

Coaching Awareness People from Disadvantaged Communities

Everyone is treated unfairly in some way at times – no doubt you can think of a few occasions when you've been on the receiving end of unfair treatment. However, there are people in society who are consistently receiving inequitable treatment. People from deprived communities can often be marginalised, and are not given the same opportunities as everyone else to access positive experiences in sport delivered by high quality, trained coaches.

StreetGames is a national charity that brings sport straight to the doorstep of young people living in disadvantaged communities. It is a network of organisations that delivers sporting opportunities to young people in England, Scotland and Wales. All projects in the StreetGames network are locally funded and controlled so group leaders know and understand the communities they work in. As such, StreetGames is regarded as the lead organisation for delivering sport to people from disadvantaged communities.

Their approach – called Doorstep Sport – recognises the need to bring sport into local communities. The cornerstones of Doorstep Sport are **sport delivered at the right time, at the right price, at the right place and in the right style.**

Here are some tips on how to engage young people and deliver effective coaching in disadvantaged communities:

As a coach:

- Create sessions that recognise and appreciate the motivations of young people to participate – they may not be related to sport (eg to socialise and meet new people or because it is a safe environment).
- Recognise that a games-led approach is a good method to meet young people's needs. Flexible formats of sport where young people can express themselves are more appealing than skills and drills sessions.
- Discuss sessions with young people to identify activities, challenges and coaching approaches they enjoy.
- Build trust and be consistent.
- Act as a role model, mentor and motivator.
- Be non-judgemental, positive and welcoming.
- Signpost and, most importantly, support transitions to further sporting opportunities.
- Be flexible, creative and prepared to adapt sessions taking place in environments which are challenging and have limited facilities.



As a club or governing body of sport, ensure:

- coaches live locally or have a clear understanding of the community and are able to build a good rapport, interact well with participants, and deliver sessions that are fun, varied and challenging
- you provide support to assist in the upskilling of local coaches and volunteers to help develop the local sporting infrastructure and therefore increase club sustainability
- you use an accessible, local, friendly and safe environment to host sessions – this should ideally be situated directly within the community for ease of access and reduced travel costs/time
- you provide clear development pathways and progression routes, with regular opportunities for participants to take part in appropriate competition – this improves the participants' self-esteem and increases pride in their club and community
- you offer a relaxed attitude to clothing – there is no demand to buy expensive kit

- promotion of the club through try-out sessions – word of mouth through the community helps to strengthen the local population further; make use of other community organisations and services that already have good relationships with local young people (eg youth and community workers or young volunteers)
- the joining fee or cost to attend a session is minimal and/or potentially subsidised – upfront membership fees or annual subscriptions are likely to create a barrier.

Further Reading/Useful Information

For further reading on this topic, including briefing papers, examples of best practice and training courses, visit the StreetGames website at www.streetgames.org

sports coach UK runs a three-hour workshop called 'Equity in Your Coaching', which looks at raising awareness around coaching people from disadvantaged or underrepresented communities. This workshop will help you develop your club's equality policy (required for Clubmark) and make your coaches more equitable. To locate a workshop in your area, visit www.sportscoachuk.org/equity-workshop

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