



## DOORSTEP SPORT

*Ingredients for Effective Delivery*



## WHAT IS DOORSTEP SPORT?

Doorstep Sport is sport/physical activity that is delivered, for young people, on the doorstep of low income, underserved communities. At its core is the provision of accessible and affordable opportunities for young people to take part in informal sport within their local community through vibrant, varied, fun and sociable sessions. Effective Doorstep Sport delivery has a strong emphasis on youth leadership, offers personal development opportunities and encourages lifelong participation. Effective doorstep sport considers the needs of multiple segments of young people in underserved communities e.g. those from different age groups, genders and vulnerabilities. It can exist in many different forms and be delivered by a range of providers.

Learning from organisations in the StreetGames network has identified a number of critical ingredients underpinning effective doorstep sport. These ingredients can be divided into two parts:

1. The Doorstep Sport Offer itself ie what is provided
2. Organisational principles ie things that the delivery organisation must think about/do.

All of these must be underpinned by good governance, monitoring & evaluation and effective communication. The ingredients all interconnect with each other.

**Young People** must be at the centre of doorstep sport. Young people, living in low income underserved communities, as the primary beneficiaries of doorstep sport, must be central to the way in which each one of the ingredients is designed, developed and delivered.

## WHY DOORSTEP SPORT IS IMPORTANT?

Effective Doorstep Sport not only gives young people the opportunity to take part in sport and physical activity in a safe and comfortable environment, it improves levels of activity know-how/sporting capital and provides opportunities for personal growth and development that improve life chances. It helps young people to develop confidence, competence and provides enjoyment and connections that leads to lifelong participation. It provides far more than a sports session: it can transform young lives by helping young people to be healthier, safer and more successful.



# KEY INGREDIENTS UNDERPINNING EFFECTIVE DOORSTEP SPORT

## THE OFFER

**1** **ACTIVITIES PROVIDED AT THE RIGHT TIME, RIGHT STYLE, RIGHT PLACE & RIGHT PRICE**  
Appropriate doorstep sport opportunities can be challenging to find within underserved communities. Negotiation with young people is essential, to explore their preferences - to find out what is 'Right' for them as this is likely to vary for example by locality and demographics. However, it is always important that doorstep sport offers are affordable and provided at easily accessible, safe and local community facilities. Sessions should be vibrant, fun, informal, social, welcoming and non-pressured and consider participants previous experiences in sport and physical activity. They should be inclusive and non-threatening so that participants feel at ease.

**2** **ATTRACTIVE OFFER**  
It is important to offer a varied and responsive programme to ensure sessions provide what young people want. An attractive offer includes opportunities to take part in a range of sports/activities together with wider opportunities that illuminate regular sessions - such as group socials, trips, residential, competitions, events / festivals and links to major sporting events. Integrating music, food and lifestyle is also important to attract young people and keep them coming back. Having an attractive offer is not only important in keeping young people engaged, but it also helps young people to gain new experiences, build a sense of belonging and provide memorable and quality experiences. What constitutes attractive may change over time and the offer will need to be regularly reviewed and refreshed.

**3** **YEAR ROUND OPPORTUNITIES**  
Achieving long-term change with young people requires a long term commitment to those young people. The offer needs to be regular and consistent (i.e. not a fixed short-term programme) and engagement needs to be over a long period either within the project or by linking to other opportunities with clear pathways from holiday activities and short-term/ taster sessions into year round doorstep sport offers. A year round offer provides regularity, consistency and routine for the young people.

**4** **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**  
Effective Doorstep Sport ensures that young people are empowered and offered both challenging and developmental opportunities as they progress to help build key social and skills for life. Effective doorstep sport provides opportunities for personal development both within the sports participation itself together with opportunities for youth leadership and youth social action - a concept which stretches traditional ideas of volunteering to include young people having a large say in running the activities. The ideal is that doorstep sport grows a generation of young people who lead sport as volunteers, coaches, organisers and leaders within their own neighbourhood.

**THE RIGHT YOUNG PEOPLE**

Doorstep Sport is for young people living in low income, underserved communities. Effective doorstep sport considers the needs of multiple segments and adapts the offer accordingly. It is important that delivery organisations understand the make-up of their communities and how to cater for under-represented groups such as girls, young people with a disability and young people from ethnically diverse communities - with some sessions specifically designed for these under-represented groups. What is 'Right' for one group might not be 'Right' for another. The design of sessions should not just be based on demographic profile of the audience but consideration should also be given to what outcome is being sought. So for example, sports-based sessions which operate within different contexts may need to be designed differently to achieve the desired outcome/s i.e. young people referred from external agencies - their needs will need to be understood and planned for accordingly.

**5** **ENCOURAGING LIFELONG PARTICIPATION**  
Doorstep Sport equips young people with the appetite, skills, confidence and knowledge (know-how) so that they can 'make their own way' into lifelong participation. It helps young people to make positive choices about their lifestyle, develop an enthusiasm to be active and developing a sporting habit for life. Doorstep Sport promotes retention and life-long participation by making sport fun, normal and part of a routine and by providing opportunities to try new activities, experience and watch sport in new and different places and equips participants with good memories that develop a sense of independence. Helping to create the confidence and pathways into mainstream sport.

**6** **REWARDS & REWARDING**  
Young people develop new skills and behaviours through their involvement in Doorstep Sport sessions. In order to achieve this young people need to attend the sessions over a duration of time which is more likely when their attendance results in experiences that are rewarding. Rewards can come in the form of physical rewards, positive reinforcement and recognition, achievement of set goals and the opportunity to get involved in new things and experiences. People find different things rewarding. Effective rewarding can aid behaviour change and create good memories of sport and encourages long term engagement. Rewards can create a sense of belonging and being part of something bigger. Celebrating success and impact is key.

**7** **A CLEAR ETHOS**  
It is important that organisations have a clear young person-centred ethos to ensure that those involved in delivering activities have a shared understanding of both the aims of doorstep sport and of the young people that the activities seek to engage. The ethos needs to be visible at both strategic and operational level. This ethos should include a clear commitment and focus on engaging and supporting young people living in underserved communities to be more active. It is important that organisations have a strong understanding of the make-up of their local community and are trusted by young people, the wider community and local partners.

**8** **STABLE AND TRUSTED ORGANISATION**  
To achieve a long-term impact in the community Doorstep Sport delivery organisations must be stable and trusted by the local community. Short term planning for survival is important but with a longer term plan for sustainability as the vision. This includes planning to be financially sustainable such as attracting local and national investment as well as diversifying income and generating funding from other areas. Having a stable and trusted organisation also involves building partnerships, relationships and connections locally, good governance and being able to demonstrate impact of their work.

**9** **MULTI-AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS**  
Partnership working and collaboration helps to develop a bespoke doorstep sport approach to a local area based on a good understanding of the locality - opportunities and constraints. It ensures that the reach and take up of doorstep sport is maximised at a local level and the benefits of economies and practicalities of partnership working are achieved. Connecting and collaborating with a range of partners (both within and beyond the sports sector) such other community groups, the local authority, housing associations, education providers, sports clubs, leisure trusts and the private sector can help to create sporting pathways for young people into mainstream sport. Whilst partnerships with organisations beyond the sports sector can help improve the lives of young people in relation to wider social issues including health, community safety and employment. A partnership approach will also be vital in ensuring sustainable impact in the longer term.

**10** **RIGHT STAFF**  
Doorstep Sport benefits from staff who have a young person-centred approach to sports delivery which prioritises and responds to the needs of the target audience and where young people have opportunities to develop. It is important for the Doorstep Sport workforce to have the skills, experience and knowledge that enable them to reach, empathise and connect with young people in underserved communities. A combination of youth work experience and sport/ physical activity delivery plus a passion for youth development often works best. A workforce that has a good understanding of the place in which they are working is most effective. Organisations should consider the recruitment/selection of local delivery staff (including volunteers) based on skills, knowledge, expertise and attributes and think about how they can offer pathways for local young people to become delivery and project staff. The continuity of delivery staff at sessions on a long term basis is important for retention of young people. Organisational commitment to workforce development - including access to training, qualifications and mentoring is essential.

## UNDERPINNED BY:



Monitoring & Evaluation



Communications



Governance