



Case Study by Neil Young

Girls Can Coach

Training

As the lead for leadership and volunteering in the Tees Valley I delivered a full day of influencer training for over 60 Y9 Girls across the county from 9 separate schools, the training looked at a variety of skills needed to lead, but more so how they can influence other girls to take part and enjoy PE and Physical Activity. The day was challenging and at times took the girls outside of their comfort zone, none more so than having a male deliver the training and ask them about issues that see young girls disengaging from PE and Physical Activity. The girls responded well to me and I gained some fantastic insight from everyone, ensuring throughout that they felt safe in the environment, to express their thoughts and share their knowledge. At the end of the training a high percentage of girls thanked me and said they were inspired and able to feel at ease to share and develop some ideas to engage other girls back at school.

Planning

The girls spent the remainder of the term speaking to girls back at their school to get a clear understanding of what activities to organise



and deliver based on need, the impact of this was huge in a number of ways. Firstly, the Girls who attended the training began to understand some of the issues faced by their peers who didn't have the same interests and passion for Sport & Physical Activity they do, secondly the girls had some real insight into what was needed to engage the girls and hopefully persuade them to take part, more so stay engaged.

Activity

Every school was very different in terms of their delivery model however, all schools targeted Y7&8, two schools ran a programme based around tutor groups which included boys and girls, focussing on developing friendships. The other schools looked at programmes focussing on girls, with a number of outcomes, Increase Physical Activity, engage those girls who have disengaged from PE & sport and finally two schools looked at focussing on Y7 Girls due to them not having much opportunity to take part in sport, mix with other pupils or have the full transition opportunities from primary to secondary due to Covid-19.

Impact

Every programme made positive impacts on both the coaches/leaders, participants and more so PE teachers who realised the traditional offer is not what everyone wants and that those disengaged pupils thoroughly enjoyed the variety on offer to them.

In terms of further impact, it was noted at one school that numbers for after school sessions had risen since the initiative had been in place and new faces arriving weekly. Miss Robinson stated that "Our numbers for after school clubs have grown and the majority are Y7 girls who are showing a new interest ever since the taster sessions took place. Confidence has increased across the new cohort and I am seeing a real difference in the Y7 girls' attitude to PE and more so the after-school opportunities offered."

At Nunthorpe Academy the leaders used Clubercise to engage those girls who have drifted away from sport clubs and enrichment opportunities, the Clubercise ran as a weekly club and made positive impact with participants and interest across the school, one of the leaders stated that “the girls are really enjoying the classes and have reported back that they can just come along and be themselves away from other people who are judgemental or make you feel not good enough when doing skills in PE, we have also been asked by other year groups if we can open it up to more people as they’ve heard such good things about it.

Trinity Catholic College decided to run some intra house competitions focussing on non-traditional sports and use house teams to engage ALL in the activities and events, due to the nature of events chosen the take up was a huge success with one Y9 Girl commenting that “she has never enjoyed football, netball and the other team sports but would love to keep doing Dodgeball as a club in school as she felt part of the team for the first time since primary school”

The whole programme was a huge success from start to finish and made a fantastic impact across secondary schools in Tees Valley. The overall success, alongside recruiting and training leaders as part of the Girls Can Coach campaign, was the increase across schools in physical activity and sport participation.



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