



Report Subject:

Young people's attitudes and engagement in sport/physical activity

Title:

Research study to gain a greater understanding of young people aged 14-16 years in areas of high deprivation.

Background

The study¹ was conducted by social marketing agency, Diva Creative on behalf of StreetGames between January - April 2013.

The study aimed to gain a greater understanding of young people (aged 14-16 years) living in areas of deprivation - specifically in terms of:

- Exploring their lifestyles, priorities and behaviours
- Exploring their attitudes and engagement in sport/physical activity
- How best to communicate effectively
- Ultimately - encourage them to take up and maintain an active lifestyle.

This briefing paper provides a summary of the key findings from the study and suggested recommendations in terms of sporting offers that are most likely to appeal. The full report is available to download from the StreetGames



website: www.streetgames.org/www/sgplus/content/social-marketing-agency-diva-creative-research-study.

Summary Findings

Lifestyles

The study highlighted that the target group have busy lifestyles and that there are many competing priorities and interests for their 'leisure time'.

¹ The research methods included desk research, an on-line survey (over 360 completed questionnaires submitted) and 6 focus groups (3 male/ 3 female groups).

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Key interests were focused around non-structured informal activities; socialising with friends was a big part of their lives. Key interests most commonly mentioned included: hanging out with friends, listening to music, watching television, playing video games (both individually and with friends), social media, going to fast food restaurants with friends and for some - sport (both playing/following teams).

Key priorities were focused on: friends, family, school work, hobbies and interests.

The survey results highlighted that nearly three times as many of the young males (29%) prioritised sport and being active compared to the females (11%) and in the focus groups the young males talked more often about sport in relation to their hobbies and lifestyle – both in terms of participation and spectating.

Sporting Habits

Most of the target group are playing sport on a regular basis with the survey results showing that over 87% play sport at least once per week. However, a large proportion of this activity is within PE lessons at school. There were many respondents who either never or infrequently engage with sport outside of school PE lessons:

- 40% of the young females and 31% of the young males **had never taken part in an after school sports club.**

- Over 50% had **never been to a holiday activity sports session/club**
- 80% of the females and over 60% of the males **do not use a leisure centre, youth club or swimming pool on a regular basis.**

Discussion group participants often spoke negatively about the lack of choice they were given in PE lessons and feeling 'side-lined' if they weren't in a school team or doing GCSE PE. For example:

"They can't be bothered with us anymore. When we was younger, we used to do like badminton and cross-country, ping-pong and occasionally football.

We're just there because it's the law"

"I think they should switch it up a bit....it's not like we're bunking off somewhere"

"...Coz there's a lot of groups you're waiting most of the time"

"When we were younger we got coached a bit"

"They wouldn't let the girls play football..."

In terms of current sporting habits - males were much more likely to be playing team sports (62%) than females (39%) – with the females, more likely to be taking part in individual activities such as dance, swimming, jogging and fitness classes.

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport



The survey data highlighted that their current favourite sports (*in popularity order*) included:

Males: football, the gym, boxing, rugby, cycling, cricket, hockey, badminton, basketball, table tennis and martial arts.

Females: dance, netball, swimming, running, football, horse riding, the gym, badminton, trampolining, gymnastics, ice-skating, basketball, zumba/aerobics and rounders.

Barriers to Participation

A lack of time, due to **too much school work** was the factor that was most likely to prevent respondents from taking part in sport/physical activity more often. However, other barriers were also highlighted, **relating to convenience, cost, a lack of confidence, perceptions of ability, perceptions of body and social norms.**

External barriers cited included aspects such as activities being **‘too far away’, ‘too expensive’ and ‘nothing on at the right time’.**

Internal barriers relating to confidence and sporting ability were also significant – particularly amongst the female respondents, with survey results highlighting that:

- 23% - ‘Not confident enough to take part’
- 22% ‘I don’t think I’m sporty’
- 20% ‘I’m embarrassed about my body’
- 17% ‘I don’t want to show off my body’
- 16% ‘I’m not good enough to play for a team’

Many of the sample also said they are too busy seeing friends and socialising to take part in sport, and that not having any one to go with prevented them from taking part in more sport. Potentially this relates to social norming, in that the sample are often led by activities that are popular within their friend/peer group rather than initiating new experiences within their friendship circle.

Additionally if none of their friends take part in sport, or would attend sport activities with them this impacted negatively on their perception of what their experience would be like if they attended a sport session, and reduce their intention to attend.

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Comments captured within the focus groups further emphasise the key barriers:

"It can get really expensive"

"Mostly everyone has homework on weekdays"

"I just don't have enough time"

"You are in a skin tight uniform, everyone sees you get hot, your hair gets messy..."

You have brothers and sisters you can't really leave them...

"They think they're the best and make you feel like you're not good enough..."

"Intimidating if there's people who are taking it a bit serious..."

"I always think girls get self-conscious about boy's and when people watch 'em and that"

"Just need the gear...."

Latent demand

Most respondents were interested in taking part in some form of sport/physical activity both now and in the future.

There is demand for a wide range of activities - with the activities they would most like to take part in (*in order of popularity*) including:

- **Females:** Swimming, going to the gym, dance, fitness classes, trampolining, running/jogging, netball, badminton, roller skating, tennis, boxing, football, volleyball, cycling, basketball and martial arts.

- **Males:** Football, going to the gym, cycling/BMX, boxing, running/jogging, rugby, adventure sports, swimming, tennis, golf, martial arts, badminton, basketball, trampolining and cricket.

Motivations and Requirements

Factors which are most likely to encourage this group to take part in regular sport/physical activity include: the **affordability of sessions and ease of access.**

However, there were other factors which were also considered important including:

- **Being healthy:** - with many stating that they'd be encouraged to attend if sessions focused more on getting fit, rather than on competition.
- **Experience:** - with the importance of a good instructor/coach, opportunities for social time to talk and opportunities to meet friends and play social leagues and fun matches being highlighted.
- **Aims and goals:** with opportunities to learn new skills e.g. team work that might help with employment being considered important.

In addition – for the females, having **female only sessions** was also important – requested by nearly one-third of all respondents.

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Core motivations for taking part in sport were focused around:

- **Health benefits:** to keep fit
- **Experience:** for fun/enjoyment and social opportunities
- **Body image:** to lose weight and look good
- **Aims and goals:** to gain new skills, for personal challenge and improve performance
- **Self-perception:** to feel good about themselves.

Comments captured via the focus groups emphasise these priorities and motivations:

"It helps you stay healthy"

"When you're with friends it's much more fun"

"You can socialise with new people"

"It teaches you skills, communication, working well in a group...."

"When you're on the same team as your mates it's good"

"Then you can do it and prove them wrong....."

"I say like you play more sport and you get more confident"

"Keeping healthy...."

"Spending time with friends"



this target group, sporting offers need to appeal to their motivations and interests and be affordable and convenient.

There are a number of different motivations that should be used as a way to encourage the target audience to take part in sport outside school including:

- Fun and socialising
- Teamwork and leadership
- Improving performance
- Personal Challenge
- Being fit and healthy.

The young males tend to be driven by a mix of task oriented goals (skill accomplishment, affiliation and fitness), ego oriented goals (social, status, competition and recognition). Therefore, offers need to provide opportunities to grow skills, be part of a team, improve fitness as well as take part in competition.

Sporting Offers

Key findings from the study highlight, that **to engage**

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport



The young females tend to be highly influenced by the opinions of peers. Therefore, offers need to be positioned as a fun and social activity involving friendship groups. Focus on looking good and losing weight as well as providing opportunities to improve and develop skills in a non-competitive environment (although fun competitions would be received well).

It is important, to consider ways of **making the offer and style of sessions relevant to their interests and hobbies** – which focus on:

- 'Hanging out with friends'
- Casual, non-structured activities
- Variety and choice (youth-led)
- Listening to music
- The importance of social media
- On-line competitions.

It may also be useful to consider opportunities for bolt-on

activities to sessions linked to other areas of interest, for example to beauty, food or music.

To ensure that sessions are accessible it is vital that:

- They are low cost/affordable (£1-£3)
- They are provided at local, familiar venues.
- The style is informal, welcoming and non-pressured. Focused on fitness, fun and friends with 'hidden coaching' included to improve skills and progression opportunities available.
- Sessions are led by a coach/instructor who is friendly, approachable, helpful, makes sessions fun and is someone the young people can relate to.
- Include opportunities for female only activities.

Incentives & Rewards

Rewards for loyalty, attendance and performance were keenly valued.

- Females requested: shopping vouchers, sweets, event tickets, certificates and leisure centre discounts
- Males requested: match tickets, trophies, medals, vouchers, sports equipment and leisure centre discounts.

Opportunities to take part in competitions, festivals or fund-raising events were important motivators and there was clear demand for trips to sports events.

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Communication

The young people consulted indicated, that they were most likely to look to 'trusted' sources for information on sports/activities in their local area – either through 'word of mouth' recommendation from their friends and family or through being told about it at school (supported via posters and leaflets). The fact that schools are seen as a safe and trusted source was important to the respondents.

Information provided via social media such as Facebook and Twitter was also very important.

Respondents were far more likely to attend a session if someone they knew recommended it or encouraged them to go and having someone to go with and taking part in friendship groups was really important.

Feedback highlighted, that promotional information needs to include essential information about the sessions (e.g. time, cost, type of activity) and provide images of young people doing the activities. It is suggested that:

For females: messages should be fun, vibrant and non-competitive

For males: messages should focus on fun, promoting social activity and sessions that can help the target audience learn new skills and challenge them to achieve their own personal goals.



Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Headline data

Table 1: Hobbies & Interests of focus group participants (Listed in order of popularity)

Females	Males
Listening to Music	Watching Television
Watching Television	Video Games (FIFA, Call of Duty, Assassins Creed)
Watching Films	Listening to music
Art (painting, drawing and colouring)	Socialising with friends
Computers (video games, Facebook, Twitter)	Sport (football, rugby, basketball, volleyball, table tennis karate, cricket, BMX, Skateboarding)
Socialising with friends	Facebook – Twitter
Food (cooking, Nando's, burgers, sweets, pizza)	Food (KFC, Nando's, McDonalds, Subway)
Shopping/Fashion	Supporting football team + following football players
Sport (swimming, jogging, football, dance)	
Reading	
Singing	
Nail Art	
Cadets	
Photography	
Looking after Siblings	

Table 2: Main priorities

Priorities	% Males	Priorities	% Females
Hobbies/interests	59%	Friends	66%
Friends	54%	Family	62%
Family	47%	School	45%
School	44%	Hobbies/interests	37%
Playing sport/ being active	29%	Shopping/fashion/image	21%
Relationships	21%	Relationships	18%
Part-time job/work	11%	Playing sport/ being active	11%
Shopping/fashion/image	2%	Part-time job/work	5%

Table 3: Main activities respondents currently take part in

Activity	% Males	% Females
Individual activities (e.g. swimming/cycling /running)	39%	39%
Team sports (e.g. football, rugby, netball)	62%	39%
Keep fit/gym (including aerobics/yoga classes)	38%	34%
Dance (e.g. street dance/cheerleading/modern)	3%	34%
Martial arts	14%	3%
Others (e.g. walking)	11%	18%

N.B: Respondents were able to select more than one response to questions, therefore responses sum to >100%

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Table 4: Favourite Activities respondents currently take part in

Activity	% Males	Activity	% Females
Football	33%	Dance	20%
Gym	10%	Netball	9%
Boxing	9%	Swimming	8%
Rugby	8%	Running	7%
Cycling/BMX	5%	Football	7%
Hockey	3%	Horse Riding	5%
Cricket	3%	Gym	5%
Badminton	3%	Badminton	5%
Basketball	2%	Trampolining	4%
Karate	2%	Gymnastics	4%
Table Tennis	2%	Walking	4%
Skiing	2%	Jogging	3%
Martial Arts	2%	Ice skating	2%
Frisbee	1%	Basketball	2%
Fishing	1%	Zumba	2%
Kick boxing	1%	Aerobics	2%
Snow boarding	1%	Athletics	2%
Golf	1%	Rounders	2%
Archer	1%	Rugby	2%
Swimming	1%	Cycling	1%
Volleyball	1%	Tennis	1%
Running	1%		

Table 5: Key factors preventing respondents from taking part in sport/physical activity

Barriers	% Males	Barriers	% Females
Too much school work	49%	Too much school work	61%
Too busy socialising	17%	No one to go with	38%
Too far away	13%	Too busy socialising	27%
I'm unfit	10%	Not confident enough	23%
Too expensive	11%	I Don't think I'm sporty	22%
No one to go with	11%	I'm unfit	20%
Nothing on at the right time	11%	I'm embarrassed about my body	20%
Not confident enough	10%	I don't want to show off my body	17%
Not good enough to play for team	10%	Not good enough to play for team	16%
I Don't think I'm sporty	8%	Too expensive	14%
Don't know where to go	7%	Don't know where to go	14%
Don't like what's on offer	6%	My friends aren't interested	12%
It's too competitive/serious	6%	Don't like what's on offer	12%
I don't want to show off my body	4%	Nothing on at the right time	11%
Don't have/can't afford right kit	3%	It's too competitive/serious	10%
I'm embarrassed about my body	2%	Don't have/can't afford right kit	5%

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Table 6: The main sports/activities respondents would like to take part in

Activity	% Males	Activity	% Females
Football	40%	Swimming	37%
Gym	37%	Gym	35%
Cycling/BMX	30%	Dance	30%
Boxing	29%	Classes (e.g. step/tone/Zumba)	29%
Running/jogging	24%	Trampolining	25%
Rugby	21%	Running/jogging	23%
Adventure sports	21%	Adventure sports	21%
Swimming	20%	Netball	18%
Tennis	20%	Badminton	18%
Golf	18%	Roller skating	18%
Martial arts	17%	Tennis	17%
Badminton	16%	Boxing	15%
Boot camp style fitness	16%	Football	14%
Basketball	16%	Volleyball	14%
Trampolining	14%	Cycling/BMX	12%
Cricket	14%	Basketball	12%
Squash	9%	Boot camp style fitness	12%
Skateboarding	9%	Martial arts	12%
Volleyball	8%	Rugby	9%
Table tennis	6%	Squash	7%
Classes (e.g. step/tone)	5%	Skateboarding	7%
Dance	4%	Cricket	5%
Roller skating	4%	Golf	4%
Netball	2%	Table tennis	1%

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Table 7: Key factors that would encourage respondents to take part in regular sport/physical activity

Factors	% Males	Factors	% Females
Easy to get to	46%	Cheap to do	37%
Cheap to do	34%	If sessions focused on getting fit rather than competition	34%
A really good coach/instructor	29%	Easy to get to	33%
If there were more social leagues/fun matches	25%	Sessions close to where I live	33%
Sessions close to where I live	22%	A really good coach/instructor	32%
If sessions focused on getting fit rather than competition	21%	Girls/Boys only sessions	28%
If taking part helped learn skills	18%	If sessions included social time	28%
If there were more opportunities for competitive matches	17%	Wider range of activities	23%
If sessions included social time	15%	If the sessions suited to my fitness level	19%
Wider range of activities	15%	If kit and equipment provided	16%
If the sessions suited to my fitness level	13%	If there were more social leagues/fun matches	13%
If kit and equipment provided	10%	If I could turn up changed or knew changing rooms were clean	12%
If there were incentives for attendance	8%	If taking part helped learn skills	12%
If I could turn up already changed	7%	If there were more opportunities for competitive matches	10%

Table 8: Main motivations for taking part in sport/physical activity

Motivations	% Males	Motivations	% Females
To keep fit	72%	To keep fit	71%
To gain new skills	36%	To lose weight	58%
To challenge myself	36%	To feel better	43%
To feel better	29%	For fun/enjoyment	34%
For fun/enjoyment	29%	To challenge myself	23%
To lose weight	29%	To meet friends/socialise	19%
To improve performance	23%	To train/compete	17%
To train/compete	22%	To gain new skills	16%
To meet friends/socialise	16%	To improve performance	15%
To enjoy the outdoors	9%	To enjoy the outdoors	11%

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Table 9: Main places to look for information to take part in sport

Communication Channels	% Males	Communication Channels	% Females
Ask Friends	47%	Posters and leaflets in school	50%
Internet search	43%	Ask Friends	43%
Posters and leaflets in school	39%	Social media (Facebook, Twitter)	40%
Social media (Facebook, Twitter)	39%	Internet search	38%
Ask parents/family	20%	Noticeboards in sports club/centre	25%
Noticeboards in sports club/centre	18%	Ask parents/family	23%
Other	5%	Other	10%

StreetGames

StreetGames is the only national charity dedicated to developing sport with disadvantaged communities. Our mission is to 'Change Sport, Change Lives and Change Communities'.

StreetGames is creating networks at national and local levels to strengthen the commitment to doorstep sport, as well as seeking significant funding to make the StreetGames projects sustainable. StreetGames' ambition is to link new doorstep sport with sports clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport programmes, local authority services and health projects.

©StreetGames 2013



streetgames.org

