SPORT ENGLAND

Extending Activities

Case Study

Healthy social gatherings for young people

CSP DELIVERER: SOMERSET ACTIVITY AND SPORTS PARTNERSHIP (SASP)

TARGET: BOYS / GIRLS AGED 14 - 19

ACTIVITY: MULTI SPORTS

Our objectives:

- Provide more structured activities around which young people in the community can socialise
- Increase participation in informal physical activity and sport
- Improve self esteem and self confidence
- Reduce anti-social behaviour
- Encourage team building

Identifying the need:

- It was identified that a local young persons' clinic was being used as a meeting place or drop-in centre by young people without clinical reasons to be there
- Other work taking place in the area by a group of detached youth workers was very informal and unstructured
- Consultation revealed that young people felt they had very little in the area to occupy themselves
- Further investigation revealed a desire for organised activities to be arranged regularly on one evening a week

How we progressed:

- Following an unsuccessful first week, reassurances were needed from local workers already engaged with the young people regarding how to motivate them to attend
- Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) coaches quickly gained the trust and confidence of the group so that successive weeks saw numbers increase to 15 young people regularly attending
- Traditional and non-traditional sports were provided with a focus on interaction and participation in an informal environment rather than skill levels
- Young people have shown a desire to engage in other activities beyond current capabilities
- Members of the group are gradually being signposted to other provision available to them and appropriate to their needs

Success factors:

- Engagement with hard to reach group of young people
- Observed reduction in unhealthy lifestyles whilst attending sessions
- Clear improvement in self esteem and active participation
- The formation of a cohesive unit within the group - all encouraging and helping one another
- A fall in number of young people using the clinic solely as a meeting place, this has encouraged others to attend for genuine reasons without feeling threatened by the number of young people 'hanging around'.

SIRC Sport Industry Research Centre

SASP

Creating a healthier and more active community in Somerset