

Sport Unlimited Case Study

Focus on Further Education Sport



CSP
Tyne and Wear

ACTIVITIES
Outdoor activities, fitness suite and multi sports

LOCATION
City of Sunderland College

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS
Student voice, joined up delivery

CASE STUDY DATE
August 2009

At the City of Sunderland College a number of sessions relating to outdoor activities (urban surfing, kayaking, surfing, skiing, climbing) multi sports (rugby, basketball, football, netball) and fitness suite sessions have been delivered through Sport Unlimited. We interviewed Amy Woolstenholmes, a Further Education Sport Coordinator (FESCo), at City of Sunderland College about her work in this area.

Partnerships

A number of partners were identified including Rugby Football Union, Durham Football Association, Eagles Basketball, Marine Activity Centre, British Colleges Sport, various local authority swimming venues and activity providers. The level of partnership working highlights the scope of activities provided through the programme.

Consultation

The college used three different methods to identify the activities which young people wanted to participate in. This included direct consultation between tutors and young people; forums on Blackboard (further education intranet system) and a texting service. A promotional video was produced and displayed on Blackboard and played to students in seminars. Students were therefore invited to identify potential sports which should be made available through the college. All promotional tools (posters, leaflets etc) included a phone number so that students could text their own ideas for future activities. Tutors were then encouraged to communicate this feedback to the FESCo's.

Delivery of sessions

All sessions were delivered on a Wednesday afternoon to incorporate the timetabling of the five college centres involved in the Sport Unlimited programme. Outdoor activities including urban surfing, kayaking, surfing and skiing were delivered on a fixed schedule with each centre creating an outdoor activities club. These centres then delivered a ten week programme allowing young people to experience five different outdoor activities each for two weeks. Transport was also provided between centres to allow young people to travel to the activities. This was under utilised and expensive and therefore was removed during the programme.

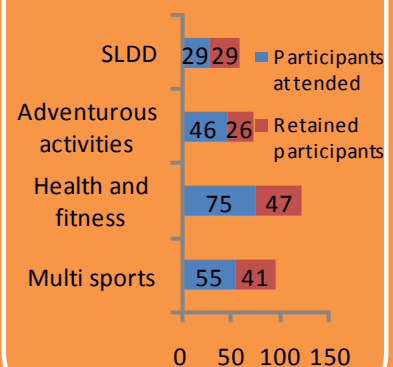
Attendance

All students taking part in the sessions were aged 16-19, approximately 70% were male. Many of those who participated in the outdoor activities were reported by the college to be students who did not traditionally take part or really enjoy sport. The fitness suite appealed to a wide range of semi sporty students including those that had not previously taken part within college. Team sports seemed to attract young people who had previously participated in similar sports at school or college, however rugby was successful in attracting some new participants who had not played the sport before. Participation and retain figures for the duration of the 10 week activities are highlighted in the graph above including Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (SLDD).

Signposting

At City of Sunderland College they found that effective promotion was vitally important in being able to attract

A graph to show participation and retention rates for activities



sport unlimited



City of Sunderland College



young people to the various activities on offer. Promoting activities at the start of the academic year was crucial, encouraging students to immerse themselves in activities from the start of the year, developing a routine from the offset. Methods to promote the activities include a video, tutor pack, the Enrichment Fayre, Blackboard and posters. The promotional video was one minute long and was made up of a series of different sporting photos of both traditional and outdoor sports activities. There was also a music soundtrack and 'inspirational' tag lines running over the top of the pictures. The video was sent to all tutors and placed on the college Blackboard site. Its aim was to get the students to discuss the type of activities and sports they would like to participate in at the college.

The tutors who showed the video were then encouraged to note these ideas/discussions and send them to the FESCo to inform future delivery. It was acknowledged that word of mouth was the most effective way of promoting activities but other methods would have contributed to the spread of communication amongst students. Therefore a mix of promotional methods should be encouraged.

Sustainability

Having created the links with the local clubs and organisations a structure is now in place to try and develop a sustainable approach to the project. Links with the RFU for example have allowed the college to utilise the Community Rugby Coach. Negotiations have taken place to enable the RFU to receive some of the Sports Unlimited money during year 2 to ensure the sessions can continue. Whilst the Community Rugby Coach has been available to deliver training sessions and provide support during matches, they have also been able to help encourage students and signpost them to local clubs. The development of a new local league for the 16-19's age group will also help to foster a continuous approach to the activity. This is being developed through the networking of both the FESCo and the sport specific development officers. Outdoor activities have targeted a different group of students, they are held in specialised areas or facilities and many have been signposted into relevant clubs or events on locations where these sessions were held.

One challenge facing the College throughout year 2 is the need to focus on creating a sustainable approach, without the mass use of transport to get students around the different sites. To try and combat this there needs to be discussions with students to identify how the activities can be delivered in the future with a decreased spend on transport costs.

Evaluation

Year 2 has seen a much greater focus on evaluation with Amy confirming that evaluation: "needs to be formalised throughout year 2 – ensuring we gain qualitative and quantitative data that could be used either in future advertising / promotion and to provide information for future activity planning". Participants received information on a weekly basis and any comments or concerns were fed back to the FESCo to respond to. Students were also able to use the Blackboard College Sport website discussion board to post any comments.

Amy's top 5 tips

1. Promote the activities early in the academic year to ensure activities are merged into the student's weekly routine.
2. Get out face to face with students as much as possible and tell them directly about the activities going on.
3. Work closely with any members of staff that might be able to help deliver the sessions – enthuse them, if needed.
4. Create a good working relationship with tutors in the college as they see the students on a regular basis.
5. Be organised with activities / know what's going on, so if asked you can answer straight away.



Feedback from participants

Students taking part in traditional sports with competitive elements enjoyed the matches / tournaments and wanted more opportunities to compete. Students taking part in the outdoor activities wanted to participate longer at each activity, but they also wanted to sample all of the activities. The students enjoyed the variety of activities on offer within the outdoor activities club. One challenge facing the FESCo is that when students were signposted by the activity provider into local clubs or events, students then had to pay money towards the activity which became a barrier for them.

For more information regarding Sport Unlimited in this area please contact David Marrin, Tyne Wear Sport at david.marrin@tynewearsport.org