

Case Study

Physical activity clinics for obese young people

Equity focused
- under 16

What were our objectives?

To increase participation in sport by overweight and obese young people.



Project origin

Sport England awarded Kirklees Metropolitan Council £124,400 revenue funding through the Active England programme. The project targets overweight and obese young people aged 5 to 16, in particular those over 91 on the BMI centile chart (that is clinically overweight and obese). The total project cost £332,900. The project started in October 2005 and will finish in October 2008.

Project aims and objectives

Kirklees aims to increase participation in sport through a series of specialised sport and physical activity clinics.

The clinic programme uses an evidence-based approach, which will change long-term behaviour and long-term participation through:

- Increasing awareness of the benefits of physical activity and opportunities available to the young people;
- Consulting and involving young people in developing the provision to ensure relevance;
- Building confidence and self-esteem to take part in activity;
- Providing activity opportunities as part of the clinic;
- Supporting progression on the pathway to mainstream activities; and
- Ensuring knowledgeable, experienced and trained instructors lead the activity clinics.

There is a complementary programme of activity to support the clinic programme. This includes motivational interviews, weekly classes, home activities and mentoring. The activities focus on fun, learning and confidence-building and will be supported by education sessions looking at diet, physical activity and lifestyle changes.

Rationale

Consultation and research showed a need to address the levels of overweight and obese young people in the region. A service was needed and so the clinic was developed.

Project performance

The project has, up to March 2008, engaged with 426 participants and had a throughput of 4,545. Activities vary and include dance, aerobics and basketball.

- Clinics are now taking place weekly in all localities in Kirklees;
- Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) and schools are developing programmes of activity to support the work of the clinics;
- Pathways have been created into mainstream activity programmes and to voluntary sports clubs; and
- A course has been developed to support coaches and teachers when working with overweight and obese young people.

Innovation

Young people have been trained as "Physical Activity Motivators" to support other overweight and obese young people access the clinics.

Feedback from parents has also led to the development of a new programme of training for parents as physical activity motivators too.

Lessons Learned

- Clinics have been particularly effective with younger children but teenagers require a more "personal trainer" approach;
- A partnership approach is essential;
- Physical activity motivators are key to ensuring accessibility and adherence; and
- Parental involvement is key to the process.

What next

The project will continue beyond the Active England funding. Existing activity provision will continue with further developments to include: review of marketing and promotion approaches; opportunities to be developed for teenagers; parents trained as mentors; and evaluation findings to be presented to partners.



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