Doorstep Sport

Right Time, Right Place, Right Price & Right Style

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StreetGames is the national charity which brings together those local projects that develop sport with disadvantaged communities and make the benefits of sport accessible to young people regardless of their social and economic circumstances. Given today’s economic climate this has never been more important.

StreetGames was launched in 2007 with a vision: “For the most disadvantaged young people and communities to enjoy the benefits of sport and participate at the same rate as their more affluent peers.” We advocate taking sport to the doorstep in disadvantaged communities. We call this way of working, ‘Doorstep Sport’.

Since its foundation, the StreetGames mission has been to: ‘Change sport, change communities and change lives.’

As they move through their teenage years into adulthood, young people start to play regular, organised sport less often. The rate of this teenage drop-off is greatest in disadvantaged communities. Doorstep Sport is a style of sport that effectively engages young people in disadvantaged areas. By offering sport ‘at the right time, in the right place, at the right price and in the right style,’ Doorstep Sport combats drop-off.

This factsheet provides top tips and helpful information about Doorstep Sport which are drawn from the findings of research, insight studies and learning gathered from online surveys of 800 respondents, 16 focus groups, 2 creative workshops and the experience of more than 250 neighbourhood projects nationwide.

This learning drives the new Doorstep Sport Club programme that StreetGames runs thanks to Sport England and Sport Wales funding.

TEENAGE DROP-OFF
IN SPORT
- THE REALITY

Participation in sport at least once per week 14-25 year olds

Just over half (56.4%) of the 8.3m 14-25 year olds in England take part in sport at least once per week. Rates of regular participation amongst young people from low income groups being around one-third lower.

Disadvantaged young people are less likely than their more affluent peers to play sport in their teenage years. This pattern continues into adult life.

However, Active People Survey 7 (2012/13) data shows that 71% of young people from lower socio-economic groups ‘would like to do more sport’.

Common wisdom says that these young people are ‘hard to reach.’ Research from the StreetGames network of more than 250 projects tells us this is not the case. In practice, they are very easy to reach. The approach needed is called Doorstep Sport.

In 2011-12, 13 million people in the UK were living in poverty. For the first time, more than half of these people lived in a working family. There are now around 3.5 million children in the UK living in poverty. Circa 2 million young people live in the 20% most disadvantaged communities of the UK.

The level of benefits for an out-of-work adult without children now covers only 40% of what the public considers to be a minimum standard of living. For families with children this figure is no more than 60%. For many of these children and teenagers traditionally organised sport is not affordable.

INTRODUCTION
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WHAT IS ‘RIGHT’ ABOUT DOORSTEP SPORT?

Doorstep Sport is sport provided at the ‘right time, right place, right price and in the right style’.

StreetGames has worked out what constitutes ‘right’ by thinking and by testing how to shape sport to meet the lives, the needs and motivations of disadvantaged teenagers.

Teenagers and young adults lead busy lives with many priorities competing for their time. School/college, work, family, friends and relationships are commonly prioritised ahead of taking part in sport and physical activity.

When teenagers and young adults are tempted into sport they want it to be part of their social lives - not unlike listening to music, going shopping or hanging out with their friends.

They want their sport to be friendly and informal, varied and vibrant. They want it to take place close to home and they want a say in what goes on at their sports sessions. Apart from these characteristics there is no ‘one size fits all’ recipe for the perfect session that will appeal universally, as the target market is far from homogenous.

Sessions created locally for and by the young people who live there have a much greater chance of becoming successful, popular and sustainable.

CATCH THEM YOUNG

Most young participants in disadvantaged areas will not join a mainstream sports club, so the Doorstep Sport sessions become their destination.

Doorstep Sport is designed to:
- keep these teenagers active
- generate positive attitudes and memories of sport
- give them the skills and appetite to make their own way in sport for the rest of their lives.

Doorstep Sport makes sport normal in otherwise inactive communities.

It teaches young people the skills and knowledge needed to make their own way in sport.

The vibrant and varied Doorstep Sport programme keeps people coming back.

Youth leadership creates a stable core of volunteers who grow to own the sessions.

Doorstep Sport contributes to healthy lives and to community safety.

GROWING THE SPORTING HABIT FOR LIFE

Participants at a sample of Doorstep Sport Clubs were recently asked what they liked about doorstep sport:

- 82% said the cheapness of the sessions
- 80% said fun
- 75% said the coaches
- 74% said it is easy to get to
- 72% said because they are getting better at sport/fitness
- 69% said being with friends
- 67% said playing matches / tournaments
- 63% said the variety of activities on offer

Other factors that are highlighted as important include – the sessions being safe, helping to improve fitness and the chance to meet new friends.

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WHICH SPORTS?

Research undertaken by StreetGames, coupled with Active People Survey data, shows that young people (particularly females) are increasingly taking part in individual/fitness based activities. In this time of austerity there is a trend for young people to take part in almost-free activities such as cycling and jogging. The table below shows the most popular activities that young people tell us they would like to take part in.

The most popular activities amongst projects in the StreetGames network are typically football, dance and basketball. These are followed by boxing, handball, fitness, athletics, table tennis, cricket, tennis and street rugby. The most popular sports/activities undertaken by Us Girls participants are fitness, dance, swimming, netball and badminton. Next come football, boxing, basketball and rounders.

Multi-sports sessions are also very popular. Multi-sport sessions help prevent boredom and develop young people’s core movement and coordination skills, confidence, knowledge and experience of playing sport. They help to prepare them for taking up sports specific opportunities.

Experience across the StreetGames network shows demand for a wide range of activities from traditional team sports to new and adapted versions. Whatever the sport, it is the style of delivery that is the most important factor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports disadvantaged young people want to play</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>14 - 16 year olds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football, gym, cycling/BMX, boxing, running, rugby, adventure sports, swimming, tennis, golf, martial arts, badminton, basketball</td>
<td>Swimming, gym, dance, fitness classes, trampolining, running, adventure sports, netball, badminton, tennis, boxing, football, volleyball, cycling, basketball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>16 - 19 year olds</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gym, swimming, football, running/jogging, cycling, martial arts, adventure sports, boxing, badminton, tennis.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DOORSTEP SPORT UNDERSTANDING DISADVANTAGED TEENAGERS

What they say:

I don’t want to play boring sports.

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

You had to do something every second...too tiring.

It can get really expensive.

I think people can be intimidated by those who are better at the activity.

I just don’t have enough time...course work, school work...music...chores.

The Doorstep Sport approach

Doorstep Sport suits the time of a young person’s life – adolescence. Those who are not very committed to sport like it because it fits in well with their teenage lifestyle - their self-image, their motivations, their wants and fears. Doorstep Sport is not boring – it isn’t an hour of structured skills and drills.

Sessions often incorporate a phone break; there are trips away; competitions and festivals to enjoy and it’s all in the neighbourhood.

Doorstep Sport wins over other forms of sport because it is convenient and cheap. It has to be so because teenage budgets are very stretched. If a high cost was involved it is likely that other leisure activities would be preferred – like going to the pub, the takeaway, or the off-license.

Doorstep Sport is enjoyed with friends and the coach protects the integrity of friendship groups and some of their social rules. It is safe from the humiliations generated by lower levels of ability.

Doorstep Sport is best when it’s run by coaches who live locally and make positive, realistic role models. In mature doorstep sport sessions many coaches and leaders were once volunteers recruited from amongst the participants.

Doorstep Sport empowers participants and provides challenges in a safe, welcome and informal environment. It provides opportunities to grow and learn to lead through a pathway to coaching qualifications through volunteering.

When it’s done well, Doorstep Sport has a high rate of retention and protects against teenage drop-off. What is there not to like?
DOORSTEP SPORT - UNDERSTANDING THE GIRLS

How Doorstep Sport addresses the issue

Understanding how non-sporty young women and girls want their physical activity is important in order to bridge the huge gender gap in participation. Typically, 20% more young males than females from lower socio-economic groups take part in regular sport.

Between 2011 and 2013, the StreetGames led Us Girls programme mobilised over 34,000 young women aged 16-25 from 80 disadvantaged communities and won the public vote for the National Lottery - Best Sports Project Award for 2013.

Almost all activities delivered are female only. Research shows that many young females do not want to exercise in front of males. This is especially true for those who have limited experience, skill and confidence.

The key points the Us Girls programme found for engaging and retaining young women in sport included:

- A focus on fun, fitness and confidence-building rather than formality. The Us Girls coaches make sure the sessions are welcoming where everyone feels included. There is nothing worse than feeling like you don’t fit in.
- By and large this group prefers indoor facilities where the surrounding environment is safe and inviting for women to exercise and socialise.
- For some groups, female-exclusive environments are essential due to their cultural beliefs, especially those from Muslim backgrounds.
- Single, young mothers cannot afford childcare. Us Girls provides free childcare and an on-site creche, wherever and whenever it can.
- Music improves sessions. It is a motivating factor and creates a fun atmosphere. Young people identify strongly with musical trends. Sport benefits from the association.
- Incentives and rewards encourage regular participation.
- Women and girls love goodies and are savvy shoppers who enjoy creative pricing offers.
- Dance and fitness are important activities. Sports can have a negative image which can be overcome by introducing participants casually to exercise.
No one solution fits all when it comes to determining the right time to deliver Doorstep Sport.

To find out the right time of day, consultation with the young people is essential. Session timings may need adjusting – so resilience and flexibility is vitally important during the early weeks.

The right time will be different for young people at different life stages. Unless it is holiday time or when working with NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training), evening activity sessions will often prove most popular. Younger teenagers who are not old enough for pubs and clubs might prefer a later start.

Not many teenagers want to get up in the morning. Not all people work 9am-5pm and many teenagers with part-time jobs work outside office hours in bars or restaurants. They might want their sport at unusual times of the day and night.

Community safety projects often start at the time when anti-social behaviour is at its highest – late evenings can be a very good time for midnight basketball and Friday night football leagues.

## What they say:
- **Evenings are best…flu, six or seven o'clock.**
- **I wouldn’t do it after college, ‘cos at the end of the day that’s my time.**
- **Weekends are really busy.**
- **Would have to be after college ‘cos you don’t want to be sweating loads then go to your lesson.**
- **During lunch hours, there’s nothing to do.**
- **Need to go home, change my phone, get changed.**
- **straight after school, it’s too late to come back.**

Indoor or out? – The right place is often a neighbourhood park, a MUGA, a community hall, a car park, a youth centre, an amenity green space or even a beach.

A facility with a roof can more readily secure year-round involvement than an outdoor venue. Numbers drop off at poorly-lit sessions run outside on a cold wintry evening.

Many Doorstep Sport users will not have been to a leisure centre or a fitness gym. It may be necessary to organise a visit to make them comfortable with the venue before activities begin. A good idea is to start sessions on a familiar space in summer and then move the established group indoors as the dark nights draw in.

Specialist sports facilities are not always necessary. Activities should run in a familiar neighbourhood space. The young people are best placed to judge which spaces are acceptable.

**Safety** - Disadvantaged teenagers are the group most at risk of street attack. Their safe areas are often strictly demarcated – with either very real or totally imagined fears of what happens to the transgressor. In a 2010 survey of over 500 StreetGames participants, being safe was the aspect participants ranked third most important about Doorstep Sport sessions.

**Convenience** - Sessions should run within walking distance of the young persons’ homes, on their estate or somewhere else that young people already go with their friends. Disadvantaged young people have below average access to cars. Facilities within easy access negate the need for car travel, save money on bus fares, make getting to sport hassle-free and save on travel time.
Community change - Disadvantaged communities can be plagued with inter-generational hostility. Older people like to see their youth engaged in positive activities that are led by a respected local figure. Doorstep Sport helps a community to take on the desirable character of an active, sporting neighbourhood.

The Solution
Pay and play pricing is essential rather than upfront membership, affiliation or course fees.

Sessions will seldom break even, so in some circumstances a charge might prove to be a bigger barrier than it is worth. Therefore it is reasonable to decide not to charge.

Older participants, especially the girls, are shrewd judges of value and like offers. They will search out bargains and value for money offers.

The Facts
Findings in the Mintel Report ‘Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools UK 2013’ found that 45% of leisure centre users said that it was ‘getting too expensive’.

Research undertaken by StreetGames with young people living in disadvantaged areas highlighted that cost is a major barrier with:

- 40% of 14-16 year olds
- 63% of 16-19 year olds

stating they would be encouraged to take part in regular sport/physical activity if it was cheap. Data from the Office for National Statistics indicates that the average household spends circa £6.70 on sport every week and that those from the lowest earning households spend around 25% less (i.e. £5).

As such, it is not surprising that our research highlighted that disadvantaged young people are usually only willing/able to pay between £1-£3 for Doorstep Sport activities, but in some cases the need for free or heavily subsidised pricing was essential.

![Graph: Sports Participation 16-25 year olds by Household Income](image)

Source: Sport England Active People Survey (APS) data – APS6. The APS data above, shows the significant impact household incomes have on young people’s ability to take part and engage in sport.

**Community change**

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**Graph:**

- 44% (at least participate (1x a week)
- 41% (at least 5x a week)
- 40% (at least 10x a week)
- 33% (at least 15x a week)
- 32% (at least 20x a week)

**Source:** Sport England Active People Survey (APS) data – APS6. The APS data above, shows the significant impact household incomes have on young people’s ability to take part and engage in sport.
Discounts and incentives such as ‘Bring a friend for half price’ or a free trial session are appealing.

Hire/use of any equipment should be included in the price of the session.

Incentives help. Loyalty cards and rewards for regular attendance and performance are valued.

Typical incentives which appeal include shopping vouchers, event tickets, leisure centre discounts, certificates, match tickets, trophies, medals, vouchers, sports equipment and leisure centre discounts.

What they say:

It can be expensive, even teenagers don’t have much money.

Swimming’s gone up to £4 and that’s a lot for an hour.

If you go to the gym it’s pretty expensive.

Youth clubs are usually 50p or a pound while you go on a thing that it should be like that.

SPECIAL OFFERS!

Vouchers

The females tend to be highly influenced by the opinions of peers. Offers which were positioned as a fun and social activity and involved friendship groups were popular, with a focus on looking good and losing weight. Plus opportunities to improve and develop new skills in a fun, non-competitive environment were well received.

Right Time, Right Place, Right Price, Right Style.

Doorstep Sport style evolves over time, but tends to be fun, informal and youth-led. Each Doorstep Sport session has its own take on these common attributes.

Research shows how Doorstep Sport adapts to satisfy the motivations of the target group. Satisfying the motivations shapes the ‘right style’ of delivery.

The most common motivations include:

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

The research also showed that young males tend to be driven by a mix of task oriented goals (skill development, accomplishment, affiliation and fitness) and ego oriented goals (social, status, competition and recognition).

Therefore, offers which focus on growing skills, being part of a team, improving fitness as well as taking part in competition tend to appeal.

Main motivations for taking part in sport

Youth clubs are usually 50p or a pound while you go on a thing that it should be like that.

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What Doorstep Sport feels like:
Doorstep Sport projects find that skills and drills sessions are unlikely to appeal. Coaches and leaders deliver hidden coaching via a game-led approach, fun challenges and/or creative activities.

Key ingredients include:
-Varied, casual and non-structured activities (where the participants have input and choice).
-Opportunities for social time when participants can talk to each other and build friendships.
-Opportunities for progression, social matches /fun leagues and chances to take part in festivals, tournaments and events - for those who wish to do so. These are really important factors in retaining participants and provide high-points to work towards and look back on.
-On-line games and competitions.
-Music within sessions.
-A flexible approach – do not expect all participants to come at the start of a session and leave at the end and don’t expect all participants to change for the session or wear the right gear.
-Connections and links via Social Media.

What they say:
You have a kick about for fun and meet new people.
It’s a break from college/work: it clears your mind, takes your mind off things.
It helps you stay healthy.
[at Sports club] if you don’t turn up they’ll notice and ask, but if you just go to the park you don’t have to worry about that……
I do it so I don’t get fat.
Trophies and medals – if you’ve got something to show for it you’re more likely to go back.
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How To Attract Participants to Doorstep Sport Sessions

Young people tell us that they are far more likely to attend a session if someone they know recommends it or encourages them to go. Having someone to go with and taking part in friendship groups is really important.

Working in partnership with intact groups - such as youth groups, faith groups, young mums or groups of friends can be a useful starting point. Offering opportunities to exercise with family members and offering a ‘bring a friend’ scheme has proved very popular with Us Girls participants.

Where promotional literature is used, it should use friendly imagery, a realistic variety of exercises – so participants know what to expect. It is best not to stress body-beautiful images.

The Us Girls Programme focused on a strap line of fun, friends and fitness – which proved both popular and effective.

Posters and leaflets alone are unlikely to be an effective means of engagement.

The young people consulted by StreetGames indicated that they are most likely to look to trusted sources for information on sports and activities in their local area.

These are:
- Word of mouth recommendation from their friends and family
- Being told about it at school (supported via posters and leaflets)
- Seeing information about it on social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

HOW STREETGAMES CAN HELP

StreetGames is funded by a range of partners, including Sport England, Sport Wales, The Co-operative, Coca-Cola and The Football Pools.

We run activities, events and training programmes that help community groups and sports clubs that deliver Doorstep Sport to grow and retain participants.

We help mainstream sports organisations to improve at involving disadvantaged young people.
WHAT WE CAN GIVE TO YOU

StreetGames has developed knowledge, insight and expertise across every aspect of Doorstep Sport since 2007. If you wish to adopt the Doorstep Sport approach, we can offer you advice and guidance at every step. Specifically, StreetGames can give you:

• Access to the most recent thinking about what works and knowledge-sharing opportunities.
• Access to the Us Girls approach.
• Access to training that is designed and delivered by experienced practitioners.
• Access to sports events that are designed to meet the needs of our target groups.
• Access to opportunities that support the local offer. Examples of these include supplying the equipment and know-how to run pop-up tennis clubs during Wimbledon or trips to the Commonwealth Games.
• Access to a national team of advisors who have been there and done it.
• Access to resources, training and support to help local projects develop young volunteers in sport.

What you need to do now
Contact StreetGames at info@streetgames.org