



CASE STUDY :: 03

LOCATION

Scotland

Kools Project

OBJECTIVES

To demonstrate how sport can contribute to the health and well being of a nation through:

- increasing awareness of a healthy diet and nutrition.
- well being and longer quality life expectancy.

BACKGROUND

Kools Project (originally set up as the Kool Kids Project) was established in Greater Pollok, one of Glasgow's Social Inclusion Partnership areas. When the Social Inclusion Partnership was formed, it was apparent that children's health was a key issue in the area and that connections had not been made by children between activity levels, healthy eating and better health. It was agreed that healthy lifestyle habits had to be introduced at a young age to lay the foundations for future health and needed to be compulsory to make a real impact on children's health, as a result the programme was included within the curriculum.

The project is delivered through curriculum based workshops and after school club provision focusing on hygiene, smoking, nutrition, self-esteem and sport and physical activity opportunities. The children came up with the name and designed the logo.

The workshop sessions include a healthy food choice workshop/taster session and a smoking prevention workshop, in addition to art and drama based activities. The drama based activities address the development of coping strategies, emotional well being and confidence building to assist children in dealing with the stresses and strains of growing up in an area facing significant challenges. These provide them with skills to cope better at school, at home and in the community generally. The after school sports clubs promote physical activity in a fun, participative way. Parents are also targeted via activity classes and workshops. The project focuses on hygiene, smoking, nutrition, self-esteem and sport and physical activity opportunities

PURPOSE

The main objectives of the are to:

- increase physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices amongst primary 5 children through curriculum based workshops and after school club provision.

PARTNERS

- Glasgow City Council's Cultural and Leisure Services
- Education Services
- Greater Glasgow NHS Board
- the Social Inclusion Partnership Board
- Bernardo's and Cardonald College.

In addition, the project has also involved working with Smoking Concerns, Health Promotion, Sports Development, Children's Play, Theatre Groups and community artists.

COST AND DATE

The cost of the project in 2004/05 was £65,000.

TARGET

Primary 5 school children in all 19 primary schools in the Greater Pollok area.



STEPS

- A literature search was also conducted for the initial proposal for the Kools Project, and this showed an abundance of evidence of need. Existing local strategies such as the Health Improvement Plan and national strategies regarding nutrition and physical activity, plus experience of the personnel involved highlighted the areas that needed to be covered within the programme.
- Began as a pilot in 2 local schools for four months prior to mainstream funding being secured for a three year period.
- The success of the pilot led to the projects extension to all 19 local primary schools in the Greater Pollok area and continues to be delivered on an ongoing basis with a view to rolling out the key elements of the project to other areas of the city.
- The project was also informed by local feedback which identified needs, through the Health and Well Being Study conducted and informal feedback from parents who highlighted that there were no safe play facilities for children, nothing for them to do and a perceived lack of opportunities for physical activity.
- Additional funding has allowed children to access venues outwith the immediate area and to engage in a wider range of activities, such as skiing and inter-school activities. It was also agreed that the after school sports clubs would provide a means of employment and training, for local young people and students from the local college.
- The appointment of a dedicated co-ordinator to manage and coordinate the programme in 19 schools and fulfil a more strategic role in further developing the Kools Project concept.

OUTCOMES/IMPACT

An evaluation of the Kools Project was carried out to identify whether the main aims and objectives of the project were being met. Some key findings from the evaluation highlighted:

- 91% noted that the Kools Project has helped them to take up sports or exercise or generally become more active.
- three quarters of respondents stated that they had attended the after school club or holiday programme club organised at a leisure centre outwith their immediate area.
- 91% of pupils stated that they had learned more about eating well.
- 95% of the primary 5 pupils who responded to the survey said that the Kools Project has helped them learn more about the dangers of smoking.
- at least 4 out of 5 pupils reported that they took the information they had learnt at the Kools Project home and discussed issues with their parents.

These findings were supported by the findings of the parents survey carried out as part of the evaluation. Overall, the parents rated the Kools Project very positively. 81% felt their child had become more active and 93% felt that their child had learned more about healthy choices.

BENEFITS

The project has been successful in achieving its objectives of increasing physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices amongst children in the Greater Pollok area. The Kools Project evaluation also indicated a number of longer term sustainable benefits including:

- children have learnt about health issues and appear to have taken some of the messages on board. They have also had fun!
- young people have been employed as coaches, which has given them valuable experience, additional qualifications and added work in the summer and school holidays
- partnership working has established relationships which did not previously exist.
- the project is owned by the local community – children enjoy it and parents also see the value – “it belongs to Pollok”.
- Kools project has been a catalyst for other areas to look at what they can do for this age group and has also prompted services such as cultural and leisure services to develop additional activities in the area.
- gaining the patronage of a celebrity figure Ali Paton, has raised the profile of Kools project.
- gaining entry to all schools in the area, including a special educational needs school, has been a great achievement.

All partners involved considered the Kools Project to benefit children and support the idea that it could be rolled out to other areas in the city. However, to be sustainable it is recognised that the way Kools Project works in Pollok cannot be ‘parachuted’ into other areas without taking account of other initiatives which may exist such as different ways of working, facilities and different needs and interests of professionals, children and parents.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- The project highlights the potential of positive reinforcement programmes in maximising positive outcomes in a variety of areas such as health improvement, education and involvement in sport.
- There are clear links between individual personal development and cross-curricular learning through the programme. New skills and competences together with knowledge and experience are also being developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Kools Project represents a holistic approach to improving the health and well being of children and young people. The key outcomes demonstrate the successes that can be achieved through partnership working with key agencies. A key recommendation would be to share this example of good practice with other authorities faced with similar challenges.