

ANEURIN LEISURE

Peer Researchers



As community coaches at Aneurin Leisure, Courtney, Alisha, Chelsea and Elise (pictured left to right) were keen to get involved with the peer research project in Wales. Prior to this, some of the girls had been involved in StreetGames before through multisport festivals in the Principality Stadium, Us Girls sessions in the community and residential. Alisha said “we know there is a gender gap so we’re invested in trying to make a difference in that”.

The biggest challenge the group faced was finding time to come together due to work and college or university commitments. However, the group eventually met twice a week and completed tasks independently between each meeting.

StreetGames posed the following research question:

‘What does an attractive sport and physical activity offer look like for girls and young women, in a post pandemic world?’

The peer researchers opted to use an online questionnaire. “We sent it quite far, everywhere we know. We wanted to reach the girls who are not attending sport regularly, are inactive, not interested in sport and are going under the radar. We sent it out to the youth service so they could get it out in their community hub sessions in deprived areas”.

Roles were allocated throughout the project; Chelsea lead on the budgets, Courtney took on building the online questionnaire, and Alisha and Elise pulled together the business plan and presentation for the pitch.

When asked if they enjoyed taking part in the project, Elise said “the best part was because we already go out and coach in the community this gives you the different side of that because we had to plan the budgets and now do the pitch. It’s just a totally different side to it, rather than just being given the money”. Courtney echoed this saying “it’s good to show the girls their opinions do matter”.

The research highlighted cost and travel as the most significant barriers for young people in Blaenau Gwent. Young girls were also keen to have girls only sessions as “they didn’t feel so confident with mixed sessions or boys being in the sessions”. To overcome this, the peer researchers would like to deliver girls only sessions, in Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and Abertillery with transport provided to and from their home and the local leisure centre.

‘We want to go out now and do focus groups with different girls to get more specific details out of them such as what time is actually going to suit them, what day etc’. As a result of taking part in the project, Chelsea said “I think we ask for more feedback in the sessions we already run. Asking what they like, what didn’t they like so we can make those small changes without doing a whole restructure of the sessions”.

What would you say to another young person who’s thinking of getting involved in StreetGames in the future?

“Especially with the residential we’ve had, we’ve made so many new friends and know so many new people. We’ve started volunteering for the Young Advisors role, it’s like a web, just get out there, it’s great!”

“It just broadens your horizons and you’re always learning. Just watching other people coach you learn different ways to collect information.”