



CASE STUDY :: 03

LOCATION

Score Goals

Glasgow,
Scotland

OBJECTIVES

To demonstrate how sport can contribute to the development of better education for all pupils through:

- raising educational standards/aspirations
- improving behaviour and reducing truancy
- improving literacy and numeracy
- cultivating citizenship and personal responsibility

BACKGROUND

The Score Goals Programme is an innovative project in preventing young people who were truanting from becoming involved in criminal activity and in encouraging them to complete their education.

Score Goals is a pilot youth scheme being developed by the Scottish Professional Footballers' Association in partnership with Glasgow City Council. It has been developed in recognition of the substantial proportion of young people, particularly young males, truanting from school and becoming involved in criminal activity. The project uses football as a "hook" to entice young people truanting back into education, promoting active citizenship and diverting children from drugs, crime and truancy. The prize of receiving professional football coaching from prestigious football clubs was felt to be a good incentive for young people to stay with the programme when the more difficult issue of dealing with their challenging behaviour arose in the group work sessions.

Another programme entitled 'Score' adopts the same principles as 'Score Goals', only 'Score' is arts based on activities such as dance and drama which are used alongside a range of physical activities designed to entice young women to maintain a good level of attendance at school. This has widened the approach to include a programme exclusively for girls.

PURPOSE

The aim of the project is to prevent young people who are truanting from becoming involved in criminal activity and to encourage young people to complete their education.

More specifically to:

- address disruptive behaviour both in and away from school
- eliminate or reduce 'risk taking' behaviour such as truancy or offending amongst pupils in the S2 age group
- encourage full-time attendance in mainstream school
- encourage participation from groups of young people who may otherwise be socially excluded from taking part
- allow young people to enjoy greater social learning opportunities, by encouraging the process of lifelong learning
- give support and provide progression after the scheme for a number of the participants
- develop positive relationships between pupils participating with parents, school staff, the police and their peers
- increase self-esteem and expectation among those selected to take part
- increase awareness of social issues.

PARTNERS

- Glasgow City Council's Cultural and Leisure Services and Education Services
- Strathclyde Police
- Celtic, Partick Thistle, Queens Park and Rangers Football Clubs
- young people, parents/guardians
- sports and activity coaches and associations.

COST AND DATE

- launched in 2000
- funded initially by Scotland Against Drugs.
- costs approximately £38,500 per annum and is now funded by Cultural and Leisure Services
- total of 120 young people benefiting each year

TARGET

- 12-15 year old (mainly boys although girls are not excluded) people truanting from school and/or at risk of becoming involved in offending behaviour.
- aim to expand the project to include other sports/activities (especially non-competitive inclusive activities aimed at girls, such as aerobics).

STEPS

- 1 Developed by Youth Services and Strathclyde Police in 2000, pilot project involving 23 participants., 13 had previously offended, with the total number of offences amongst them amounting to 30.
- 2 Football coaching and group work sessions dealing with anti-social behaviour and to maintain or develop their interest top remain in education.

OUTCOMES/IMPACT

- High success rate in pilot with all 23 completing the course and only 3 offences committed during the course and with no offences committed in the 3-month period following the course. Average increase in school attendance of 43% (one moved from 26% attendance pre-course to 69% post-course)
- Current performance is measured against the key objectives set out. A range of positive project outcomes have been achieved including:
 - > young people being encouraged to stay in school, thereby increasing their educational capacity.
 - > encouraging young people to participate in the programme, the programme has prevented them from becoming involved in criminal activity.
 - > the increased physical activity has also benefited the health and well being of young people involved.

Feedback from schools with pupils who have participated in Score Goals has been very positive in terms of the impact of project. Key findings include:

- teachers answered yes to 'improved behaviour' in 80% of cases.
- attendance has improved by an average of 37%.
- attainment has improved by an average of 32%.
- other improvements reported include increased confidence and ability to mix.

Comments from teachers regarding the Score Goals programme and its participants include:

"He is much more settled. He now channels his energies towards learning as opposed to looking for distractions."
"He seems more engaged and positive in classes now... seems more confident in relating positively with staff."

Feedback on what participants liked most about Score Goals included:

"Playing football and learning new skills."
"The workers and other people on the course."
"Getting to know new people."
"The football, it's brilliant."

Feedback on how participants thought they had developed from the course included:

"Behaviour has improved a bit."
"Getting better behaved at school. Not fighting with as many people."
"My attitude has improved."
"I can get along with other people."
"It's not all about me, it's about others too."

BENEFITS

The benefits of the programme include:

- education benefits: a reduction in truancy and improvements in educational attainment.
- community safety benefits: a reduction in criminal activity.
- health benefits: the increase in positive physical activity amongst young people provides a greater incentive for eating a healthy diet and refraining from taking alcohol or drugs.
- sustainable benefits: the project has been developed and expanded further to encourage a greater audience of young people.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Score Goals is an excellent example of a positive diversionary activity programme aimed at young people truanting and/or at risk of engaging in criminal behaviour.
- A key recommendation would be to share this example of good practice with other authorities faced with similar challenges.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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