



Loughborough
University

USING SPORT TO ENHANCE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CONTEXT OF SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

MAKING REFERRALS

***GUIDANCE AND TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT
LOCALLY TRUSTED ORGANISATIONS (LTOs)***

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INTRODUCTION

Sport is increasingly viewed as a positive referral opportunity by statutory and non-statutory agencies. This document provides guidance on how to put in place a referral pathway for sport interventions for young people at risk of or already involved in offending behaviour which includes serious youth violence. This guidance has been based on academic insight and theory from the fields of youth and criminal justice, youth and family work and community sport as well as learning from a series of research and programme evaluation programmes undertaken by Loughborough University (Loughborough campus) in partnership with StreetGames since 2015.



This guidance includes knowledge and insight, best practice and tools such as checklists that can be used by Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs)¹ and 'sport referral co-ordinators' to help to put new referral systems into place as well as to improve existing referral systems. (Please see the separate file for a pdf version of the checklists which can be downloaded, adapted and used) It is hoped that this guidance can be used to speed up the process of putting referral systems into place, making the process more straightforward and helping to avoid pitfalls. A similar guidance document has been produced for referral agencies which has similar content to ensure that there are shared areas of knowledge and understanding for a consistent approach towards referral systems, supporting partnerships and collaboration.

A glossary of key terms is included at the back of this document. Other resources can be found on the StreetGames website:

1. Theory of Change for Enhancing Positive Outcomes for Young People in the context of Serious Youth Violence
2. Literature Review for policymakers and practitioners: Safer Together: Creating partnerships for positive change
3. Literature Review for policymakers and practitioners: Sport and Serious Youth Violence
4. Literature Review for policymakers and practitioners: The Use of Sport-based mentoring programmes as an intervention for preventing and reducing youth offending
5. Literature Review for policymakers and practitioners: Vulnerable Girls and Young Women and Sport in the context of Violence Reduction

This referral guidance toolkit has been based on insight from both academic literature as well as from the evaluation of relevant programmes which includes:

1. Home Office funded - Sport and Serious Violence Prevention Programme (2019-2020)
2. Home Office funded - Safer Together Through Sport Programme (2017- 2020)
3. Home Office funded - Reducing Youth Crime Through Sport Programme (2015-2017)
4. Youth Endowment funded - Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Sport-Based mentoring Programme (2020-2021)
5. Plymouth OPCC funded – Supporting Vulnerable Young People Through the Power of Sport Programme (2021-22)
6. West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit funded - Vulnerable Girls, Young Women, Sport and Crime Programme (2020-2021)

SECTION A: USING SPORT AS AN INTERVENTION FOR REFERRALS

The value of sport for referrals

Sport is increasingly seen as having a role in prevention, early intervention and diversion work with young people at risk of or already involved in offending behaviour. The term 'sport' should be understood broadly as it includes a wide range of different sports and physical activities, sometimes also described as community sport, grassroots sport or recreation. Types of sports can include indoor and outdoor sports, martial arts, lifestyle sports², dance, team sports and individual sports and physical activities such as going to the gym, cycling and walking. Sport can be provided as an organised sports session, as part of a club or informally.

Sport can offer young people³:

- Supervised, positive, fun activities
- Routine activities⁴
- A physically and emotionally safe environment
- Sense of belonging
- Pro-social friendships
- Positive adult role models
- Relationship with a trusted adult
- A form of diversion from the youth justice or criminal justice system
- Sport can be one element of a 'holistic' package of interventions developed with other welfare agencies
- New pathways back into education or training and employment
- Achievements
- Support for the development of a young person's pro-social identity

Sport as an intervention

A sport intervention, sometimes called a Sport-Based Intervention (SBI), is a sport programme designed and run for vulnerable young people by LTOs. It should have a broader purpose than just offering young people the opportunity to play sport. A helpful way of thinking about different types of sport interventions is to use the terms of Sport, SportPlus or PlusSport programmes as described in Table 1 (based on Coalter, 2007⁵).

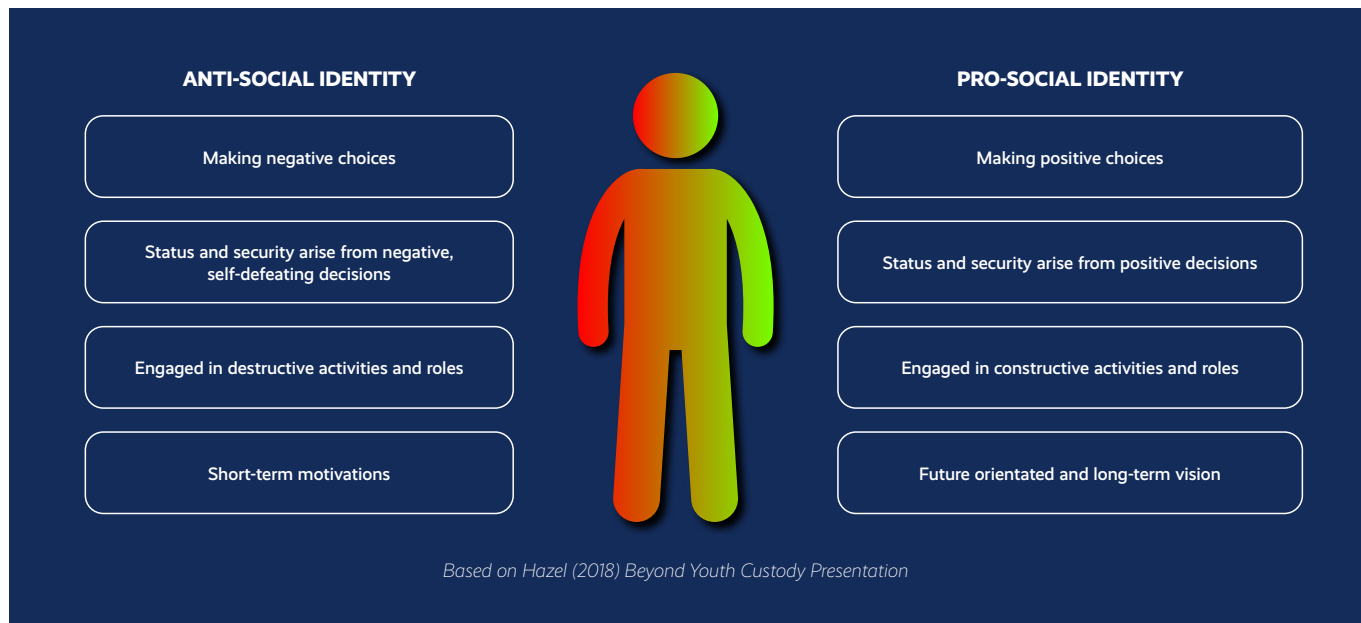


Table 1: Terms for different types of Sport Interventions

Type of sport intervention	Description
Sport	Focus on sports activities and playing sport, open access recruitment of young people, coaches might have ad hoc, informal conversations with young people, some opportunities for young people to help out at sessions or in other ways at the project/club.
SportPlus	Focus on sports activities plus other activities to support young people including volunteering, mentoring, advice, workshops, training/ qualifications etc. Often a targeted recruitment of young people including referrals
PlusSport	Focus on providing support for the young person including 121 mentoring, holistic/ family support, workshops etc with sport used as a hook/reward/engagement tool. Almost always a targeted recruitment of young people based on referrals.

We know that providing sport to young people can help to prevent involvement in offending. However, providing sport for young people at risk of or already involved in offending requires more than just playing sport. Using a public health approach can make it easier to decide which type of intervention is needed for providing more support to vulnerable young people.

A public health approach to sport interventions (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary)

Sport interventions can benefit from being considered in the context of a public health approach. The term 'public health approach' is often used by partners working with young people at risk of or involved in offending. The use of a public health approach recognises that violence can be prevented and that young people's involvement in offending is not inevitable.

As part of this approach, it is helpful to consider some of the underlying factors (sometimes referred to as 'vulnerabilities', 'contextual factors' or 'risk factors') experienced by some young people that are used to consider how likely it is that they will get involved in offending behaviours including violence. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which for some young people can result in experiencing trauma, are also viewed as significant as they have been associated with an increased likelihood of offending as well as other negative life outcomes⁶.

Underlying factors (including Adverse Childhood Experiences – also known as ACEs) experienced by a young person can include one or a combination of some of the following:

- Involved in ASB/ contact with the police
- Living in poverty
- Community trauma – witnessing violence, incidents of serious violence in local community involving others
- Struggling with emotions - anxiety, mood swings, anger, frustration
- ACEs – Bereavements, domestic violence, neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse, parent with mental health issues
- Low confidence/self-esteem
- Autism/ADHD
- Family difficulties – relationship breakdowns, instability, carer/in care/adoption
- Homeless
- Excluded from school/struggling
- Being bullied
- Going missing
- Self-harming and wanting to harm others
- Negative thoughts, suicidal
- Socially isolated, no friends
- Drug taking
- At risk of exploitation and county lines
- Online risk

N.B. Please note that if a young person experiences one or more of these factors, it does not mean that they will inevitably be involved in offending/ violence – many young people aren't involved in offending/ violence.



The public health approach uses three categories:

<p>Primary level Prevention before offending and violence takes place</p>	<p>Secondary level Intervening at an early stage when there are signs of offending/ violence</p>	<p>Tertiary level Intervening when offending/ violence has already taken place</p>
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Primary level: A young person who has experienced minor underlying factor(s) and who is not at risk of offending can be described as being at the 'primary level' and needing a low level of support as a form of prevention.

Secondary level: A young person who has experienced a combination of underlying factors and is either at risk of offending, on the cusp of offending or already involved in minor offending could be described as being at the secondary level and needing additional support as a form of early intervention. This could also include young people who have been victims or experienced community trauma and who would benefit from additional support.

Tertiary level: A young person who has multiple underlying factors and has already offended, is involved in serious violence or who has been in the criminal justice system, including the prison system could be described as being at the tertiary level requiring high levels of additional support to prevent and reduce re-offending.

This categorisation is helpful as it makes sure that young people are given the opportunity to take part in a sport intervention that has the appropriate type of activities, level of resources and support to ensure that they can experience the benefits of taking part in sport.

Figure 1 on the next page shows how this categorisation based on a public health approach can be used to identify which level and type of sport intervention would benefit the young person. It should be noted that it is helpful to see this categorisation as a continuum where the boundaries between levels overlap and a young person's needs, vulnerabilities and involvement in offending might need to be reviewed at a later stage or in some cases, continually.

SECTION A: USING SPORT AS AN INTERVENTION FOR REFERRALS

Figure 1: Identifying the appropriate sports programme(s) for young people

LOW LEVEL OF SUPPORT NEEDED			HIGH LEVEL OF SUPPORT AND EXPERTISE NEEDED		
PRIMARY PREVENTION	SECONDARY EARLY INTERVENTION	TERTIARY OFFENDING/REOFFENDING			
'Sport'	'SportPlus'	'PlusSport'	THE USE OF REFERRALS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not usually appropriate, open access for all young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always in place 	PROGRAMME APPROACH		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal • Neighbourhood/ community level • Developmental provision to improve overall life opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted at those considered at risk of involvement in youth offending • Can be an individual/ family approach and/or targeted at geographical 'hot spot' areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted intervention for those already involved in offending behaviour • Can also support rehabilitation programmes 	EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular weekly sports activity sessions. • School holiday activities • Opportunities for volunteering and training/ qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted and/or 'hot spot' regular group sports sessions • Sport-based one-to-one mentoring programmes • Formal sport volunteering opportunities including training and qualifications • Residential trips with outdoor adventure activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport-based one-to-one mentoring programmes • Targeted small group work using sport • Sport volunteering, training and qualification opportunities • Sport as one element of a more holistic programme run by other agencies. 			

(adapted from Stephenson et al., 2017)

The area that often needs most consideration is whether a referral is suitable for a secondary (SportPlus) or tertiary (PlusSport) level intervention as the boundary is often blurred and overlaps.

The level and extent of offending by a young person is not always easily categorised and, as highlighted by academic insight, involvement in offending by young people can also be ‘under the radar’ and ‘not always easily known’⁸ by referral agencies. In addition to this, if an LTO uses informal and self-referrals to recruit young people, then they might not be aware of the young person’s circumstances including any involvement in offending or serious violence.

Moreover, in some cases, a young person’s involvement in offending could increase and escalate in a very short time or it could reduce over time. It might, therefore, be helpful for LTOs to ask referral agencies to consider identifying the trajectory or pathway of a referred young person’s involvement in offending as a way to assess whether a secondary or tertiary level sport intervention would be more appropriate based on the young person’s behaviours, attitudes and values. An early discussion between the referral agency and the LTO(s) might be helpful as an LTO might not have the expertise or resource available to accept the referred young person.

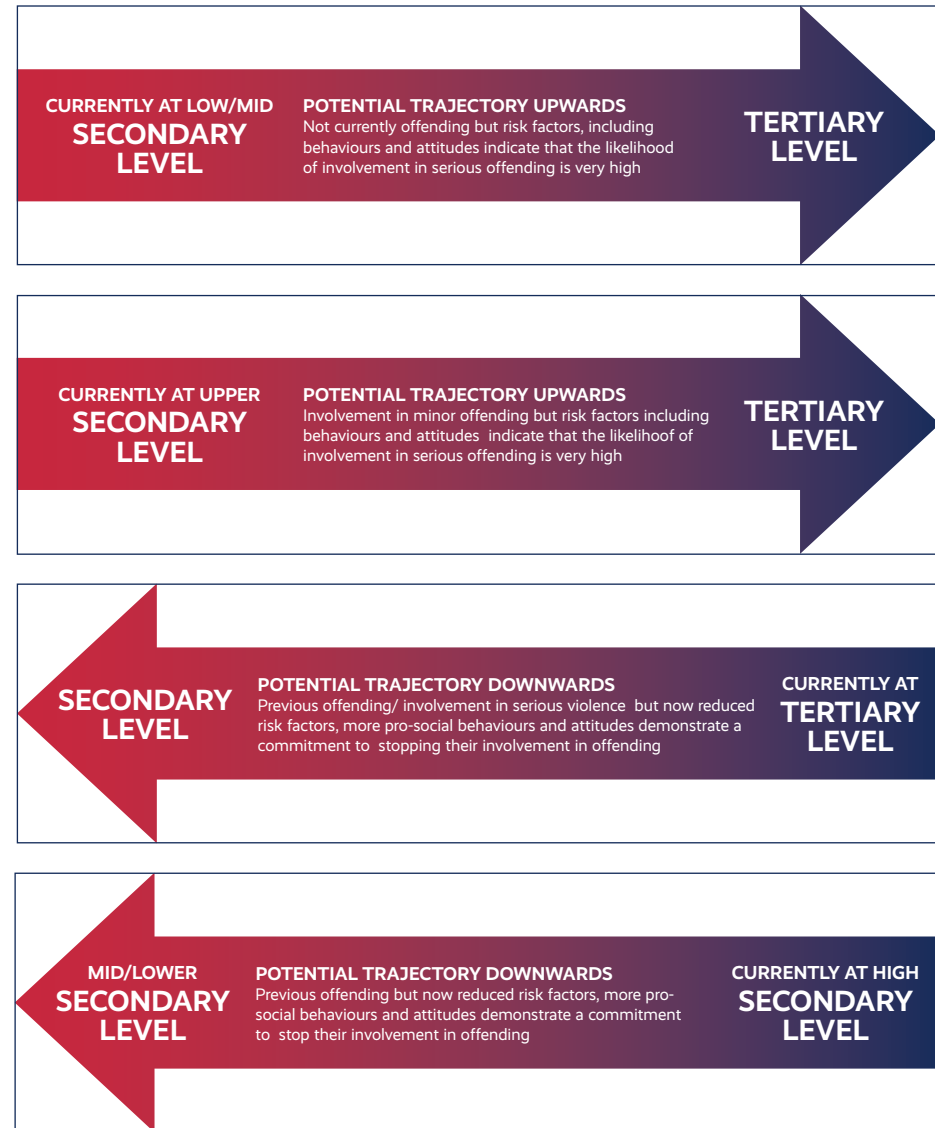


Figure 2 provides examples of potential trajectories for referred young people. However, these need to be treated with caution as the pathway to stopping offending might not always be smooth and for some young people might be described as a ‘starting to stop’ pathway to desistance⁹. This requires referral agencies to play a pro-active role in continuing to review the pathways of young people that they have referred to the LTO. If the intervention level provided by the LTO is no longer appropriate as the young person’s needs have become too challenging or complex, consideration needs to be given by the referral agency and the LTO about finding alternative support or intervention for the young person.

It is also important to consider the impact on the young person if they are asked to leave the LTO’s intervention and if they have started to develop a meaningful and trusted relationship with the project staff. It might, however, be possible for the young person to be referred onwards to a tertiary level ‘PlusSport’ intervention at the same or different LTO if their circumstances have become too challenging. Similarly, if the young person’s vulnerabilities and risks factors have reduced significantly, then they could be ‘stepped down’ to a primary level ‘Sport’ programme at the same or different LTO.



Figure 2: Potential trajectories of referred young people



SECTION A: USING SPORT AS AN INTERVENTION FOR REFERRALS

This referral guidance will focus mainly on the provision of secondary level sport interventions as LTOs are more likely to have this level of expertise and resource available and this is more likely to be required for the greatest number of referrals. As stated earlier, a 'SportPlus' type of sport intervention is appropriate for a secondary level referral. Table 2 shows how the public health approach of primary, secondary and tertiary levels matches the different types of sport interventions.

Table 2: Matching a public health approach with different types of sport interventions

Public health approach		Type of sport intervention	
Primary level	Universal level, open to all young people with the aim of preventing offending. These young people are not showing signs of vulnerabilities or engaging in offending behaviours.	Sport	Focus on sports activities and playing sport, open access recruitment of young people, coaches might have ad hoc, informal conversations with young people, some opportunities for young people to help out/ volunteer at the sessions.
Secondary level	Targeted approach for young people who have been identified as experiencing multiple underlying factors and have vulnerabilities and/ or are engaging in behaviours associated with offending or who are at risk of offending. This level of intervention requires more formal support and expertise	SportPlus	Focus on Sports activities Plus other activities to support young people including volunteering, mentoring, advice, workshops, training/ qualifications etc. Often a targeted recruitment of young people including referrals
Tertiary level	Targeted approach, usually focused on young people who have already offended and have multiple vulnerabilities. Interventions at this level require high levels of expertise and resource based on holistic support for the young person.	PlusSport	Focus on providing support for the young person first including 121 mentoring, holistic/ family support, workshops etc with sport used as a hook/reward/ engagement tool. Almost always a targeted recruitment of young people based on referrals. Usually one to one or small group work.



Types of LTOs providing secondary level SportPlus interventions

Different LTOs provide different types of sport interventions – some LTOs focus solely on primary level, some LTOs focus on secondary level, some on tertiary level and some LTOs provide two or more different levels of sport interventions. LTOs providing secondary level SportPlus interventions can be different types of organisations and can often provide different types of sports activities and programmes for young people.

Secondary sport interventions can be run by a wide range of LTOs which include:

- Small, medium and large community sports organisations run as CICs or charities offering a range of different sports
- Community and youth organisations offering sport as part of their activity programmes
- Small sports clubs including boxing, basketball, martial arts and football
- Large sports organisations such as Community Trusts attached to major sports clubs including football, cricket, rugby and basketball clubs

It can also be valuable for LTOs to have practitioners with 'lived experience' as part of the workforce as this can help to build trust with young people, the local community and partners. This can be especially helpful for SportPlus interventions based in ethnically diverse communities where 'cultural competency' is important for building the relationship of the trusted adult with the young person.



The significance of 'lived experience' for the LTO workforce

It can be valuable for practitioners to have had similar experiences to the young people that they are working with¹⁰ as this can help to support the development of their relationships with young people. This is helpful for building the authenticity and authority of the practitioners with the young people that they are working with¹¹. However, not all the practitioners at an LTO need to have 'lived experience' as this can be learned or shared by practitioners at the LTO who do have 'lived experience'.

The 'lived experience' of practitioners can include growing up in the same conditions as the young people that they are working with so that they can recognise the same challenges. It can also include sharing similar lifestyles, interests, language and knowledge. This is often described as 'cultural capital' where the practitioner acts as a 'cultural intermediary' helping to connect young people to other networks and agencies to further their development.

If an LTO is providing a SportPlus intervention, the culture and ethos of their organisation is key. This has become even more important over the past few years as this work has expanded and attracted new and, in some cases, larger funding sources which might be attractive to sports organisations not yet working in this area.

LTOs need to have young people at the centre of their work in terms of supporting them more widely, not just in terms of playing sport. They must want to work with and support young people who have challenging lives and support their staff as practitioners to develop relationships with young people as 'trusted adults'.

The importance of the practitioner as a trusted adult

The practitioner's role as a trusted adult with the young person is central to the success of any intervention programme¹². Ideally, this should be based on a long-term relationship between the young person and the practitioner as this supports the engagement of the young person. Engagement is important as this helps the young person to make positive changes which can then result in long-term outcomes. Engagement goes beyond turning up as it also involves the young person's 'motivation, commitment to, and participation in, activities'¹³.

The role of the practitioner as a trusted adult consists of both practical and emotional support. Young people need high quality relationships with practitioners who are optimistic and supportive¹⁴ and who demonstrate their belief in the young person and that they can change¹⁵. The practitioner needs to develop a caring relationship supported by the opportunity for meaningful conversations, role modelling, feedback and encouragement¹⁶.

This can be in contrast to some sports organisations, often sports clubs, that have a more traditional approach to sport and focus on the technical role of the sports coach and provide coaching, competition, leagues and matches, talent identification and representative sport including elite sport. These types of sports organisations might, however, be appropriate for the referral of young people who want to play sport more seriously and at a higher level and who have access to additional personal development support from other interventions or agencies. Table 3 below provides some general guidelines for LTOs to consider whether they have the appropriate culture and ethos for referrals although there will be exceptions.

Table 3: The right culture and ethos for LTOs for referrals

General sport/ community/youth-based LTOs with the appropriate culture and ethos	Sports clubs with the appropriate culture and ethos	Organisations or 'traditional style' sports clubs where the culture and ethos might not be suitable for some referrals
Young person is at the heart of their work, usually a young person with vulnerabilities and challenging circumstances.	Combining sport and a holistic interest in the young person.	Thinking about the young person as a sports player first and foremost. Playing and competing in sport is the focus of the organisation.
Young-person centred or youth work approach. Interested in the young person holistically and supporting them with their challenges and problems	Interested in the young person as a sports player at the same time as being concerned with the young person and what's happening in their life. Balancing a young-person centred/ youth work approach with sport.	Mainly interested in the young person in terms of playing sport – attending training/ coaching, matches and working with the young person to enable them to play sport at a competitive/ higher level.
Playing sport for fun, healthy lifestyle, positive activity, friendships.	Playing sport for fun, healthy lifestyle, friendships.	Coaching sport and using 'skills and drills' approach, playing competitively and improving their performance in sport.
A sports coach/ leader/ mentor as a trusted adult.	A sports coach/ leader/ mentor as a trusted adult.	A sports coach/ leader whose role is to develop talent and performance in sport.
Using sport as a way of working with the young person to help them to move forward in their lives – focus on support and personal development.	Combining playing and coaching sport whilst supporting the young person with the challenges that they are facing in their personal lives.	Taking part in competitive sport, leagues and matches.
Providing pathways to additional welfare support such as social care, CAMHS. Providing exit routes to local sports clubs if they want to progress to a higher level. Providing pathways for opportunities outside sport such as going back to school, going to College, employment	Providing opportunities for the young person to have coaching, training, matches, access to performance pathways if they want to progress in the sport. Providing pathways for opportunities outside sport such as going to College, employment.	Identification and selection of the best players. Pathways to performance and representative sport including elite sport.

SECTION A: USING SPORT AS AN INTERVENTION FOR REFERRALS

Types of secondary level SportPlus interventions

Secondary level (also known as 'early intervention' by some referral agencies) SportPlus intervention programmes are well-suited for referrals by agencies such as schools, the police, youth justice services and early help services. They can include one of more of the following: regular sports activity and playing sessions which are targeted (e.g. in terms of local area 'hot spots' and specific groups of young people), volunteering and one to one sport-based mentoring. A description of these activities is provided below:

Sports Activity and Playing sessions

at a secondary intervention level should provide sport or physical activity activities that are designed purposefully to provide fun and positive opportunities for personal development and growth for young people including achievements. It can be based on providing a single sport or physical activity such as boxing, football, martial arts, or dance or it can be based around a multi-sport approach, providing a wide range of sports for young people to play at the same session. Some sports activity sessions can be based around playing team sports or individual sports and physical activities. These sports activity playing sessions should be purposefully designed to include additional elements such as 'hidden sports coaching skills', 'teachable moments', dealing differently with difficult situations, the benefits of rules and identifying the young person's achievements. The sports delivery staff should act as positive role models and support young people's engagement at the session including building positive relationships and supporting friendships with pro-social young people at the sessions.

Volunteering can include helping out, leading or coaching at a sports activity session. It can also include carrying out other activities such as admin, social media at the LTO as well as volunteering in the local community as a form of social action. Volunteering activities should be designed so that the young person can be supported by an individual member of the LTO staff and have the opportunity for positive achievements including leadership and coaching qualifications.

One to one sport-based mentoring provides an experienced adult to use sport to work with the young person on an individual basis. This includes building a trusted relationship, someone for the young person to talk to and to listen to them. The mentor can also help the young person to prepare for getting involved in small group/team sports sessions as well as helping them to reflect on and work towards achieving their own personal development goals.



The importance of a good quality sport intervention

Although sport is well placed to take a preventative role and can contribute at the early intervention stage, sport-based interventions which lack support and structure may increase the risk of offending¹⁷. Sport can also have unintended outcomes in the context of preventing and reducing youth crime¹⁸. This includes the potential for negative labelling, deviancy training, putting the young person, other young people and staff at risk and retraumatising vulnerable young people.

Avoiding 'Deviancy training' at a SportPlus intervention

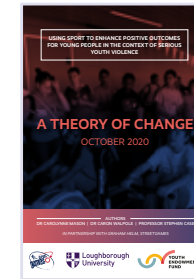
Deviancy training takes place when a young person already involved in serious violence encourages and persuades another young person to get involved in serious violence with them. This usually happens when the young person already involved in serious violence comes into regular contact with a young person in a setting, often not related to the serious violence. They might portray themselves as a 'role model' with high status, 'glorifying' what they have done and seen, underplaying the risks and the consequences for themselves and others. Interventions should, therefore, avoid creating opportunities for unsupervised interaction between young people which might result in a form of 'deviancy training'¹⁹.

Sport-based Interventions need to be aware of the potential for deviancy training even during supervised interactions such as small group work. An example of deviancy training was identified during small group work at one LTO where a young person was bragging to the other young people about their involvement in a gang and what they had been doing (their involvement in a gang had not been previously identified). The LTO delivery staff had to change the format of the intervention after that session and move towards one-to-one mentoring work with the young people. This example demonstrates the importance of having staff with expert knowledge and the confidence to be able to respond quickly and change the format of the intervention to protect the young people attending and to address the anti-social values and attitudes of the young person involved in the gang on an individual basis.

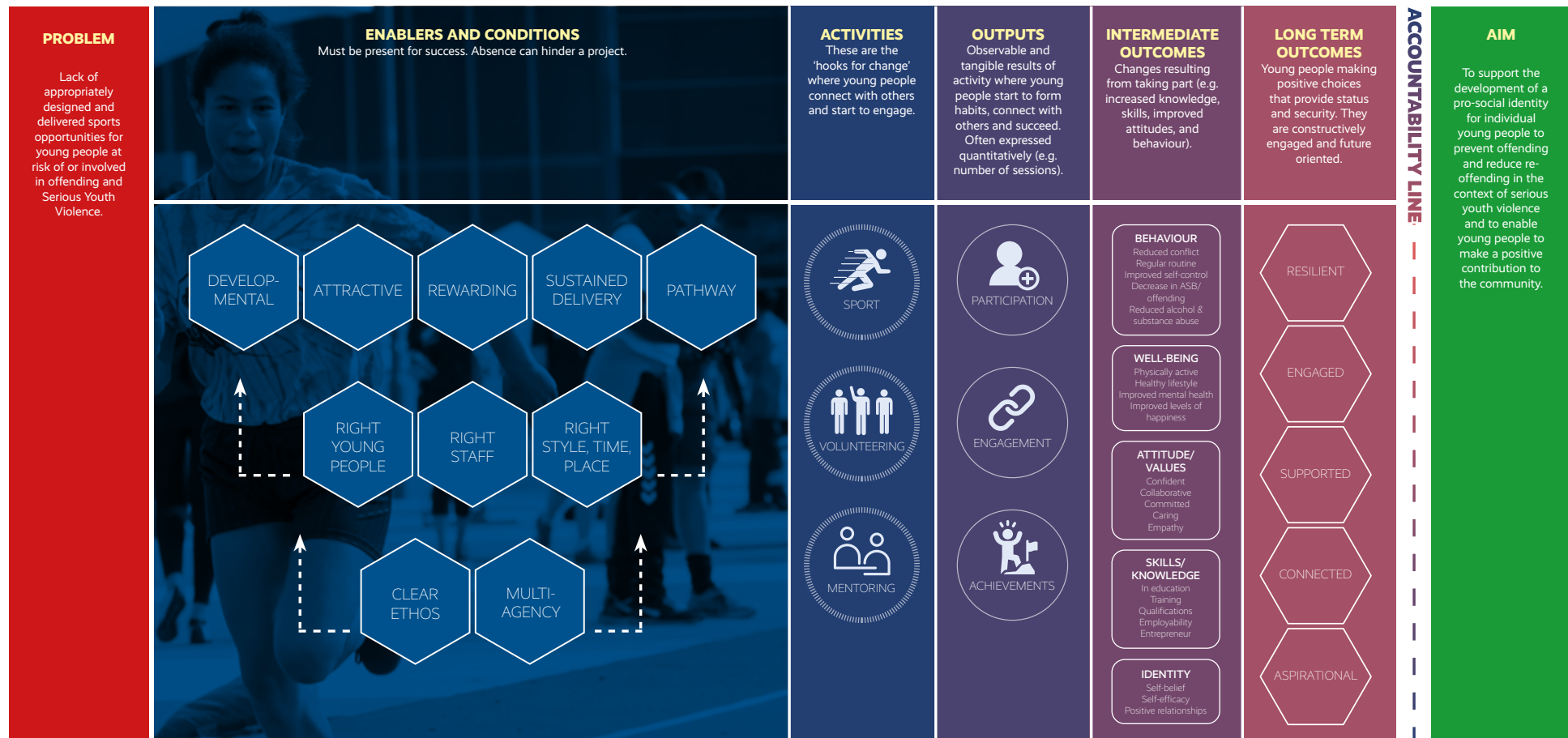
It is, therefore, important that sport-based interventions are well-designed and well-run with the appropriate expertise and resources in place to provide a good quality sporting experience for young people.

Best practice for designing and running a sport intervention

A theory of change which shows how and why a sport intervention works can support best practice. This theory of change *Theory of Change for Enhancing Positive Outcomes for Young People in the context of Serious Youth Violence*²⁰ has been designed specifically to help LTOs to design and manage a sport intervention in this context. It can also be used by referral agencies to understand what referred young people will be offered at the sport intervention.



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SECTION B: REFERRALS

The purpose of a referral

A referral is made when the agency or organisation working with a young person makes an assessment or decision that the young person would benefit from additional support and refers the young person to an intervention programme which, in this context, aims to help to prevent and reduce their involvement in offending. In some cases, it might be compulsory for the young person to attend or it might be voluntary. In terms of referrals to sport, it is more effective for a young person to agree to taking part voluntarily as this has been shown to support better engagement levels²¹.

Table 4: Examples of reasons for involvement with referral agencies

Referral Agency	Reasons
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging behaviour in and outside lessons • Being bullied • Bullying other children • Not attending school regularly or at all • Aware of challenging circumstances outside school including at home or in the community • Poor mental health as a result of multiple ACEs, involvement in serious violence etc • Negative influence of friendship group
Police including PCSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting into trouble - ASB • Receiving a caution • Suspected of being in a gang/ county lines • Arrested
Youth Offending teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving a caution/ being arrested • Going to court
Local authority Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going missing • Exploitation/ Gangs/ County Lines
Local Community organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about young person's circumstances/ behaviours/ actions



Types of referral agencies

Referral agencies can include statutory and voluntary agencies working with young people (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Schools
- Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)
- Early Intervention/Early Help Services
- Social Care/ Children's services
- The Police
- Youth Justice Services (also known as Youth Offending Services)
- Local authority Boards/ panels around missing children, children at risk of exploitation etc.
- Youth service
- Community organisations
- And/ in some cases, families and young people themselves

Types of referrals

Traditionally, referrals have been based on a formal agreement between organisations with agreed protocols in place, often known as a formal referral. However, more recent learning on the use of referrals in the context of sport suggests that it is more helpful to have a combination of formal, informal and self-referrals. A reliance solely on formal referrals can be a risk for the viability of the intervention if not enough young people are referred for the start of the intervention as recent evaluation reports have identified that young people are often referred in small numbers throughout the length of an intervention. The use of informal and self-referrals can also be helpful for addressing the problem of recruiting young people who are 'under the radar' or 'invisible to the statutory and non-statutory agencies and yet known to LTOs based in their own communities.

Formal referrals

Formal agreements between an organisation and an intervention provider with agreed protocols and procedures in place, often based on paperwork.

Informal referrals

Informal agreements usually between individual practitioners at statutory/ non-statutory organisations and LTOs where there are some informal procedures in place. Some might include some paperwork and/or verbal agreements and signposting. Some LTOs might informally refer/signpost vulnerable young people that they are already working with to their own SportPlus sport interventions. Some LTOs might use outreach work and other local networks including local youth workers to recruit/informally refer vulnerable young people who are 'under the radar' and not known to other agencies to their own SportPlus interventions.

Self-referrals

Young people decide that they would like to take part in a SportPlus Intervention and ask the LTO directly if they can be involved. In some cases, this might involve the parent/ caregiver asking if the young person can be involved.

Managing referrals

Insight shows that referrals work most effectively when:

- Organisations have shared values and ethos
- Partnership and Collaboration is in place to support two-way communication
- Protocols and shared agreements are in place for joint working including a feedback system from LTOs to the referral agency about the young person's progress
- An agreed process is in place for specialist support from statutory agencies after young people have been referred to an intervention if their needs are too complex, there are unexpected disclosures or their circumstances change.
- Good understanding by the referral organisation about the nature and type of the intervention and its benefits
- Referral agencies are familiar with the sport intervention and can talk to the young person about what it would involve
- Referral agencies have a high level of trust in LTOs to provide a quality experience for the young person. This can include the referral agency being confident that LTOs:
 - have a good understanding of young people's vulnerabilities
 - have robust safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place
 - are able to look after the needs of the young people
 - are prepared for unexpected disclosures
 - are using experienced and consistent project delivery staff



General challenges include:

- Difficulties experienced by referral agencies in sharing data with LTOs about referred young people (i.e. challenges around GDPR)
- LTOs not receiving enough, relevant or up to date information from the referral agency and needing to ask for additional information. This can be particularly challenging if the young person has been referred by the referral agency as part of an exit strategy and is no longer working with the young person
- Parents and caregivers can act as gatekeepers and in some cases, might not want to provide consent for the young person to be referred to an intervention.
- Matching the right young people with the right intervention such as level of need, location, day and time, type of sport and age group.
- Planning the number of referrals for interventions in advance is difficult as it is not always possible to know how many young people will want to be referred to sport and when
- Making sure that there is capacity available at LTOs to accept referred young people on an ongoing basis
- Making sure that the referred young people will fit into the dynamics of other young people at the intervention and avoid potential conflict including rivalries
- Providing continuity of support for referred young people when and if the intervention comes to an end especially if they were referred halfway or near to the end of the intervention or if their engagement has not been regular.

SECTION B: REFERRALS

A co-ordinated referral system

Best practice suggests that a co-ordinated referral system is the most effective way to manage referrals and could be valuable for LTOs.

A co-ordinated referral system, often managed by a statutory agency such as the local authority or the police, brings together all the referrals for young people at risk of or involved in offending and serious violence within a geographical area into a single management system. This type of referral system often includes setting up a data management system for the referred young people in a single place, ensuring that key protocols such as data sharing, privacy, storage and safeguarding are in place. This stores relevant information about the young person in a single place so that the person managing the referral system (also known as a 'single point of contact' or SPOC) can make sure that intervention providers receive appropriate and timely information about the referred young person. A wide range of interventions and intervention providers can be included as referral destinations for young people in the co-ordinated referral system, including sport and LTOs.

In terms of referrals to sport interventions, it is helpful to have a bespoke 'sport referral co-ordinator' as part of this system who can act as a bridge between the co-ordinated referral system and the LTOs within a geographical area. Each LTO that is involved in receiving referrals should ideally also have a named person who is responsible for receiving and looking after the referred young people.



The role of the 'sport referral co-ordinator' overseeing sport referrals over a wider geographical area could be to:

- Ensure that referral agencies and the system's 'single point of contact' are aware of the value and benefits of sport for young people so that it can be considered as a potential referral opportunity for young people when appropriate.
- Help to embed sport into the co-ordinated referral system including the shared protocols and agreements and make sure that LTOs' policies and practice reflect this.
- Ensure that referral agencies and the system's 'single point of contact' are aware of the sport interventions available in their geographical areas and have sufficient information to be able to make the referral and to talk to the young person and their parent or guardian about the sport interventions
- Ensure that referrals are only made to LTOs that are able to offer a good quality experience for the referred young people.
- Support LTOs to develop their workforce, put systems in place and design good quality SportPlus interventions
- Ensure that referred young people are matched to the appropriate type of LTO provision and that if their needs are too complex, to place them back into the referral system for a more appropriate intervention
- Act as a bridge between the referral system and the LTOs by starting to engage the young person (and their parent or guardian) and provide practical support for encouraging them to attend the first and subsequent sessions
- Ensure that LTOs can add informal and self-referrals to the co-ordinated referral system so that the 'single point of contact' and the referral agencies are aware of the young people that LTOs are working with
- Act as an intermediary between the referral agency and the LTO if a young person's circumstances change (such as involvement in a gang or serious offending) and the LTO does not have the expertise to work with the young person.
- Identify the potential for LTOs to develop or expand sport interventions to fill the gaps for referral agencies who might want to make a referral to a specific sport or in a particular location etc.

Best practice: A co-ordinated referral management system including sport

A co-ordinated referral management system has been shown to be a promising approach for referring 'vulnerable' and 'at risk' young people to other agencies and interventions including sport. In terms of sport, this can ensure that a young person is referred appropriately to a quality sport intervention and that they have a good quality, positive experience.

The characteristics of a co-ordinated referral management system may include:

- Place-based – covering a 'manageable' local area that could be a town, a town/district/borough, city or county
- Partnership-based – including a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies
- Strategic commitment from organisations to 'make the system work'
- Positioned within a lead organisation such as a local authority
- Integration into the lead organisation or local authority's own referral process and policies for vulnerable young people if appropriate, including data protection and safeguarding
- Responsive and flexible approach to managing and improving the referral management system
- Having a specialist referral co-ordinator who is a 'single point of contact' for referrals within the referral management system
- Being able to provide more relevant and comprehensive information about the referred young person
- A combination of formal, informal and self-referral routes into the system
- A specialist sport role (such as a sport referral co-ordinator) to act as a 'bridge' between the referral agencies, the system and the LTOs
- A choice of secondary level, quality sport interventions offering different sports and types of interventions in different local areas
- A mechanism for making sure that there enough sport interventions available in terms of geographical area, choice of sport, type of intervention, age group, gender, culture, access.
- A two-way referral system – referral agencies referring young people downwards to sport and LTOs referring young people upwards to the appropriate welfare agencies if additional support is needed by the young person

The role of the named person responsible for referrals within an LTO includes:

- Responsibility for making sure that the LTO's SportPlus provision is of a good quality and has the appropriate policies and procedures and workforce expertise and training in place
- Acting as a single point of contact within the LTO for referrals – both externally with the sport referral co-ordinator and internally with LTO staff including frontline delivery staff
- Attending meetings and networking opportunities with other LTOs and referral agencies to stay up-to-date with new developments and to develop local partnerships
- Receiving the referral form and checking that all the necessary information has been provided and, if not, asking for further information.
- Responsibility for matching the referred young person to the LTO's SportPlus provision or if their provision is not suitable for the needs of the young person, responsible for contacting the sport referral co-ordinator so that a more appropriate intervention can be found for the young person
- Responsibility for maintaining a secure and confidential system for the storage of the young person's data and personal information
- Engagement of the young person and their parent or guardian – at the beginning of their involvement at the intervention as well as on an ongoing basis
- Providing feedback to the referral system and agency about the young person's progress
- Making upwards or onwards referrals for additional support for the young person if needed
- Collecting M&E data for funders and referral systems and agencies



However, in some geographical areas, sport might not be part of a co-ordinated referral system and individual referral agencies or practitioners might need to make individual arrangements with LTOs.

Referrals between individual referral agencies and individual LTOs

Instead of using a co-ordinated referral system in some areas, referrals are sometimes made on an individual basis where an individual referral agency refers young people to a sport intervention run by an individual LTO. However, this approach needs careful consideration:

- This might mean additional work for individual LTOs as an individual referral agency will need to do their own regular checks for areas such as DBS checks and safeguarding and a different agreement will need to be put in place between each LTO and each referral agency which will need to be regularly updated
- The LTO might only receive information about the referred young person that the individual referral agency is aware of rather than a more comprehensive picture of their needs, circumstances etc.
- The LTO might not have enough capacity to accept all their referred young people by itself and might not be able to offer the right type of sport intervention, choice of sport, locations etc.
- The LTO might find it too risky to increase the capacity and range of sport interventions if it relies on working with a single or small number of referral agencies

SECTION C: PLANNING TO PROVIDE A QUALITY SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION FOR REFERRALS

Insight shows that it is important for an LTO to prepare for accepting referrals but that it can take longer than expected. The following suitability and readiness checklists for four key areas can be helpful for LTOs and sport referral co-ordinators:

AREA ONE

THE LTO'S EXPERIENCE AND TRACK RECORD OF WORKING WITH VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE



AREA TWO

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS



AREA THREE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



AREA FOUR

PREPARING THE SPORT INTERVENTION TO RECEIVE REFERRED YOUNG PEOPLE



AREA ONE: THE LTO'S EXPERIENCE AND TRACK RECORD OF WORKING WITH VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE

Assessing the previous and current experience of working with young people at the secondary level is important for an LTO to help to identify the suitability of their sport interventions for referrals. It is important to consider the following key areas.

- An LTO's previous experience of working with young people
- An LTO's understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of young people
- An LTO's commitment to the use of sport with their work with young people
- An LTO's understanding of their role with young people

Checklist C1 might be helpful for an LTO to identify whether they already have or need to work towards achieving the appropriate levels of experience for receiving referrals. (Please note that all the Checklists can be downloaded separately for use by LTOs etc.)

Checklist C1: An LTO's experience and track record of working with vulnerable young people

CHECKLIST FOR USE BY LTOs:		Suitability / Readiness (Yes, Partly, No)
EXPERIENCE AND TRACK RECORD OF WORKING WITH VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE		
Ethos of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people at the heart of their work - vision, aims and values, young-people centred, youth voice 	
Previous experience of working with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organisation with experience of working with vulnerable young people in either a sport or youth/ community work context • An organisation known, respected and trusted for its work with young people locally • Policies, procedures (including enhanced DBS checks) and staff training in place for safeguarding and disclosures • Partnerships in place with agencies who can provide additional support to young people e.g. mental health, employment. 	
Understanding the needs and vulnerabilities of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project staff and delivery staff with a good understanding of the types of vulnerabilities experienced by young people and the implications for their work • Delivery staff attending regular training on areas such as a trauma-informed approach, promoting positive behaviour • Policies and procedures in place for safeguarding etc 	
Commitment to the use of sport with their work with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation recognises the benefits of using sport positively as a way of working with young people 	
Clear understanding of their role with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery staff (coaches, mentors, volunteers) have a clear understanding of how they need to support individual young people • Delivery staff (coaches, mentors, volunteers) have a clear understanding of what is not included in their role and how to support young people to access specialist support e.g. counselling for supporting mental health issues • Delivery staff act as role models to young people – modelling positive behaviours, attitudes and values 	

AREA TWO: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

As referrals are based on collaboration between youth justice, criminal justice, early help partners and LTOs, the development of effective partnerships is a central feature of this preparation work. The 'sport referral co-ordinator' can play a valuable role in helping to build partnerships between LTOs and referral agencies as well as leading the development of agreements and protocols. Best practice has shown that regular place-based networking events co-ordinated by the sport referral co-ordinator which bring LTOs and referral agencies together can be effective for building partnerships and supporting collaboration. Checklist C2 can be helpful to identify the level of partnership working in place at an LTO.

Checklist C2: Building Partnerships

CHECKLIST FOR USE BY LTOs:		Suitability / Readiness (Yes, Partly, No)
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS		
Awareness of local partners working with vulnerable young people:	Already made contact with local partners such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early help/ intervention services • Schools • The police • Youth Offending services • Local authority services– community safety, missing children, exploitation, social care • Understanding of partners' values, vision and goals 	
Knowledge of the needs of the non-sporting partners who are working with vulnerable young people at the secondary level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the roles and work carried out by local partners • Understanding how sport could contribute to the work of local partners 	
Using advocacy to communicate the value of sport to local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good understanding of key concepts and terminology used by non-sporting partners in their work with vulnerable young people • Able to clearly and convincingly articulate, express and communicate to partners the potential role and benefits of using sport for their work – at both a senior manager and practitioner level • Opportunities in place to talk to partners about the role and value of sport – both practitioners and heads of service 	
Building trust and respect with non-sporting partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already know key staff from local partnerships – service managers and practitioners • Already shared knowledge of the sport interventions available • System in place to support in-person visits by partners to sporting interventions to meet delivery staff, see the venue, and see the activities and find about previous work. 	
Developing shared agreements/ protocols between LTOs and partners	Already identified areas for shared agreements and put them into place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and expectations • Data sharing, data privacy and data storage • Safeguarding • Timescales for referrals • Shared forms • Feedback and questions • Regular review of protocols and the referral pathway 	
Regular networking events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending regular networking events bringing LTOs and referral agencies together 	



SECTION C: PLANNING TO PROVIDE A QUALITY SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION FOR REFERRALS

AREA THREE: WORKFORCE CAPACITY

As the trusted relationship between the LTO staff and the young person is at the heart of the sport intervention, a skilled and competent workforce is essential. The 'sport referral co-ordinator' can help to support the LTO workforce development and provide a co-ordinated workforce training programme. Best practice has shown that bringing LTOs and referral agencies together for shared training courses as part of place-based networking events can help to develop working relationships and increase levels of trust and collaboration. Checklist C3 might be helpful for identifying the readiness of the LTO's workforce for involvement in SportPlus interventions as well as forming the basis for a workforce development plan.



Checklist C3: The readiness of an LTO's workforce capacity

CHECKLIST FOR USE BY LTOs:		Suitability / Readiness (Yes, Partly, No)
THE READINESS OF AN LTO'S WORKFORCE CAPACITY		
Experienced workforce in place	<p>Delivery staff with the appropriate expertise and background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable young people • Local knowledge • Youthwork/sports skills • Empathy, non-judgemental and caring • Cultural competencies <p>LTO with sufficient staff to deliver the intervention</p>	
Workforce with understanding of the aim of the sport intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding by project management and delivery staff of the aim of the sport intervention and of areas such as personal development • Understanding by sports delivery staff of their role with young people at the session with a focus on participation and personal development and not a focus on coaching and talent pathways 	
Equipping delivery staff	<p>Key regular and repeated training opportunities for delivery staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of sport in addressing youth crime • Theory of Change for the use of sport • Trauma informed • Managing behaviour • Safeguarding • Plus others.... <p>Regular supervision and support in place for staff working with young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to clinical support for staff working with very vulnerable young people, recognising the potential for vicarious trauma 	
A workforce development plan in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies in place to recruit, reward and retain staff • Regular training plan in place for new and existing staff • Job descriptions and person specifications for roles delivering secondary sport interventions that recognise the unique nature of SportPlus intervention work rather than solely the role of a traditional sports coach 	

AREA FOUR: PREPARING THE SPORT INTERVENTION TO RECEIVE REFERRED YOUNG PEOPLE

A secondary level sport intervention needs to be purposefully designed and run as a SportPlus model. (The previous section presenting the public health approach of primary, secondary and tertiary level sport interventions and the Sport, SportPlus and PlusSport model is helpful to refer to.) Checklist C4 can be used to support the design of a good quality secondary level SportPlus intervention.



Checklist C4: Designing the SportPlus intervention for referred young people

CHECKLIST FOR USE BY LTOs:		Suitability / Readiness (Yes, Partly, No)
DESIGNING THE SPORTPLUS INTERVENTION FOR REFERRED YOUNG PEOPLE		
LTO Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate governance structure in place (e.g. CIC²², Trust, charity) to support the activities of the LTO Affiliation to NGB(s)²³ if required at this point Appropriate level of NGB coaching qualifications and training in place for delivery staff if appropriate 	
Policies and procedures in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding policy and procedures in place All LTO staff with enhanced DBS certificates Regular training sessions for all staff about safeguarding policy and procedures Training and procedures in place about disclosures plus/ outward referral system in place for young people for extra support Safeguards in place to avoid negative interactions and dynamics between young people incl. local rivalries Safeguards in place to avoid deviancy training Data privacy incl. data sharing and storage policies and procedures in place for paper and electronic forms Making sure that only appropriate data about young people is shared with key staff, that it is shared confidentially and is kept confidential 	
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venue in a safe, local, community location – for the young person travelling to and from the venue as well as at the venue Venue suitable in the summer and winter (for bad weather and dark evenings) Venue that is familiar and known to the young people and is suitable for the type of sport(s) Venue available for a long-term intervention If it is an outdoor space, additional considerations about safety and access to an indoor space for the 'plus' activities Consideration of dynamics of young people attending the sessions and relationships, friendships and rivalries both at and outside the session 	
Sport' element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposefully designed yet flexible session plans for the intervention based on an appropriate Theory of Change Choice of sport(s) identified which meets needs of young people – individual and/or team sports Hidden sports skills integrated into sessions Hidden development of knowledge about rules of sports and tactics Plans for running a session with players of different abilities - from beginner to more experienced players Plans for integrating new young people into an existing, established group sports session A comfortable, friendly and welcoming atmosphere Young people having fun whilst playing sport Everyone is involved in playing sport at the session – or helping to run it – such as keeping scores, selecting teams Young people encouraged to talk to each other, mix and get on Young people encouraged to talk to the coaches, volunteers and mentors and have meaningful conversations Different sports activities or variations in the sports activities at each session, some informal competitions if wanted by the young people – different each week Including players of different abilities - from beginner to more experienced players – in the sports sessions Coaches know everyone's names and background and talk to the young people individually before, during or after the session Coaches act as positive role models, give praise, talk positively, deal with difficult situations or conflict in a positive way and positive decision-making. An 'informally organised' session which responds to what young people want, not chaotic or 'out of control' and not strict or authoritarian. 	
'Plus' element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key 'plus' areas identified for working with young people whilst taking part in sport Structured but flexible 'plus' planning for sessions 'Teachable' moments Giving young people 'a thousand chances' Opportunities for personal development, setting goals and progression Opportunities for socialisation with other young people Opportunities for individual young people to develop a meaningful relationship with a trusted adult or member of the delivery staff at the session Opportunities for taking part in additional activities such as volunteering, mentoring, training, qualifications or other non-sports activities. Opportunities for young people's achievements to be recognised Delivery staff praising and recognising young people's achievements however small. Potential pathways and exit routes available for young people 	
Mechanism in place for regular session briefings and reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanism and resources in place for staff to discuss the sessions and their work with young people before and after they have taken place and to identify areas for action for the following weeks Mechanism in place for staff to raise issues of concern about young people – dynamics at the sessions, progress being made and safeguarding concerns Mechanism in place for staff to request additional support, training and resources 	

SECTION D: PREPARING FOR RECEIVING REFERRALS TO A SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION

FIRST STEP: SETTING THE SCENE AND GETTING TO KNOW THE REFERRAL AGENCIES

It is valuable for LTOs to meet referral agencies in person so that they can get to know each other and discuss the needs of the young people that the referral agencies are working with. These discussions could also include broader issues such as building a picture of the youth landscape and identifying the priority areas for working with vulnerable young people. It is helpful for LTOs to make sure that referral agencies are aware of the different LTOs and the types of sport interventions that are available in the geographical area so that appropriate referrals can be made.

If a co-ordinated referral system is in place with a sport referral co-ordinator in post, they could take the lead role in bringing together LTOs and referral agencies. The sport referral co-ordinator should have a good knowledge of the LTOs and their suitability for the young people that the referral agencies are working for. In some areas, the sport referral co-ordinator (or similar role) will arrange regular training and networking events for LTOs and referral agencies where they can meet and discuss specific topics. This approach is helpful to build trust and working relationships between referral agencies and LTOs.

Best practice: Bringing LTOs and referral agencies together

In some areas, the sport referral co-ordinator (or equivalent) organises regular events to bring LTOs and referral agencies together. The sport referral co-ordinator would be responsible for inviting the LTOs and referral agencies to the meeting, leading the meeting and setting the scene. In some places, this has been called 'a coffee morning, 'a speed dating meeting' or a 'cluster meeting' where referral agencies are able to move from one LTO to another in the room to find out what they could offer to referred young people.

The format of the meeting could include:

- An opportunity to meet each other individually and to 'put a face to the name'.
- To exchange information about their roles and their organisations.
- To talk about the youth landscape and priority areas
- To talk about the potential benefits of community sport for referred young people.
- To find out about what the LTOs offer e.g. location, activities, age groups, days, times, cost.
- To talk about the needs and vulnerabilities of the young people that the referral agencies work with
- To explore the potential to refer their young people to the LTOs
- To exchange contact details

It is helpful to consider running these meetings on a regular basis as firstly, practitioners from LTOs and referral agencies might change over time as well as secondly, the LTOs' sport interventions might change.



SECOND STEP: PUTTING FORMAL AGREEMENTS INTO PLACE

If a co-ordinated referral system is in place and, when it is clear that an LTO is providing a quality secondary level sports programme, then the data sharing agreements, safeguarding checks, referral forms and feedback forms used by the system should be put into place by the LTO ready for receiving referrals. There needs to be individual discussions and agreements with each LTO about which secondary level sports sessions are suitable for referred young people, the threshold of the level of need and vulnerability of the referred young people that the intervention has been designed for, the capacity at the LTO, and the number, timing and length of referrals.

However, if an individual referral agency is putting referrals into place with individual LTO(s), then it is still important to carry out checks and to have agreements in place, preferably in writing in case of staff turnover. Areas to be considered by the LTO and referral agency include:

- Roles and expectations – who will make the referrals, who will receive the referrals at the LTO, who will support the young person's engagement at the LTO
- Agreed referral form and communication system in place – See Checklist D1 for the contents of a referral form
- Data sharing, data privacy, data storage – the type and level of information about the referred young person that will be provided by the referral agency, which data will be passed on to the LTO delivery staff, how the LTO will keep the information confidential and where it will be stored safely.
- Safeguarding – policies, procedures, enhanced DBS certificates, staff training and onward referrals to other agencies for specialist support for the young person
- Timescales for referrals – how often referrals will be made, how many young people might be referred, how long a young person will be expected to attend the LTO sessions
- Feedback and questions – will referral agencies want to know if the referred young person has attended the first session, is continuing to attend, their progress
- Timescales in place for the regular review of protocols and the referral pathway

Checklist D1 might be helpful for considering the information that should be included on the referral form for both a co-ordinated referral system as well for agreements between individual referral agencies and LTOs. It might also be worth considering the use of other checklists in this guidance to support this referral form at the same time such as Checklist D2: *Identifying the levels of vulnerability and the trajectory of a young person's involvement in offending.*

Checklist D1: The contents of the referral form

CONTENTS OF THE REFERRAL FORM	YES / NO
Name of the referral agency	
Name, contact details and role of the practitioner at the referral agency	
Dated signature of the practitioner at the referral agency	
Dated signatures for consent to be referred: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent or guardian • the young person 	
Name, date of birth, ethnicity of the young person (including any other personal information that might be helpful such as school/ College)	
Name and contact details (phone number/address/ email address) of the young person's parent or guardian including best way to contact the young person	
Does the young person live with their parent or guardian? If not, who do they live with? Are there any concerns about their accommodation or an imminent move?	
Relevant context for the referral including any challenging circumstance at home or school, any caring responsibilities, any negative peer influence, considerations for the dynamics at the sport intervention including gang or group associations	
Details of any specific geographical areas or transport that the young person needs to avoid or any curfews in place?	
Details of any other interventions that the young person is taking part in and the name and contact details of other professionals and mentors involved	
Name of the LTO and specific sport intervention or opportunity wanted for the referral	
Reason for the referral and young person's interest in sport	
Potential start date for the referred young person at the LTO	
Any specific needs of the young person including health conditions, disabilities and any other additional needs including SEN?	
Any safety/wellbeing, mental or physical health and safeguarding concerns	
Areas of specific support needed by the young person, personal development goals, behaviours, attitudes, values.	
Benefits identified by the referral agency/ young person for their involvement in the sporting opportunity	
Feedback required by the referral agency about the young person's progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended the first session • Regular attendance • Positive changes and achievements Any challenges including lack of engagement and attendance	

THIRD STEP: MATCHING THE REFERRED YOUNG PERSON TO A SPORTPLUS INTERVENTION

As identified earlier, it can sometimes be difficult to tell whether a young person should be referred to a SportPlus intervention if they are at risk of or have already been involved in offending or serious violence. The use of the young person's potential trajectory is helpful to consider whether the LTO is able to work with the young person in terms of:

- Having sufficient staff with expertise, training and resource (including staff time to work with the young person)
- The levels of risk for the young person, the other young people, their staff and the local community
- The need for high levels of safeguarding to be in place

If this is not done correctly and the young person's circumstances are too challenging for the LTO, then there is the likelihood that this might result in the following:

- The lack of appropriate support and expertise given to the young person which means that they are unable to benefit from the intervention
- A safeguarding risk for the young person themselves, the other young people and the LTO staff
- A decision by the LTO that they are no longer able to work with the referred young person. (This is not desirable as a young person might already have experienced broken or interrupted relationships with key adults in their lives.)

The checklist D2 might be useful for helping to develop the potential trajectory for the young person and to assess the young person's suitability for a SportPlus intervention. Ideally, this should be completed in partnership with the LTO that is being considered for the referral.



SECTION D: PREPARING FOR RECEIVING REFERRALS TO A SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION

Checklist D2: Identifying the levels of vulnerability and the trajectory of a young person's involvement in offending

ABOUT THE YOUNG PERSON	CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE YOUNG PERSON'S VULNERABILITIES AND INVOLVEMENT IN OFFENDING	COMMENTS BY THE REFERRAL AGENCY/LTO
How complex are the young person's circumstances?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of challenges is the young person facing? • Are the young person's circumstances complex i.e. multiple factors? • Is the young person also getting support from other agencies and if so, from which agencies and what kind of support? • Are there possible signs of offending behaviour/ gang involvement? 	
Has the young person been involved in offending/ serious violence in the past?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of offending has the young person been involved with? If it was low level, is the LTO able to work with the young person? • Was the young person involved in a gang, knife carrying or violence etc. If so, how recently, what were the consequences? Is this too complex or too serious for the LTO to deal with? • What kind of safeguarding concerns would there be for an LTO to deal with? Would they be too serious and complex? 	
Does the young person currently have an upwards trajectory for offending?	<p>Consider whether a young person should be referred to an LTO if it is an upwards trajectory (N.B. caution – this requires careful consideration and is unlikely to be appropriate for SportPlus interventions – a PlusSport intervention might be more appropriate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young person's level of offending is increasing in frequency, types and levels of offending • The young person has positive attitudes about offending • The young person's peer group is also involved in offending and very influential • Other agencies are also concerned about the young person's increasing levels of offending 	
Does the young person have a downwards trajectory for offending?	<p>Consider whether a young person might be referred to an LTO if it is a downwards trajectory (N.B. caution – this still requires careful consideration if the young person is still offending but might still be involved in less or lower scale offending)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the young person's level of offending decreasing in frequency, types and levels of offending? • Does the young person have negative attitudes about offending? Do they want to stop offending or are they considering stopping offending? • Is the young person's peer group that was involved in offending becoming less influential? • Is the young person getting support from other agencies, parents or guardians and peers to reduce or stop their offending • Is there a likelihood or risk that they might return to or increase offending and what would the safeguarding concerns be for the LTO if that were the case? 	
What would be the impact on the young person if the LTO had to stop working with the referred young person if the risk and safeguarding concerns became too high?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would the LTO be able to refer the young person back to the referral agency? • Would the LTO be able to refer the young person to a local LTO offering a PlusSport intervention? • What would the effect be on the young person if they had started to build new friendships and trusted relationships with the project staff? • What support could be put into place by the referral agency to support the young person if the LTO was not able to continue to work with them including a transition plan. 	
Does the young person have multiple vulnerabilities but is not at risk of offending?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the potential consequence for the young person of having multiple vulnerabilities? • Does the LTO have sufficient expertise or resource to work with the young person? • Would the young person benefit from taking part in a sport intervention or would other interventions run by other partners be more appropriate? • What would the implications be for an LTO that has been funded for preventing or reducing offending in terms of targets, M&E etc 	
Which opportunities are being offered by the LTO? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing sport • Volunteering • Sport-based mentoring? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the session only offers sport playing sessions, will this be sufficient for the young person? (This is doubtful as more support will probably be needed) • If the session also offers volunteering, will the young person be given individual support for volunteering by an experienced coach or adult • If the session also offers sport-based mentoring by an adult project staff member, is there currently capacity? Does the staff member have the appropriate level of expertise? Will the mentoring be available for a sufficiently long enough time? (6-12 months is the minimum for a young person with challenging circumstances) If the mentor leaves, will the young person be able to have a new mentor? 	
Summary of the referral agency's view and recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the young person's likely trajectory? • What is the young person's suitability for the SportPlus intervention? • Are there any special considerations for the LTO or the referral agency? 	

FOURTH STEP: DISCUSSING THE SPORTPLUS INTERVENTION WITH THE YOUNG PERSON AND THEIR PARENT OR GUARDIAN

As part of the referral assessment process, it is helpful for referral agencies and LTOs to talk with the young person and their parent or guardian about the value or benefits that they could have from playing sport and to explain what they can expect from being referred to a SportPlus session. This is the first step towards the engagement of the young person at the intervention and needs to be carried out by a skilled LTO practitioner who can demonstrate their listening skills, show genuine interest in the young person, start to create trust with the young person and their parent or guardian, build confidence and reassurance about attending the intervention and be inspiring and motivating.



Explaining to a young person what they can expect from going to a SportPlus session

WHAT IT IS:

- A safe place to go every week, supervised by experienced adults who enjoy playing sport and working with young people
- It's for everyone - you don't already need to know how to play the sport – you don't have to be good at playing the sport either – although you can be good at playing the sport
- Having fun whilst playing sport
- Getting better at playing sport (if you want to get better!) and sometimes trying and learning new sports
- Opportunities to make friends and to try new things
- Helping to build confidence, learning new ways of dealing with difficult situations, learning how to deal with your emotions in a better way
- At some projects, there are opportunities to help out and volunteer and to get involved in new projects in the community
- At some projects there are opportunities to have a mentor - an experienced adult who will listen to you and support you to achieve your goals
- At some projects there are other activities like information workshops, discussion groups, and sports leadership training and qualifications.

WHAT IT ISN'T:

- It isn't a traditional sports club and it isn't a traditional sports coaching session
- It isn't skills and drills to improve your playing ability
- It isn't serious competition where winning is the most important thing.
- It isn't about selecting the best players for teams



It might be helpful to also use the checklist on the next page in conjunction with the referral agency if appropriate to talk to the young person about their interest in taking part in a SportPlus session, any practical support that they might need and the benefits that might be important for them if they are referred to the session. *(N.B. not all these activities might be offered at all LTOs such as volunteering and sport-based mentoring).*

SECTION D: PREPARING FOR RECEIVING REFERRALS TO A SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION

Checklist D3: Areas for the discussion about the SportPlus session with the young person and their parent or guardian

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON/ PARENT/GUARDIAN:		NAME OF LTO MEMBER OF STAFF:	DATE:
KEY FOCUS	CONSIDERATIONS	YOUNG PERSON'S/ PARENT/ GUARDIAN'S THOUGHTS/ VIEWS	
Identifying the sport(s) that the young person is interested in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any specific sports or physical activities they would like to take part in? which ones? Team or individual? (Consider the choice of sports available locally that they can get to safely) Are there any other sports or physical activities that they might consider if their first choice of sport isn't available? Which ones? Are there any new sports that they would like to try? 		
Thinking about what the young person would like to do at the sports session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they want to play sport or if it is available at the session would they also like to volunteer or be mentored by an experienced adult? Do they just want to enjoy playing sport or do they also want to improve their playing skills? Learn new game tactics etc? Would they like to get to know new friends at the session? 		
Getting ready for the sports session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they need anything for playing sport at a session such as trainers, clothing, deodorant, soap, shampoo, underwear including sports bra, period products? Do they have access to enough food at home and school or do they need snacks and food before or after they play sport? If they haven't played sport for a while, do they feel as though they need to get fitter, brush up their playing skills? If the sports session isn't within walking distance, could they get the bus or cycle there or do they need help with transport? Do they know anyone at the session and how do they feel about that? Is it positive as they already have a friend there or is it negative as they might not get on with that young person? Do they know any of the project staff? 		
What's important for them/ what benefits would they like from playing sport in particular?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having fun Trying new sports and activities Getting better at playing sport Feeling more relaxed and less stressed Feeling good about themselves A healthier lifestyle including better physical fitness Making new friends Feeling that I belong, having a sense of family at the session Making positive choices Thinking positively about the future Any other benefits? 		
What's important for them and what benefits would they like from volunteering?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being able to help out at a sports session - putting out equipment, keeping scores, learning how to run a warm-up session, run small-sided games like 5-a-side Being able to help out at a project doing different things (this might include helping with social media, DIY, running sports events depending on the project) Helping other young people like me Having the chance to be a role model to other young people Feeling that I am doing something worthwhile Making new friends Knowing that what I say will be listened to Being trusted by the coaches and other adults at the session Feeling that I belong, having a sense of family at the session Having opportunities to take responsibility when I'm volunteering Having opportunities to make decisions when I'm volunteering Having the opportunity to get a qualification or training (sports leadership etc) Being able to achieve new things 		
What's important for them and what benefits would they like from sport-based mentoring? (sport-based mentoring is a trusted one-to-one relationship with an experienced adult)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having an adult who I can trust Having someone who will listen to me Having someone who I can talk to about things that matter to me Having someone who can give me advice and support me Having someone who can help me to achieve my goals 		
Any other benefits that they would like? (e.g. other adults like teachers/ YOT/Police etc knowing about their progress?)			
Anything else?			

FIFTH STEP: ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT TO HELP THE YOUNG PERSON ATTEND THE FIRST SESSION AND TO CONTINUE ATTENDING

Ideally, the LTO will have an engagement process in place for the referred young person. Some referral agencies might want to be part of this engagement process especially if the referred young person has more complex needs and vulnerabilities. Checklist D4 might be helpful to consider key areas for the engagement of the young person before the first session and to assess the young person's suitability for a SportPlus intervention. Ideally, this should be completed in partnership with the LTO that is being considered for the referral.



Checklist D4: Planning for the engagement of the young person before the first session

ENGAGEMENT CONSIDERATION	ENGAGEMENT PLAN / ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY Referral Agency/ Sport referral co-ordinator/ LTO
Does the young person have enough information about the sport and physical opportunity and what it involves? (clothing/footwear/ water/day, time and location/ parental consent forms.)		
Does the young person's parent or guardian have enough information about the sport and physical opportunity and what it involves? (day, time and location, profile of the coaches, other young people attending, type of activities, support they need to give the young person to encourage them to attend)		
Does the young person know the sports staff involved already?		
Does the young person already have any friends at the session?		
Is the young person confident enough to come to the first and subsequent sessions by themselves?		
Can the young person get to the session and back home again easily and safely?		
Are there any costs involved in taking part in the session? (Clothing, footwear, equipment, subs, travel)		
Would it be helpful for a key worker to go with the young person to the first session(s)? (pick up/ stay at the session/ take part alongside the young person/ take home). Or/ would this be seen negatively by the young person and other participants		
Has the lead coach planned how they will get the young person involved in the first session?		
Has the lead coach planned how they will support the development of new friendships for the young person at the session?		
Does the lead coach have enough information about the young person's goals and outcomes to support the planning of the session?		
Anything else?		

SECTION D: PREPARING FOR RECEIVING REFERRALS TO A SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION

SIXTH STEP: POSITIVE LABELLING OF THE REFERRED YOUNG PERSON

As part of the planning for attending the first session, LTOs need to consider how to avoid the negative labelling of young people referred to their sessions especially if the young person has complex needs and vulnerabilities. Programme staff should avoid negative labelling or treating a young person differently and place the emphasis on positive labelling.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LABELLING THEORY FOR COMMUNITY SPORT

What is labelling theory?

- Labelling theory suggests that involvement in the offending system can apply 'offender labels' to children and young people and confirm delinquency.²⁴
- If young people are called 'offenders' or troublemakers, they are more likely to see themselves as young offenders and adults are more likely to treat them as young offenders. These young people are then more likely to adopt an identity as an offender and to continue to engage in offending behaviour – a self-perpetuating cycle.

Implications for sport-based practice

- Ensure that young people are integrated and not seen as 'referred' or treated differently.
- Consider how to ensure that staff or peers at a session do not label a young person if their caseworker brings them and collects them afterwards.
- Integration of young people into SBIs which are not publicly identified as reducing youth crime and ASB can avoid this labelling and stigma.
- Positive experiences at SBIs give young people the opportunity to see themselves and their lives differently.
- Adults have the opportunity to view young people more positively in a different setting.

Checklist D5 might be helpful for LTOs to consider with key referral agencies to avoid the negative labelling of a young person at the SportPlus intervention.

Checklist D5: Considerations for referral agencies and LTOs to avoid the negative labelling of a young person at a sports session

CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT AVOIDING THE NEGATIVE LABELLING OF A YOUNG PERSON		TICK YES OR NO	ACTIONS TO AVOID LABELLING
1.	If a caseworker is bringing the young person or collecting them from the session, how will the project staff/ coaches greet the case worker/ give feedback in front of their peers?		
2.	If a caseworker is staying at the session with the young person, how will the project staff/ coaches get them involved, if at all? How will the case worker's presence be explained if participants make any comments?		
3.	If a young person is referred to a session, how will that be recorded so that the staff are aware of this and can make notes etc at the session to give feedback to the referrer about attendance, progress, issues etc.?		
4.	Does the community label young people who already attend the session as 'trouble makers' and potential offenders? Can community perception be changed? If not, is it the right session for the young person to attend?		
5.	What kind of positive experiences and achievements could the young person gain from the session so that they view themselves positively?		
6.	What feedback can be given about the young person's achievements/ progress to other agencies such as their school, family, the Police etc. How and when could this feedback be given?		
7.	How will the project staff/ coaches deal with other participants who might give the young person an 'offending'/ 'troublemaker' type label.		
Other?			

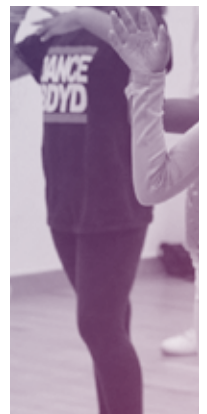
Additionally, it is important to consider whether the use of an identifiable image of a young person attending the SportPlus intervention might contribute to negative labelling even if the young person and their parent or guardian have provided their consent for their images to be used.

If an image of a young person such as a photograph or video is used in the local media or online to promote the intervention or the organisation that has funded

the organisation, there is the potential for the young person to be publicly labelled negatively depending on the context, especially if it is promoting work with vulnerable young people who are at risk of or involved in offending or serious violence. It is important to consider the impact of this for the young person's future education or career as images posted online can be viewed for many years to come. This negative labelling has the potential to damage the trusted relationship between

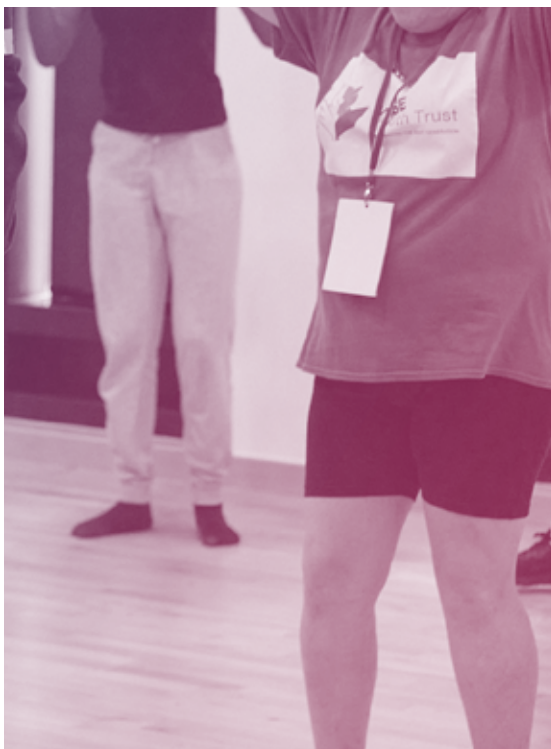
the young person and the LTO staff and might result in the young person's decision to stop attending the intervention. It also has the potential to damage the reputation and trust of the LTO with other young people and its own local community.

Referral agencies might also be able to provide guidance on whether the public use of an identifiable young person might put the young person, their family or others at risk.



SEVENTH STEP: CHECKING HOW THE REFERRED YOUNG PEOPLE ARE GETTING ON AT THE SPORTPLUS SESSION

It might be helpful for the LTO to have a system in place to check how the referred young people are getting on at the SportPlus session on a regular basis. This should involve asking and talking to the young people and the delivery staff. It could also include an informal observation at the session that the young people are attending using checklist D6 as a guide. It might be helpful to provide the referral agencies with this feedback if they are still working with the young person. LTOs could also use these observation sheets to inform their M&E and to build their track record with partners including referral agencies and funders.



Checklist D6: Informal observation of the SportPlus session

INFORMAL CHECKLIST FOR THE YOUNG PERSON'S ENGAGEMENT AT THE SPORTS SESSION	COMMENTS
Name of SportPlus session	
Date and time of observation:	
Name of observer:	
The welcome to the session – are referred young people made to feel welcome when they arrive at each session?	
Number of young people at the session	
General profile of young people at the session (approx. age/ gender/ ethnicity/ disability...) Does this match the profile of the referred young people?	
Number, type and profile of staff/volunteers at the session	
Sport(s) being played (Individual activities/ team sports/ multi sports/ specific sports)	
Were young people enjoying the session? Were they all involved in the session? Were young people going outside, sitting down? What was the dynamics at the session?	
What were the young people's relationship like with the staff – coaches/ youth workers/ mentors/ volunteers?	
What happened at the sports session? How was the session structured/ organised?	
What else is at the session besides sport? (Food, drink, music)	
Which kind of additional or 'plus' activities incl. volunteering/mentoring were taking place.	
How do the project staff keep young people coming back to the sessions?	
Was any personal development taking place? Any teachable moments?	
Were there any role models at the session? Who? (Coaches/ mentors or others?)	
Are any partners/ other agencies at the session?	
Any key feedback from chatting to young people informally – what they've been doing at the session (no identifying info)	
Any key feedback from chatting to any partners informally at the session	
Overall impression of the atmosphere at session (busy/quiet/welcoming, chaotic)	
Anything to flag from the informal observation? anything different/inspirational/concerns/ good practice	
Overall, if you were working for a referral agency, would you be happy to refer young people to this session?	
Anything else?	

SECTION D: PREPARING FOR RECEIVING REFERRALS TO A SECONDARY SPORT INTERVENTION

EIGHTH STAGE: PLANNING TO COLLECT M&E DATA ABOUT REFERRED YOUNG PEOPLE

It is important for LTOs to collect formal Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) data about their SportPlus interventions. This usually involves collecting information and keeping regular records of what is happening at an intervention. As an example, this can include how many young people are attending, what activities they are doing and the progress that they are making.

The benefits of M&E for LTOs include:

- Making it easier to understand the effectiveness of their sport interventions and to check whether they are meeting the needs of the referred young people or if there are areas that need to be improved
- Providing robust evidence to referral agencies about the effectiveness of their sport interventions
- Meeting the requirements of funding partners in terms of achieving their targets (sometimes known as Key Performance Indicators - KPIs) in terms of outputs, outcomes and impact
- Demonstrating the effectiveness of previous or current interventions to potential funders as part of an LTO's track record

It is important to plan for the M&E data before the sport intervention begins so that the data collection can be integrated into the design and management of the sessions. This planning needs to include who will collect the M&E data, which data will be collected and when, and how often the data will be collected. Collecting data from referred young people requires careful consideration as they are often referred to a sport intervention at different time periods meaning that they are likely to have different 'start' dates. Insight has also shown that attendance patterns can vary significantly between young people – from attending every session to only two or three sessions or even just one session in a twelve-week period. This has implications for the data collection as well as the data analysis stage.

As collecting, analysing and presenting M&E data can be challenging for LTOs especially if they have limited staffing resources, the use of an 'off the shelf' M&E system such as VIEWS or UPSHOT, for example, can be helpful. Although there is often an annual licence cost for this type of M&E system, it is possible that some funders might be prepared to contribute towards this cost as well as towards the staff time required for collecting, inputting and analysing the M&E data.

The benefits of using an 'off the shelf' M&E system for LTOs are:

- Training is usually available for LTO staff responsible for using the systems to collect, input and analyse the data
- The systems have been designed to capture different types of M&E data including both quantitative (i.e. numbers) and qualitative (i.e. descriptions of experiences, changes and improvements)
- All LTO staff are able to input M&E data into the system so that there is less reliance on an individual member of staff for smaller LTOs in particular
- LTO staff can see all the data on a specific intervention or young person in one place if it is relevant to their role. This is helpful for checking areas such as attendance and engagement rates for an intervention or the progress of individual young people especially if there are concerns or challenges. (Please note that GDPR issues such as types of personal data collected, data privacy and storage need to be considered when collecting and storing the personal data belonging to young people)
- Data can be collated and then arranged in different ways. For example, it can be brought together for a specific intervention, it can follow the progress of individual young people, it can be brought together for specific types of referrals and for other areas that are helpful for the LTO.
- Data can be analysed by the system more easily and quickly and whenever needed by the LTO
- The results of the data analysis can be presented professionally such as tables or diagrams ready for use in reports and presentations.

It can be valuable for LTOs in the same geographical area such as a county or region to use the same 'off the shelf' M&E system especially if they are part of a co-ordinated referral system. The key benefit of this is that the M&E from the individual LTOs can be collated, analysed and presented as one set of results. This can be used in the following ways:

- As an advocacy tool with partners from sectors such as criminal and youth justice services to demonstrate the value of community sport for working with vulnerable young people
- To track the progress and performance of the role of community sport in working with vulnerable young people
- To support the sustainability of SportPlus interventions by demonstrating their effectiveness to funders
- To provide feedback on the design and delivery of SportPlus interventions including sharing learning, identifying good practice and the need for training and workforce development across a geographical area

Identifying the areas for collecting M&E data can be based on outputs and outcomes as part of a Theory of Change. The StreetGames Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) toolkit can be helpful for considering which data should be collected and how. It also includes tools that LTOs can use such as surveys, engagement ladders and case study templates. Potential areas for M&E can include:

- **Attempts to engage the referred young person** - offering a referral opportunity to a young person, meeting with the young person and their parent or guardian to talk about the referral opportunity, attempts to engage the young person including more than one attempt, decision by the young person to get involved and even not to get involved
- **Attendance levels** – regular, intermittent, not attending sessions as this can be an indication of whether they feel that the session is right for them, whether they need additional support in attending or whether there are external factors that are making it difficult for them to attend
- **Engagement levels** – whether levels have stayed the same, reduced or increased over time as this can be an indication of how committed young people feel, how strong their relationships are with the project staff and other young people, how involved they are at the sessions and making a contribution.
- **Achievements** – this can include positive steps forward, positive behaviours, attitudes and values, learning new skills, new friendships, returning to school, volunteering, qualifications.
- **Additional positive outcomes** - personal development, reduced conflict, reduced or no involvement in offending/ASB, healthy lifestyle, improved physical and mental health and more...



It is recommended that LTOs consider which data is most important to collect, how easily it can be collected and who can collect it. It might be helpful to do this in partnership with funders and referral agencies to make sure that it provides the appropriate feedback and evidence. For some referral agencies, it might be important to receive feedback about the positive changes experienced by a young person so that they can look at the young person's overall progress and assess whether further support needs to be provided.

Even if a referral agency refers a young person as part of an exit strategy at the end of working with them, it is still valuable for them to be aware of how and if the young person has benefitted. If the young person has benefitted from the SportPlus intervention, then this can help to reassure both the referral agency and the LTO that an appropriate referral was made. However, if the young person has made little or no progress and has not engaged, it is helpful for the referral agency and the LTO to meet and discuss whether it was appropriate to refer the young person to the intervention and to consider what the next steps should be for the young person. It might be helpful to consider the following areas:

- **Was it the right time in the young person's life to be referred?** (e.g. challenging personal circumstances, low motivation, reluctant to take part, was it seen as a last chance for the young person before being arrested or being a victim of violence)
- **Were there factors in the young person's life that made it difficult for them to engage with the LTO?** (e.g. home life, school, friends, struggling with their mental health, involved in a gang)
- **Were there practical reasons that made it difficult to attend the intervention?** (e.g. transport, lack of food, lack of trainers and clothing, poor weather, dark evenings in winter, no-one to go with)
- **Were there factors in the community that made it difficult to attend the intervention?** (e.g. violence, fear, serious events, gang activity, threats)
- **Was it the right choice of SportPlus intervention?** (e.g. location, type of sport, format of the sessions, availability of volunteering and mentoring, dynamics of other young people, cultural factors, gender)
- **Was the SportPlus intervention able to provide sufficient support to the young person?** (Did the project staff have sufficient time and opportunity to build a trusted relationship with the young person, was there sufficient personal development support available, was more support needed by the young person than originally identified, did the young person need to take part in a longer intervention)

Checklist D7 provides some examples of M&E data that could be collected by the LTO (it is not recommended that all the areas in the checklist are collected unless the LTO has a significant level of resource available).

Checklist D7: Identifying areas to be collected for the M&E data

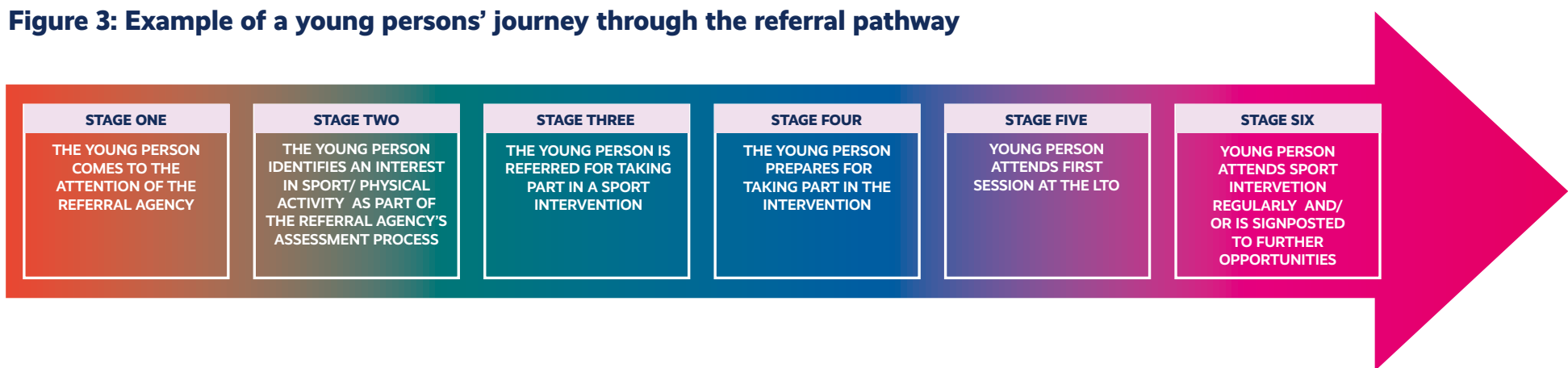
Area for M&E data	Specific areas	How will the data be collected? i.e. tools – record keeping, surveys, registers, engagement ladders, case studies....	Who wants this data? i.e. funder/ referral agency
Attempts to engage the referred young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer of a referral to the young person • Meeting with the young person and parent/ guardian • Follow-up(s) with young person/ parent/ guardian 		
Attendance levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular or intermittent etc • Attendance improving or reducing • No. of times that the reasons for no or low attendance explored by LTO • Type of additional support offered or given by LTO to help attendance • Communication with parent/ guardian to encourage attendance 		
Engagement levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of commitment to the session • Levels of motivation • Levels of involvement • Relationship with key project staff as trusted adults • New and stronger friendships at the session • Young person's sense of belonging and family at the session 		
Positive outcomes for physical well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. and length of sessions playing sport • Levels of fitness • No. of new sports or physical activity played • Types of sport played • Improved lifestyle 		
Positive outcomes for emotional/mental well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of happiness • Levels of confidence • More relaxed and less stressed 		
Positive outcomes for behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved routine by attending sessions • New, improved ways of dealing with conflict • Calmer and more self-control • Less or no substance misuse • Less getting into trouble • Making more positive choices and decisions • More pro-social friendships 		
Positive attitudes and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased confidence and self-esteem • Showing caring attitudes • Showing empathy • More collaborative • Improved critical thinking skills • Development of pro-social values – e.g. future focused 		
Education/ employment/ career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At school/ PRU or College • If not at school/ PRU/ College, considering returning or is starting to return • Achieved a qualification including sports leadership/ coaching • Taken part in training courses including sport • Aspiration for the future – has ideas about future careers and aspirations 		
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any sporting achievements, however, small. • Improved sports playing skills • New friendships • Getting on better with their peers/ other adults • Volunteering for the first time/ new area of volunteering • Anything that they are proud of • Anything that they have done for the first time • Anything that they have made or helped to make (e.g. whilst volunteering) • Any positive changes at home/ school/ community as a result of the session • Any feedback from others e.g. parent/ guardian/ teacher. • Viewed as role model by others 		

SECTION E: THE STAGES OF A REFERRAL PATHWAY

A referral pathway is helpful to think about the stages for the referral of a young person and their engagement at the LTO's sport intervention. An example of a referral pathway for a young person is shown in Figure 3. This is followed by a summary of the six stages of the referral pathway.



Figure 3: Example of a young persons' journey through the referral pathway



FIRST STAGE

THE YOUNG PERSON COMES TO THE ATTENTION OF THE REFERRAL AGENCY

The young person comes to the attention of the referral agency as a result of their vulnerabilities, challenging circumstances and risk factors. The young person might already be involved with the referral agency or organisation, for example as a student at school. Or, the young person might have been signposted or referred to the referral agency such as an early help service or youth offending team by another service or organisation such as social care or the police. In terms of informal or self-referrals, the young person might already be known to the LTO.



SECOND STAGE

THE YOUNG PERSON IDENTIFIES AN INTEREST IN SPORT/ PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS PART OF THE REFERRAL AGENCY'S ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The referral agency will often carry out an assessment of what has been happening in a young person's life to assess whether the young person needs additional support, what their interests are and, in some cases, if they would be interested in a sport intervention. If the referral agency is part of a co-ordinated referral management system, then the details of the young person will be passed to the person who is the 'single point of contact' (SPOC) who will check the information already in the system about the referred young person. Sport can be embedded into the referral process and used at any stage of a young person's involvement with a referral agency or as part of a co-ordinated referral system. If sport is identified as a possible intervention, a discussion will take place with the young person about which sports or physical activities they would like to take part in. It is recognised that some young people might think that 'sport isn't for them'. In this case, it might be useful to explain the different types of sport interventions and their benefits to the young person and to explain that this will be different to traditional sport provision as it would not place an emphasis on being able to play sport well, coaching, performance and competition. Ideally, it is helpful for referral agencies to be aware of the different sports opportunities available locally - types of sport, types of sport interventions, venue, day and time etc especially if a co-ordinated referral management system is not in place. The young person can then identify the sport (s) that they would like to take part in. The young person's parent or guardian also needs to be involved in the discussion about the referral so that they can give their permission and understand the purpose of the referral.

THIRD STAGE

THE YOUNG PERSON IS REFERRED TO A SPORT INTERVENTION

If the young person is interested in taking part in a sport intervention, the details will be passed to the 'sport referral co-ordinator' if it is part of a co-ordinated referral system. The 'sport referral co-ordinator' will then check the referral information, identify an LTO and the sport intervention suitable for the young person and send the information to the LTO. If there is a waiting list for the young person to access the sport intervention, then they might need to discuss whether to wait or to find a sporting opportunity at a different LTO that they can access more quickly.

If the referral agency or the LTO is not part of the co-ordinated referral system, then the young person will be referred directly to the LTO by the referral agency to take part in a sport intervention.



FOURTH STAGE

THE YOUNG PERSON PREPARES FOR TAKING PART IN THE SPORT INTERVENTION

When the young person's place at the sporting intervention has been confirmed, then they and their parent or guardian will need to have more practical information including:

- the location, day, start and end time of the session and the length of the referral
- safety and safeguarding including getting to and from the sessions
- the activities and what else the young person will be doing
- profile of the coaches, mentors, leaders – who they are, where they come from, their experience

This could involve setting up either an in-person meeting between the 'sport referral co-ordinator' and/ or the LTO (and, in some cases, the referral agency) to meet the young person and their parent or guardian to answer these questions. Building a positive relationship with the parent or guardian is helpful as they will be a contact point and can help to encourage the young person to attend and take an interest in what they doing. The parent or guardian can also act as a contact point for the LTO if the young person does not attend regularly or stops attending as they might be able to offer explanations or suggestions to help the young person to attend and engage.



SECTION E: THE STAGES OF A REFERRAL PATHWAY

FIFTH STAGE

YOUNG PERSON ATTENDS FIRST SESSION AT THE LTO

The young person attends their first session. The member of the LTO staff or the referral agency might meet the young person at their home or another place in the community and go with them to the first or subsequent sessions as part of the young person's engagement plan. This might also involve taking the young person back home after the session. This can be a valuable way of getting feedback from the young person about how they felt about attending the session as well as helping to build trust and engage the young person.

SIXTH STAGE

YOUNG PERSON ATTENDS SPORT INTERVENTION REGULARLY AND/OR IS SIGNPOSTED TO FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES

The young person becomes a regular participant so that it becomes part of their routine. This is easier to achieve when a young person is referred to a sport intervention which runs on a long-term basis or has exit routes to other opportunities in place. In the first few weeks, the project delivery staff listen to the young person, learning about how they like to be communicated with, understanding further strengths and challenges and providing consistent support to help them to settle into the sessions.

FEEDBACK ABOUT THE REFERRED YOUNG PERSON TO THE REFERRAL AGENCY

It is helpful for referral agencies to know how well the referral has been working and the difference that it has made for the young person. The LTO might be able to provide feedback about the young person's involvement at the sport intervention back into the co-ordinated referral system for the referral agency to access or in some cases back to individual referral agencies. Receiving feedback helps the referral agency to have confidence in making referrals to an LTO. However, some referral agencies might refer the young person at the end of their involvement with them and so might not be able to formally receive feedback about the young person. However, as working with referred young people can be complex work, it is still valuable for LTOs to collect data about referred young people and might also be required by funders. If the referral agency is still working with the young person, it is also helpful for the LTO to receive feedback from the referral agency about the referred young person that they have been working with. This can help the LTO to understand the benefits that the young person has gained from being involved with the SBI and to also consider whether additional support and opportunities at the SBI might be helpful.

REVIEWING THE REFERRAL PROCESS

It is helpful to review the referral process on a regular basis and to check what is working well and what could be improved. It is also an opportunity to update knowledge and understanding between partners involved in different sectors and to refresh working relationships between referral agencies and LTOs as key individuals might leave their roles.





GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)	ACEs are negative childhood experiences including physical and emotional abuse, sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, household substance abuse, domestic violence, parental separation or divorce, household mental illness and a member of the household in prison.
Criminal Justice Services	The collection of agencies including, but not limited to, the police, the courts, the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office which are involved in the detection and prevention of crime, the prosecution of people accused of committing crimes, the conviction and sentencing of those found guilty, and the imprisonment and rehabilitation of ex-offenders.
Diversion (and diversionary)	Helping individuals to stay away from situations, peer contacts and routines that might lead to involvement in offending behaviour and risky situations. This can also be used in the context of diverting young people away from the court system if they have been involved in offending behaviour.
Early intervention	Early intervention within youth offending is based on the belief that young people at risk of offending can firstly, be identified and secondly, provided with services to reduce or eliminate potential offending behaviour.
Engagement	Engagement in an intervention is more than just turning up as it needs to include their motivation, commitment to, and participation in, activities offered in programmes of intervention.
Intervention	This is a type of programme that aims to bring about change – this could include changing behaviours, attitudes and values.
Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs)	Organisations delivering sport opportunities that are locally managed, funded and 'trusted' by the local community. They can include community and youth groups, charities, leisure trusts, sports clubs, housing associations, local authorities and colleges and, for some of them, sport is not the primary purpose.
Offending	Committing a crime or unlawful act. This can range from minor offences including some forms of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) to serious offences.
Pro-social	Positive behaviours, attitudes and values.
Pro-social identity	A young person who has a pro-social identity feels empowered, makes positive choices, is engaged in constructive activities and is focused on the future.
Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)	Pupil Referral Unit is a school for pupils not able to attend a mainstream school. Pupils might be referred to a PRU if they need greater care and support than their school can provide.
Serious Violence	The World Health Organisation (2002) defines serious violence as 'the intentional use of physical force of power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation'.
Targeted	Targeted (Secondary or early intervention) approaches are based on work with specific individuals and groups.
Trauma-informed	This approach aims to understand and respond to the effect that trauma has on people's lives. Trauma is the result of experiencing stressful, frightening and distressing events that are not in our control – it can be a single event or recurring events.
Universal	Universal (primary prevention) approaches include all young people who can access the programme.
Vulnerable young people	Young people who are at risk or who might need extra support or help.
Youth Justice Services	The youth justice system aims to prevent and reduce offending by children aged under 18 years. Youth Justice services cover a specific geographical area and are staffed by Youth Justice Teams or Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) who work with young people who get into trouble to try and help them to stay away from crime.



END NOTES

For further references, please refer to the Literature reviews that can be found on the StreetGames website

¹LTOs are organisations trusted by local people that provide sport either as the main focus or as part of wider provision to young people in their own communities

²Lifestyle sports can include skateboarding, BMX, scootering, rollerblading, surfing and more...

³See Chamberlain (2013) Coalter (2007) and Nichols (2007)

⁴Routine activity theory: Cohen L.E. and Felsen M. (1979) Social change and crime rate trends: A routine activity approach. American Sociological Review 44, 588-608

⁵Coalter, F. (2007) A Wider Social Role for Sport: Who's Keeping the Score? London: Routledge

⁶Fox B.H., Perez N., Baglivio M.T. and Epps, N. (2015) Trauma changes everything: examining the relationship between childhood adverse experiences and serious, violent and chronic juvenile offenders Child Abuse and Neglect (46) 163-173

⁷Stephenson M., Giller H. and Brown S. (2011) Effective Practice in Youth Justice Routledge: Abingdon

⁸Melde, C., Gavazzi, S., McGarrell, E., and Bynum, T. (2011). On the efficacy of targeted gang interventions: can we identify those most at risk? Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 9(4), 279-294.

⁹McMahon G. and Jump D. (2018) Starting to Stop: Young Offenders' Desistance from Crime Youth Justice, 18, 3-1

¹⁰See Crabbe (2006)

¹¹See Jeanes et al. (2019)

¹²See Weaver (2011)

¹³See Youth Justice Board (2008, p 8).

¹⁴See McNeill et al. (2005)

¹⁵See Farrall et al. (2013).

¹⁶See Rhodes (2004, p. 156).

¹⁷See Abbott and Barber (2007)

¹⁸See Kelly (2011).

¹⁹Hennigan, K.M., Kolnick, K.A., Tian, T.S., Maxson, C.L., and Poplawski, J. (2010). Five year outcomes in a randomized trial of a community-based multi-agency intensive supervision probation program. Report to Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. US Department of Justice.

²⁰Mason, C., Walpole, C., and Case, S. (2020) Theory of Change for Enhancing Positive Outcomes for Young People in the context of Serious Youth Violence Loughborough University

²¹See Nichols (2007)

²²CIC: Community Interest Company

²³NGB (National Governing Body): most sports have their own NGB to govern and administer their own sport nationally

²⁴Becker H. (1997) Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance. New York: Free press



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