

## street games case study



**Report Subject:**  
**Case Study**

**Title:**  
**StreetGames Canterbury  
Employability Project**

### **Porchlight**

As a charity working across Kent, Porchlight help vulnerable and isolated people access support with their mental health, housing, education and employment.

Providing young people and adults with the advice, guidance and skills to live independently in the future, to play an active role in their local community and to fulfil their potential.

In partnership with Active Life in Canterbury, under the banner of StreetGames Canterbury, Porchlight have successfully delivered two Doorstep Sport Clubs and three Club Is over the last three years, engaging almost 200 young people in a variety of sporting and fitness based activities.

In the Northgate area, where the majority of the sessions take place, the young people who came to the sessions would typically struggle with a variety of issues which have hindered their progress in life. This could be low aspirations or confidence, poor life and/or work skills, risk of offending

or a reliance on benefits. As such, Porchlight have placed a significant focus on improving the prospects of these young people by using sport as the vehicle to bring about a positive change in their lives.

### **The “Springboard” Project**

The “Springboard” project was developed on the back of the success of the StreetGames sessions, with the specific aim of enhancing the employability of the young people who attended by offering them confidence building activities and workshops to improve life skills, communication and social skills.

The sessions were delivered in a very informal style and setting as it was clear that a more “Classroom” based approach would not appeal to the young people. As such, the Springboard sessions ran immediately after the sports sessions, taking place at the side of the pitch they had just been playing on - very much a “StreetGames” approach to employability support.



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Where possible, the content and themes of the sessions were linked to real world sporting examples, making the important employability subject matter more relatable to the young people. An example of this was the “Mourinho v Messi” workbook, which made participants think about the particular characteristics of their sporting heroes and how traits like teamwork and discipline are crucial to their success and how transversely they themselves can apply these very same skills in their own lives to become more successful in pursuing goals.

A key element of the sessions was to encourage self-reflection within the context of employability. An effective way of achieving this was to ask questions which made the participants think about themselves and the qualities they possess. Initially, many were quick to presume that they didn't actually have any of the traits that an employer would usually look for. Coaches would then point out that they had been coming to the sessions week in week out and were always on time. So without them even realising they were already demonstrating a good record of attendance and time keeping skills.

This was the starting point for the coaches - building the foundations of self-confidence upon which aspiration and belief could eventually grow.

## Outcomes

As this was an initial testing period for the concept, it was decided that the target numbers would be kept fairly low,

this also allowed for more personalised contact with the participants ensuring they received the maximum benefit of the experience of the coaches. Two sessions were run per week over a ten week period with a total of 18 young people taking part in the programme.

During the programme, seven of the participants found employment:

- Two working in a fast-food restaurant
- Two working as carers
- One working in construction
- One working at a supermarket
- One working as a kitchen porter

## Participant Quotes

*“It was good to be able to think about stuff I have done in sport that could help me get work in the future”*

*“I feel much more confident now about being able to sell myself”*

*“I enjoyed listening to how work has helped other people - not just about the pay. It has made me start looking for stuff myself”*

## A Successful Project

With seven of the eighteen participants going on to find employment, it can be seen that this project has certainly had a positive impact. Whilst the project alone cannot take sole credit for these results, there is no doubt that the



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

concept of offering employability support in an informal and creative manner has reached through to the young people, for whom employment had previously not been something they had given a great deal of thought to.

A key factor in the success of the project, and an interesting point to note, was the positivity that surrounded the group when the first few participants started to find work. This sparked discussions between

the young people and gave them the inspiration to really start looking for employment themselves. Showcasing the power and momentum that positive peer promotion can bring to a group.

The challenge for Porchlight now is to sustain and grow what has been a very encouraging and effective approach to employability support for young people.

## StreetGames

StreetGames is a national partner of Sport England and a centre of expertise for developing doorstep sport in disadvantaged communities.

The charity supports community based sports projects that deliver sport and volunteering opportunities to young people living in the 20% most deprived wards in the UK.

StreetGames works with National Governing Bodies of Sport to establish and develop links between community and mainstream sport. Recognised by the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games Inspire Mark, StreetGames is creating a lasting legacy of doorstep sport in the UK.

