

Physical activity: Tools for engaging with those that are harder to reach

"It doesn't matter how slow you jog - you're lapping everyone on the couch"

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Objectives

- This workshop will offer practical tools and ideas on how to engage pupils that may not currently be engaging well with physical activity.
- We will look at engaging all pupils in PE lessons, as well as engaging hard to reach groups in extra-curricular physical activity.
- There will be opportunities for you to feed back on what has worked well for you

Local data: Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (HRBQ) 2016

8531 Hertfordshire pupils participated

(from 65 primary schools and 22 secondary schools)

- 86% of pupils said that they enjoy physical activities at school 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'. 13% of pupils said they enjoy them a little, 1% said they didn't enjoy them.
- 54% of pupils said that they find it very easy to be physically active at playtimes. 12% said that they found it 'not at all' or 'not very' easy to be active at playtimes.
- Children who report eating 5 portions of fruit or veg per day are more likely to participate in/ enjoy physical activity

Nb. There's still time to participate in the 2018 HRBQ

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Why does physical activity matter?

Physical activity is linked with:

- Improved concentration levels (and academic attainment)
- More positive social behaviour for young people
- Lower levels of anxiety and depression
- Children report higher levels of self-esteem, happiness and satisfaction with their lives
- Numerous health benefits including a healthy weight

1. Gender as a barrier: Girls

The Bad News.....

- Enjoyment of physical activity declines with age and is most marked in its decline for girls (HRBQ)
- Girls are more likely than boys to report 'The way they look' as a key worry, and this can prevent them from participating in physical activity (HRBQ)

The Good News.....

- Girls report that they would like to do more physical activity (HRBQ)
- There is national attention on promoting physical activity in girls e.g. This Girl Can

1. Gender as a barrier: Girls

Barriers and Motivators:

- Boy and girls identify **similar** motivators for participating in physical activity (Girls Active data, 2017)
 - Being healthy and having fun were the top motivators for both boys and girls
- Boys and girls identify **different** barriers for participating in physical activity (Girls Active data, 2017)
 - Girls are 2 x more likely to identify ‘confidence’ or ‘not being good at it’ as key barriers to engaging in physical activity (Girls Active data, 2017)
 - 40% of boys identified no barriers at all, while only 21% of girls identified no barriers

Barriers for girl's engaging in physical activity

Social, e.g. peer pressure, family commitments

Environmental, e.g. changing area, times

Psychological, e.g. self-belief, body image

Differences in activities taken part in:

The top 5 activities taken part in at least weekly

Boys	Girls
Football (70%)	Dancing/gymnastics (64%)
Running for exercise (65%)	Running for exercise (63%)
Keep fit (55%)	Going for walks (58%)
Going for walks (50%)	Keep fit (53%)
Swimming (42%)	Swimming (42%)

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Differences in activities young people want to take part in....

The top 5 activities children want to take part in as part of PE (KS3)

Boys	Girls
Football (43%)	Trampolining (27%)
Parkour (22%)	Netball (23%)
Dodgeball (17%)	Dance (23%)
Basket ball (13%)	Gymnastics (20%)
Boxing & Freerunning (13%)	Swimming (17%)

Lessons from 'Girls Active'

- Non-traditional activities
- Get students involved e.g. surveying other pupils
- Understand the barriers – e.g. Girls Active, HRBQ, school surveys
- Lacking confidence is a key barrier for girls – mental health promotion should therefore go hand in hand with physical activity promotion
- Providing coaching, leadership or organiser opportunities to girls could get them more involved

Lessons from 'Girls Active'



Engaging girls more: practical solutions

- Make PE and sport relevant to girls' lives e.g. 'This Girl Can' approach
- Empower girls through design and delivery
- Develop role models for the future
- Place developing self-confidence at the heart of PE and sport
- Recognise the power of friends to drive progress
- Take a long-term approach
- **Any other ideas?**

2. Weight as a barrier

Overweight children tend to perceive a greater number of barriers to sports participation, including feeling insecure about their appearance.

Other barriers to consider are:

- The environment e.g. Lack of privacy in changing rooms

“I hate gym class. I hate wearing shorts. I feel so embarrassed about how I look in shorts.”

- Lack of family support
- Stereotyping and stigma
- Bullying
- Lack of initial fitness

Obesity: The Hertfordshire picture

- In 2016/17:
 - 98% (14,496) of children in reception measured
 - 91% (11,705) of children in year 6 measured
- What percentage of children in **reception (age 4-5)** in Hertfordshire were
 - a) Underweight?
 - b) Overweight?
 - c) Very overweight?

Reception: Percentage underweight, overweight and very overweight, Hertfordshire, 2016/17

Underweight



Overweight



Very overweight



**Excess weight
(overweight & very overweight) = 20%**

In 2016/17 what percentage of children in **Year 6 (age 10-11)** in Hertfordshire were

- a) Underweight?
- b) Overweight?
- c) Very overweight?

Year 6: Percentage underweight, overweight and very overweight, Hertfordshire, 2016/17

Underweight



Overweight



Very overweight



**Excess weight
(overweight & very overweight) = 29%**

Differences in excess weight

- **COMPARED TO ENGLAND**

- **Reception:** Hertfordshire =20%; England = 22%
- **Year 6:** Hertfordshire =29%; England = 34%

- **BY DISTRICT**

- **Reception:** 17% in St Albans/ Hertsmere to 23% in Broxbourne
- **Year 6:** 24% in East Hertfordshire to 36% in Broxbourne

- **BY SEX**

- **Reception:** No difference; **Year 6:** Boys (32%) > girls (26%)

Weight as a barrier: A focus on bullying

Bullying or fear of bullying can inhibit participation in exercise

Bullying can be physical or verbal and can be particularly triggered by engagement in strenuous activities which “emphasise the overweight child’s body”, for example trampolining:

“I get bullied, you know at school, ...and I get bullied at PE because when we had trampolining and I didn’t want to go in then, because people would like take the mickey.”

“I don’t like it because I’m fat and often get hit by others. When we play dodge ball, I’m often the target that gets hit, so I don’t like it.”

Weight as a barrier: A focus on stigma

Peer or teacher stigmatization can also inhibit participation in exercise

Research shows that there are negative stereotypes of individuals who are overweight, for example that they are inactive or lazy. Overweight children were also perceived to be “unable to do certain physical activities” like dancing for example, and in some cases were even stereotyped by teachers who would say “It’s a little too strenuous... you might want to sit this one out”

Teacher bias may also exist: Overweight children can be seen as less intelligent and worse at social situations by PE teachers

Weight as a barrier: Practical Solutions

School dress codes, particularly for PE clothing, should accommodate larger body sizes so that short or tight fitting clothing can be avoided

Concessions should be made for pupils to dress for PE in private change rooms or bathroom cubicles

PE should offer activities that are suitable for all athletic and body types, and allow some choice where possible.

Don't just rely on PE: build physical activity opportunities throughout the day e.g. Daily Mile

Discussion: Segregation of obese children?

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/12197515/Fat-children-should-be-taught-in-segregated-PE-classes.html>

Beezee Bodies: Beezee Families

17 week programme for overweight and obese children

- Increase parenting efficacy
- Strengthen family bonds
- Increase self-efficacy
- Maintain weight or gradual sustained weight loss (dependent on age group and individual needs)
- Prevent further weight gain
- Create sustainable family weight management / healthy lifestyles
- Improve partnership working
- Strengthen community links



“She’s a **totally different person now”**

When busy mum of three Jenina Capelli from Welwyn Garden City noticed her 10-year-old daughter Lia was overweight, she took her to see the GP.

Lia was referred to Beezee Bodies, a Hertfordshire County Council-funded child weight management scheme, and has since lost more than a stone.

Jenina said of Lia: “She’s a totally different person now – instead of being timid and shy she is now confident and happy.

“The programme was fun and inspiring, and because the whole family attended it meant we all got involved in the activities. It has totally changed our life. The children now have a much better relationship with food: they understand healthy choices and portion size, and are more involved in helping to prepare meals and deciding what we eat. We still have treats twice a week and order takeaways now and then, but we now know how to choose healthier options.

“It was really interesting finding out about the hidden sugar in foods like cereals and drinks – we learnt how to interpret food labels and use these to choose foods with a lower sugar and salt content. As a busy mum I don’t always have time to do this, but I’m now more aware that staying away from the red labels is half the battle!”

With obesity rates hitting headlines on a regular basis, programmes like this are a lifeline to families who need a little extra help to point them in the right direction.

Teresa Heritage, Cabinet Member for Public Health, said: “We work closely with schools and children’s centres to encourage children to develop healthy habits which will help them to make good choices throughout their life and reduce the likelihood of diet-related disease.

“Being overweight and obese can lead to a greater risk of health problems such as type 2 diabetes, which increases demand on social care and health services. Tackling these problems early helps ensure children have the best start in life and leads to savings on the public purse in the long run.”

Physical activity also plays an important role in children’s health, which is why Hertfordshire County Council issues for every school to have outdoor playing space. We will also be supporting Public Health England’s 10 minute shake up campaign this month, to encourage children to do short bursts of activity throughout the summer.

For information about the range of health initiatives available to families in Hertfordshire visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthinherts

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General Rules for engagement

- Understand/ address the barriers – regular consultation with pupils e.g. questionnaires, mind mapping.

Yorkshire School: *“We have a special buffet lunch for the students which adds to the importance of the session. The students give excellent insight into popular and less popular activities, and come up with great ideas for future sports or adaptations to the (PE) curriculum”.*

- PE should offer activities suitable for all body types, allowing some choice where possible. A mix of traditional, non-traditional & non-competitive activities is key to developing a successful PE programme for ALL
- Don't just rely on PE: build physical activity opportunities throughout the day e.g. Daily Mile
- Foster a positive school environment

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Some examples

Get Parents Involved: Alison Woodall (Youth Sports Trust):

- Adolescent girls organised and ran a race for life event on the school site and invited their mums, sisters, aunties etc. They used the opportunity to celebrate the fun and friendships associated with being active.
- A school sport partnership also trained year 5 pupils in healthy and active lifestyles over one term. At the end the children wrote a letter to their parents saying why it was important for them to be active and do sport. The parents were then invited into school to sign their children and themselves up to a range of after-school activities.

Some examples

Challenge homophobia: Louise Englefield (Pride Sport):

LGBT children have told us they find PE a particular focus of homophobic and transphobic bullying. On a basic level, work undertaken to challenge homophobic and transphobic language and behaviour in school sport would make for a more inclusive environment.

Be Proactive: Danielle Tedford (Flixton Girls School)

Launched “Fitness Fridays”: All staff wear sports kit on the last Friday of each month and have Fitness Friday T-shirts & water bottles. Before school (8am–registration) the head-teacher holds a running club for staff & students. Aerobics classes run through the day and all PE lessons are involved in fitness sessions which are both practical and with a theme. ‘This Girl Can’ has been one of our themes.

Thank you

Questions or comments?

Please feel free to contact me

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