next three years.
- b. The North East Games have caught the imagination of many agencies including the Government Office and the Regional Development Agency One North East. Next summer local networks of renewal and sport workers intend to run four sub-regional games building up to a regional event to promote the use of sport amongst agencies which do not traditionally offer sport.
- c. Government Office for the North West supports a network of NDC sports workers who ran the Easter football tournament and are well integrated into the renewal networks. New Street Games networks are developing in the Eastern region, West Midlands, Yorkshire and Cornwall.
- d. The Football Foundation will look favourably at co-funding future Street Games across the country and at a basket of applications led by the London SAZ to upgrade the kick-about areas on the estates that are the venues of choice for so many Street Games participants.
- e. On most estates there is an organisation or an individual who, with the right support, could make all the difference to the future of neighbourhood sport. The Games highlighted the enormous potential of 'community drivers'. The London and the North East Street Games have gone a long way towards prioritising and supporting these sporting champions. Community leaders have been identified and enrolled on Football Association training courses and Community Sports Leaders Award courses.
- f. In London a girls' tournament ran alongside the boys'. Unlike the boys' they did not attract an averagely interested girl but the most able athletes, whom many women's clubs would have been pleased to sign. Two girls' teams have been set up as a result of the London Games. Local/regional Street Games groups need to think hard about how best to involve girls. Estate based work will need to target girls and find out what they want to do or else accept the risk of only attracting the most able.
- g. Over the next year, we will assess the potential value of the Street Games to sport and to renewal. We will work with other regions to support new Street Games-like interventions (the South East are discussing a Park Games initiative) and help to make a lasting impact upon those networks and the young people who will shape the future of renewal areas.
- h. There are many questions that remain unanswered about the Games, and sport's contribution to renewal as a whole. Most people who are involved with sport think that in the right circumstances it offers benefits to participants and to the broader community. Survey work by Sport Action Zones suggest that Zone residents share that view. However, this is not accepted by all renewal agencies or academics. Therefore we will bring together researchers with different perspectives to co-evaluate next summer's Street Games. We hope this will provide the opportunity for researchers with different perspectives and analytic tools to reach an accommodation.

London Street Games

This section is a brief summary of the evaluation of the London Street Games. It covered boys' and girls' football, and was aimed at 17 estates in Lambeth and Southwark. Street Games was a large programme: there were around 100 coaching sessions, with around 3,000 attendance involving 500-600 participants.

Background

Groups from the voluntary and statutory sectors got involved in delivering the Games. They included the Community Action Team, Kickstart, Millwall Community Scheme, Southwark Estates Warden Scheme and the Waterloo Sports and Football Club. Some of these had worked in the estates or localities before and had built up a local profile. For other estates this was the first time that structured football sessions had been organised specifically for the young people. In addition to these sessions, the Peabody Trust had organised its own under-16 football teams on estates across London: these teams were also invited to, and played in, the finals tournament on the 30th August 2003.



Aims of the London Games

The main aims of the project were to:

- 1: Get more young people from targeted housing estates involved in sport.
- 2: Improve their physical, sporting and social skills.
- 3: To make a positive impact on the estates involved in the project in terms of community cohesion, safety and capacity.

London Street Games was funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (OPDM), Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP), the Peabody Trust, the North Lambeth and North Southwark Sports Action Zone (SAZ), Southwark Council and the Waterloo Community Regeneration Trust. The Review of 'Street Games' was commissioned by the SAZ with funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA). The full evaluation can be found on the NRU website www.neighbourhood.gov.uk from June 2004. What follows is a brief summary.

Evaluating the Games

The evaluation ran alongside the sporting programme. Researchers asked coaches to rate participants in terms of sports skills and sportsmanship. The evaluation also included a participants' questionnaire, observations of coaching sessions and the final tournament, and interviews with coaches, deliverers and key players.

Findings

- There was a clear demand for structured football and participants came from the group targeted. However, participation was mainly by boys, aged 12 to 16. There was relatively high participation by black and minority ethnic communities particularly Black African / Afro-Caribbean / UK and less by ethnic minorities from the Indian sub-continent.
- Nearly all the participants had previously participated in sports, though mainly in informal sports. Less than half were members of a sports club or team.
- 'Street Games' was judged good value for money with a cost per hour of attendance at around £5. All sessions were free to participants.
- Participants rated 'Street Games' highly. 4.1 out of a maximum of 5 (i.e. better than 'pretty good').
- Participants improved their sports skills and their sportsmanship. Coaches rated young people at the start and the end of the project on their sports skills – tackling, passing, heading, ball, on target – and sportsmanship – time keeping, positive attitude, discipline, confidence and team working. Football skills improved by an average 16%. Sportsmanship improved by an average 11%.
- It was more difficult to assess its impact in terms of community cohesion. However, the final tournament involved 16 teams from different estates – an example of community cohesion in practice. Plus, 33% of the participants surveyed stated that one thing they liked best was meeting new people from other estates. The consensus amongst deliverers was that 'Streetgames' was potentially a powerful lever to increase community cohesion.

- In terms of Community Safety and Youth Offending, the programme diverted young people from anti-social behaviour for a total of 250 session hours and 7,500 participant hours. The coaches also acted as positive role models for participants. Residents in two estates that it had led to a decrease in anti-social activity on their estates – further evidence of the positive impact of the programme.
- In terms of Community Capacity, many deliverers have mechanisms in place to ensure that talented individuals progress. However, there are fewer opportunities for most participants to continue playing in structured football, unless there is continued funding for Street Games. On one estate, two unemployed participants have been offered a free FA Level 1 training course. In addition, a few teams were managed by volunteers from estates. On the debit side, there was relatively little involvement by parents and residents.
- In terms of next steps: 'Street Games' has demonstrated that there is a huge demand for structured sports activities in estates. The programme could be extended across London, to include other sports and, importantly, to involve girls more. But there are difficulties in meeting this demand in terms of coaches and funding.
- Parents and residents need to be involved more as volunteers.
- Sports facilities on and off estates need to be improved.

Benefits of the London Street Games

In conclusion, 'Street Games' was a great success. It delivered structured sports to areas not reached by local authority leisure facilities or sports clubs. It tapped into a huge demand and reached its target group – at least amongst boys. It was successful in improving participants' football skills and their sportsmanship. And, finally, although the evidence was patchy, the impact of the programme was positive in terms of helping community cohesion, community safety and youth offending, and community capacity.

Good Practice Notes

Sandy Craig of Leisure Futures drew out these top-tips for effective Street Games, based on her observations of the sessions and tournament and interviews and discussions with coaches, organisers and other key players.

Each estate / project needs to be dealt with on its own merits. The individual projects were organised in different ways:

- some took place on estates; some took place off estates (though nearby and in places that participants can identify with)
- some embraced a more competitive ethos, others a more co operative ethos
- some were more structured (with warm-ups, co-ordination exercises, football skills sessions, as well as small-sided football games) than others

Each of these had advantages and disadvantages. For instance, there are better facilities off estates, which can help to give a more structured approach and can act to bring young people from different estates together at an early stage; but hosting the project on estates may help to reach the target group and may give more ownership by the participants. Similarly, while I would favour a more structured approach (and it appears to have paid dividends for the Waterloo SFC), this is not always possible, particularly in the initial stages of the project and where there is no history of structured sport in that particular estate. In these cases, the initial sessions may need to be very low key and with little structure.



image: www.wiredesign.com

Personal qualities of the coaches

One of the major pointers to success was the personal qualities of the coaches. Many of these came from similar backgrounds to the participants and were able to relate to participants and environments in an open, positive but street-wise way. Coaches were seen as role models because they come from the same background as the young people, and had positive personal qualities, which proved more important than professional qualifications. Coaches worked hard to get knowledge of participants and estates and to get the respect of participants. This is a fundamental building block to the success of projects and in developing them into more structured projects that can impact on community cohesion, community safety, and soon. Many are now role-models for participants. Kickstart, Millwall Community Scheme and Waterloo Sports and Football Club all aim to 'grow' their own coaches from amongst participants and have achieved the beginnings of a track record for this.

Get respect of participants

This goes hand in hand with the personal qualities of the coaches. It is an obvious point, but projects will not get the voluntary commitment of participants until they have got their respect and this is particularly important for estates with no history of structured sport. This can take a lot of patient, arduous outreach work. This leads to the next pointer.

Don't underestimate the amount of resources needed for the initial outreach work

Street Games was fortunate in that all the deliverers had expertise in outreach work and some, for example Kickstart, Millwall, Waterloo, already had a profile and a respect in the estates and with the target group. This helped these groups to deliver greater numbers of participants operating in a more structured manner.

Two coaches are better than one

Working on these estates with this group of young people is tough and, as a generalisation, the more successful sessions were those where there were more resources, particularly more coaches. This enables the sessions to have more structure and discipline. It means that more attention can be paid to individuals and gives a better quality of experience. Two coaches won't be possible for all sessions but, where resources allow, two coaches should be considered a minimum. In some cases, a reasonably experienced volunteer or helper may be used as a substitute for a fully trained coach, but this should not be viewed as the 'default' option.

Involve the participants in the coaching and organisation

In one session, individual participants were asked at random to take sections of the warm-up exercises. This worked well. It involved the participants. When younger participants led a warm-up section, it earned them the respect of their seniors. Plus, because participants did not know beforehand which exercises they would be asked to lead, it helped to keep all participants focussed. Similarly, involving one participant as the manager of his team helped him to develop and grow.

Detailed planning and improvisation

The organisation and management of the football sessions benefits from detailed planning – e.g. for warm-ups: what routine to follow? How to do it? How to break the groups? Who should lead it? They also benefit from improvisation – that is, learning from one session to the next what works and what doesn't work with particular individuals and groups. Reflecting afterwards on whether the aims for the session have been achieved or not, and acting on these reflections, is also good practice.



image: www.wiredesign.com

Consider having separate age ranges

There were a number of comments from participants who felt it was unfair that some teams appeared to be composed exclusively of 14 to 16 year olds, while other teams – including their own – had a much wider age range. Also some sessions involved children from as young as eight to as old as 16 – this was too wide an age range and, although it worked reasonably well, a narrower age range would give a better focus to the sessions and lead to a 'fairer' tournament. But, of course, this will have a large impact in terms of resources and funding.

The tournament

The tournament was a success: the facilities on the astro-turf, the 'proper' matches, the larger than life (and, indeed, smaller than life!) referees, the different kits for different teams – all these helped to make it an event to remember for the participants. Importantly, the tournament gave a goal for participants during the sessions throughout the summer – it gave a point and meaning to the proceedings which would otherwise have been 'just another holiday playscheme'.

But the tournament was also a success because inter-estate tournaments and competitions do break down the barriers between young people from different estates.

Longer lead-in times and more organisation

The project and the tournament worked as a pilot. But it was 'organisation-lite', there were gaps in planning, and publicity could have been improved. All these are easily remedied by having a longer lead-in time and ensuring that there are more workers, volunteers and stewards involved in the project. A minor point, but more support may need to be given to the voluntary managers and parents and others who help out in terms of ensuring that they too understand and follow the ethos of respect (to their team, other team, referees, officials). In this sense, the young participants were ahead of some of the adults.

More thought is needed to train and encourage coaches, 'managers', helpers, supporters from estates

The low numbers of parents and supporters at the tournament was disappointing. One deliverer stated that some of the parents from his estate wanted to come but there was only room in the minibus for the children. More thought, organisation and publicity will be needed to attract more parents, family and friends to support their teams at the tournament. This will in turn raise a number of issues.

Of more importance is the need to train up more coaches and managers from amongst participants and residents of the estates. Managers will make the organisation of tournaments and leagues much more feasible. But coaches are particularly important. At present, the potential demand for football on estates, inter-estate leagues and competitions appears to far outstrip the supply of suitable trained coaches who can make it possible. In addition to finding suitable candidates and making it possible for them to achieve coaching qualifications, there is also a need to make it attractive for individuals to consider coaching. This could be done by making sure that there are opportunities to earn money through casual coaching and then appointing coaches to permanent posts. The 'supply' of local coaches and managers is crucial to the development of community capacity. It should also be borne in mind that, although 12 coaches may be trained and qualified, leading sessions for young people on housing estates is a tough assignment (and very different from leading sessions say at a local authority leisure centre or being a coach at a football club). Some will struggle and it is likely that only three or four will last the pace and become really good coaches.

The lack of suitable coaches – along with the need for more funding – seems to be the biggest obstacle to developing and extending the programme. Sport England is funding the 'Community Sports Coach Scheme' which hopes to establish 3,000 paid and qualified Community Sports Coaches across the country. The Scheme has a particular focus on coaching for young people and is organised through County Sports Partnerships. The Sports Action Zone and partners needs to consider how it can best intervene in order to secure funding to train coaches who can work with young people on estates.

Ethos and Sportsmanship

All the deliverers, to a greater or lesser extent, emphasised the ethos of fair play and sportsmanship. All tried to inculcate the principles of sportsmanship in their participants. It is vital to the success of the project that this element is continued, developed and strengthened – particularly because many of the other messages aimed at young people consciously or unconsciously reflect values of aggression and individualism. It must be at the very core of the project and shared by all the coaches and delivery organisations. To do this requires constant reinforcement between and by all the deliverers and key players in 'Street Games' and constant communication about the values of fair play and sportsmanship to participants.

Conclusion

'Street Games' has been a success. It has been a success in developing programmes of structured, disciplined sport in estates and areas which are not reached by local authority leisure facilities, by sports clubs or by schools. It has been a success in tapping into a huge demand and in reaching its target group. It has been a success in terms of the positive response of participants and their wish for the pilot project to be continued. It has been a success in improving the footballing and sportsmanship skills and qualities of the participants and in helping them in their self-development. And, although the evidence is patchy in places, it appears to have had some positive impacts in terms of both community cohesion and community safety and, to a lesser extent, in terms of community capacity.

There are, therefore, more than sufficient grounds for the pilot to be rolled out as a long-term project and for public funding to be secured for such a project.

If you'd like to know more, please contact:

Brian Dickens
Sports Action Zone Manager
South Bank Employers Centre
103 Waterloo Road
London, SE1 8UL
020 7202 6900

The North East

This section briefly summarises the evaluation of the North East Street Games. The North East Games were held at Westgate Centre for Sport and organised by a collective of regional sports workers in August 2003. Street Games were funded by the Football Foundation, Government Office for the North East and sponsored by the Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

In the West End of Newcastle, Street Games built on the doorstep provision that the newly built Centre for Sport had been delivering in the surrounding neighbourhoods. This Street Games initiative took the centre staff out of the building to the local streets to entice young residents to join in games and maybe eventually start to use the Centre. Street Games provides whatever sport can be delivered on patches of grass and has encouraged parents to help organise the sessions. A few parents have enrolled in the Community Sports Leaders Award and the Centre hopes to persuade more to get qualified.

The aim of the regional Street Games was to link up sports workers in the region who were also looking for innovative ways to reach non-participants. These workers cast the net wide to provide an opportunity for young people who currently do not or cannot get involved in team activities to compete in, try out and enjoy a range of activities in a fun, safe and sociable setting. The young participants were drawn from youth groups and community projects throughout the region including Positive Futures, New Deal for Communities and Youth Inclusion programmes. The intention of the organising group was to persuade the agencies working with these young people to continue to invest in their sporting needs.

Northumbria University's PEANuT (participatory evaluation and appraisal in Newcastle upon Tyne) programme undertook a short research study during the Street Games event to explore what activities young people took part in and examine their potential to take part in sports activities in the future. The research also explored the perceived and actual barriers that prevent the young people from getting involved in sport. This information will shape future Street Games and will form an advocacy document, showing mainstream sports providers as well as renewal agencies what the young people themselves want to do. The full document will be available on the NRU website: www.neighbourhood.gov.uk from June 2004.



Methodology

Participatory Appraisal (PA), is recognised as one of a growing family of approaches that takes a “whole community” approach to conducting action research.

PA uses a wide variety of tools, techniques and exercises, which enable different types of people to contribute to the research in ways and levels that they feel most comfortable. The flexible and informal nature of PA allows the views of those people who are often difficult to reach to be represented. For the Street Games research, graffiti walls, ranking or bean voters, mapping, H forms and Spider diagrams were used.

Key Messages

The research focused on two key questions, “What sporting activities do you do currently?” and “What activities would you like to do?”

The PA methods revealed:

- Young people, (although it should be noted that majority of the participants in the research were boys) regularly take part in sporting activities, with football being the most popular, followed by basketball. Much of this was informal kick-about sport or was a recent development provided by the agency that took them to the Street Games. Dancing and football were the most popular activities amongst the young women, closely followed by swimming, basketball and horse-riding.
- It was evident from the PA research that the young people were quite adventurous and were keen to try out activities that could be considered risky and unconventional, such as boxing (which was popular amongst boys and girls) and paint balling. Other popular choices included bob sleigh and go-karting. However, traditional sports such as football remained the favourite activity and were the main sport that the young people wanted to do more often. Many young people felt that the school sports curriculum lacked variety.

The barriers that the young people put forward that prevented them from taking part in sporting activities were also revealing:

- Safety was a key concern amongst many of the young people who took part in the research. Their concerns mainly related to a sense of personal safety in parks, particularly in areas that were run down and poorly maintained. A number of young people worried about “perverts” (their language). There was also fear of bullying by older young people, and concerns about racism.

- Cultural issues were seen as a barrier to sporting activities, particularly for the young women.
- The cost of activities outside school was a major factor in the young people’s choices. Many young people were keen to take part in activities such as ice hockey and go-karting but difficulties in accessing transport in addition to the cost prevented them from doing so.
- Cleanliness and maintenance of facilities was of particular importance to the young people, along with privacy in changing rooms.
- There was real concern amongst the young people that they were not consulted about planning decisions to demolish “their spaces” such as play areas and community centres.

Conclusions

The young people who took part in the Street Games event and the PA research had many positive things to say about current provision. Parks, shopping centres and community centres were considered important areas that the young people considered their “own space”, where they socialised as well as played sport. However, the barriers to accessing sport were clearly articulated and will be addressed by the Street Games Regional Steering Group.

Many young people commented that the Street Games event had given them the opportunity to try new things and to meet other young people. The overall consensus was that the young people wanted more variety and greater access to activities both in and outside the school curriculum, with suggestions including “girls only” activities and family outings.

Given the chance, the young people had lots to say and gave every impression that with the right support and encouragement could make a major contribution to designing sports provision in their areas.

If you’d like to know more, please contact:

Su Cumming
Centre for Sport
West End Community College
West Road
Newcastle, NE4 9LG
0191 241 7701

The Salford Story

When Salford New Deal for Communities asked young people in their patch what they wanted from sport some of the key findings were unexpected and interesting. The questionnaire was distributed to approximately a quarter of young people in the area aged between the ages of 4 and 16 years with males providing 45% of replies and females 55%.

Key findings:

- Traditional sports such as football continue to be popular with boys and many boys play soccer at the after-lessons sessions at Albion High School and all the Primary schools in the areas. Salford City Leisure run these activities and also the evening sessions at the crime hotspots which the Police find very helpful.
- Dance is the most popular 'want to' activity for girls but there is a huge gap between the numbers who get to dance and the numbers who would like to. Girls are participating far less frequently in out of school physical activities than boys.
- Young people of Salford are requesting more and more participation in adventurous sports such as ice and water sports.

Findings in detail:

Over two-thirds of males and one-third of females play sport after lessons at school.

We were surprised to find that 70% of males but only 37% of females play sport after lessons at school. 24% of these boys play football. Other sports for boys were fairly low scoring with basketball being the next highest sport with 7%. The highest scoring female reply was netball with just 8% saying they play after lessons at school.



image: www.wiredesign.com

Football ranked highest for other sports activities played for BOTH genders.

In total, 28% of young people provided football as a reply to what other sporty activities they play (outside of school). Predictably football was the highest ranked reply by males with 44% (see figure 1). However, 15% of females also returned football as a reply. Other sports given by females included swimming (14%), trampoline (10%) and netball (9%). Other popular replies by males included rugby (19%) and swimming (10%) (see figure 2).

Figure 1. Participation in sporty activities other than at school for boys.

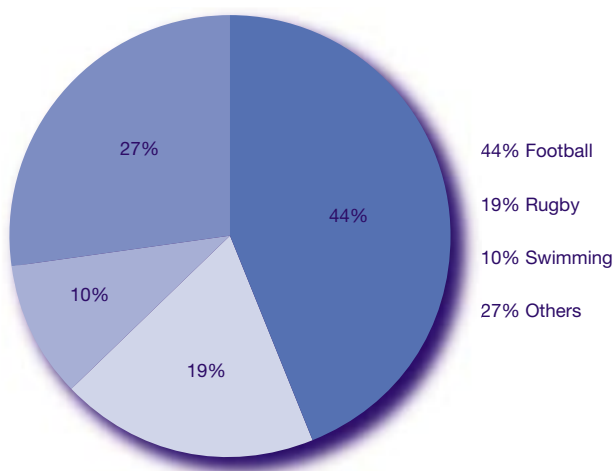
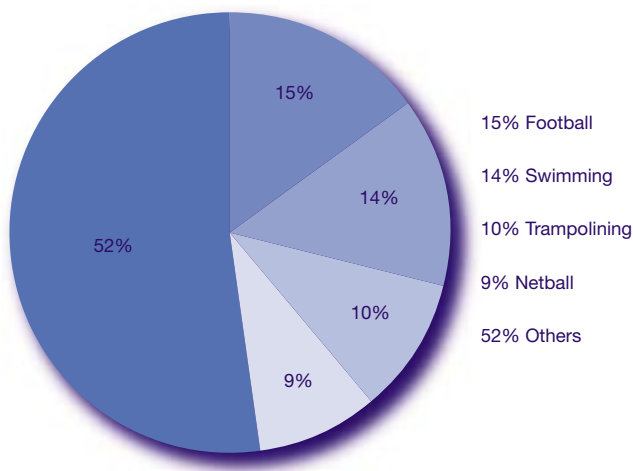


Figure 2. Participation in sporty activities other than at school for girls.



Facilities needed for access to a wide range of sports?

When asked what in the whole world they would like to do, both boys and girls replied with a wide range of activities. This is especially true for girls with 7 sports reaching over 10%. Football was undoubtedly the most popular reply from boys with 31%. The next most popular sport for males was rugby with 11%. The most popular reply from females was ice skating followed by swimming. However fewer boys returned swimming as an answer to this question. Other popular female sports included gymnastics, horse riding, skiing, watersports (12%), and trampoline (12%).

Access to more activities in local areas.

Three activities stand out in reply to what activities young people would like access to near to where they live.

- Football is a popular choice with a 33% total across both boys and girls with 54% of boys (see figure 3) and 13% of girls replying football (see figure 4).
- Dance was the next most popular activity with 23% as 40% of females gave this as their reply.
- Swimming was the third most popular with 22%, 12% of males and 24% of females wanted to participate in swimming near to where they live.
- Other results reaching over 10% include 12% of girls wanting to access ice skating locally, 12% of boys wanting to play rugby, 9% of girls looking for quad bike access and 10% of boys wanting to play cricket near to where they live.

Figure 3. Boys were asked: “What would you like to do near to where you live?”

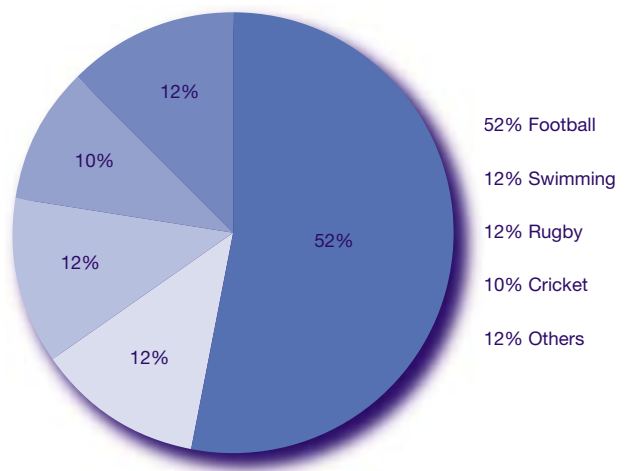
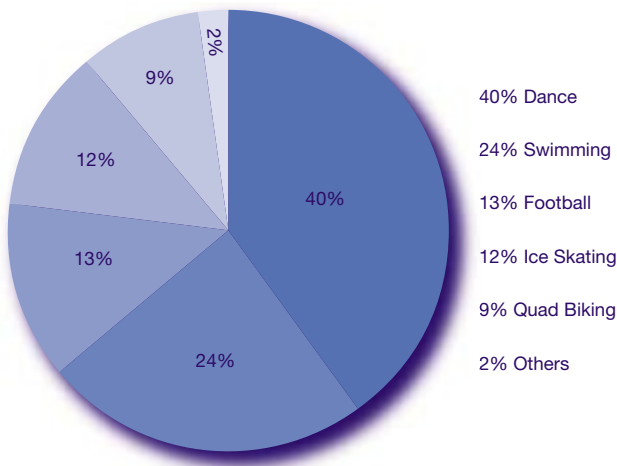


Figure 4. Girls were asked “What would you like to do near to where you live?”



How often and where?

An open space was given as the best place to participate in the sports they selected with over half (52%) of responses. A leisure centre (38%) and youth club (11%) were the other popular answers to this question. The responses to this obviously reflect the sport chosen by the individual, with football ranking so highly with boys an open space is the obvious answer.

When asked what they like about the sports they play, not surprisingly a majority of 58% said it was because it is “enjoyable.” One fifth of young people realised the health benefits of exercise and provided “to keep fit” as a reply. 41% of the young people surveyed said there is nothing they do not like about the activities they participate in. Other popular replies included “getting tired” (16%) and 10%, replied that they don’t like losing. The average number of times young people want access to participation in these sports locally is three times per week.

When asked how much money would they be willing to pay replies varied greatly from “nothing” to £20. The amount averaged at £3.89*.

Around three-quarters of young people visit their local leisure centre

77% of respondents said they visit their local leisure centre, breaking this down, 74% of boys and 80% of girls gave this positive answer. The average number of times per week that young people visited their leisure centre was twice a week, although once again a wide range was given with many saying they only visited their leisure centre in the holidays when age-appropriate schemes were on offer.

For those that don’t attend their leisure centre, distance was the answer given by 42% of replies, 37% of these young people said they don’t visit their leisure centre because they do not like the facility or do not like participating in the sports provided by their leisure centre. These findings are confusing: more people say they go to centres than say they do sport! We suspect that unless visits were for school purposes people were going to centres for non-sports purposes.

If you’d like to know more, please contact:

Joe Gallagher
 Salford NDC Sports Development Unit
 Cromwell House, Cromwell Road
 Salford, M6 6DE
 0161 607 8505

For information on funding Street Games style programmes visit the Football Foundation at www.footballfoundation.org.uk



*We are worried that we did not adequately segregate the answers by age to this question. Some respondents were too young to know the value of money and in group situations others seemed to be caught up in a ‘bidding war’ with bravado driving up the amount of spare cash they could access. Given the nature of the local low-wage economy we think this information is unreliable and needs to be further researched.



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister
Creating sustainable communities

Delivering Sport and Physical Activity in Renewal Areas

A toolkit for practitioners and strategic managers

- Practical advice on what works
- Top tips on delivering sport and physical activity in neighbourhood renewal areas
- Clear explanations on the value of sport to neighbourhood renewal
- Available from June 2004 on: www.renewal.net

This is co-produced and funded by:



Neighbourhood
Renewal Unit



NRU hotline: 08450 82 83 83
Website: www.neighbourhood.gov.uk
Email: neighbourhoodrenewal@odpm.gsi.gov.uk

Further copies of this guidance can be obtained from:
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PO Box 236, Wetherby,
West Yorkshire, LS23 7NB
Telephone: 0870 1226 236
Fax: 0870 1226 237
Textphone: 0870 1207 405
E-mail: odpm@twoten.press.net
www.neighbourhood.gov.uk

© Crown Copyright 2004
Copyright in the typographical arrangement
and design rests with the Crown.

This publication (excluding the Royal Arms and logos)
may be reproduced free of charge in any format or
medium provided that it is reproduced accurately and
not used in a misleading context. The material must be
acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the
publication specified.

Published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
Printed in the UK, June 2004 on paper comprising
75% post consumer waste 25% ECF pulp.

First edition, June 2004

Product code: 04NRU01900



Neighbourhood
Renewal Unit