

PACYP 42

Ymchwiliad i weithgarwch corfforol ymhlith plant a phobl ifanc

Inquiry into physical activity of children and young people

Ymateb gan Criced Cymru

Response from Cricket Wales



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## Inquiry into physical activity of children and young people

This is the brief Cricket Wales response to the above consultation. The comments here are seen as complementary to the Welsh Sports Association's Response.

### **Q. 1. What do we know about physical activity levels in children in Wales? How robust is the data on this issue?**

- As physical activity is such a crucial determinant of what people need to intentionally do, the lack of confidence, frequency and application of data at levels where agencies can make changes, leave the government's aspirations open to no accountability or partner buy in.
- Without clarity of individual sports' buy in and understanding of their contribution to CMO guidelines, renders NGBs doing whatever that can do rather than against a national requirement or clear contribution to ensure people are sufficiently active in Wales.
- With only a small team Cricket delivers the following for young people:-
  - 7,700 young people regularly play club cricket
  - 38,000 participants engaged per year in our schools programme
  - 8,000 students benefiting from events and workshops through Glamorgan Cricket at the SSE SWALEC stadium
  - A brand new engagement level initiative which, in its first year alone, captured 2,300 new 5&6 year olds to cricket
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**Q. 2. Differences in gender-based attitudes towards, and opportunities for, participation in physical activity in Wales.**

- Over the last decade Cricket globally has taken very significant steps to develop the game amongst women and girls. Cricket now offers a full range of playing options for both men and women. From local learn to play activities, right through to playing international cricket on the televised world stage cricket, is a sport played by women.
- Cricket Wales is confident that there is latent demand for more girls to play the sport. This evidenced by a positive growth trends in girls cricket participation. In 2017 500 new girls aged 5-7 started with cricket through the ALL stars programme which increased the junior club levels of participation by 55%, which even without ALL Stars has in itself has risen by 13% in recent years. We believe that the only barrier to accelerated participation is the capacity to nurture this projected growth.
- During 2017 Cricket Wales delivered an ECB pilot project that was devised to increase participation of Women's cricket. The focus for this activity was softball cricket festivals. These were held across Wales in areas such as Ammanford, Cresselly, Blackwood, Newbridge, Ebbw Vale, Dollgellau, Hawarden Park, Bethesda, Brymbo and Gresford. The festivals were a great success, with virtually all women involved new to the game. As a consequence more festivals will be held in 2018. In addition Cricket wales will deliver a number of new U14 girls' softball festivals using this successful model in 2018.
- Glamorgan Cricket has committed to involving girls in its elite academy which is a pathway right up to the England women's team.
- Cricket Wales believes it would be beneficial for members of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee to view the following video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUQuhrpCzaY&feature=youtu.be>

**Q.3. the extent to which Welsh Government policies are aimed at whole populations and/or particular groups, and what impact that approach has on addressing health inequalities.**

- There is no accountability as to who needs to deliver what, to ensure Wales meets CMO guidelines. Currently the health sector is orientated to treatment rather than prevention and also adopts a low risk, zero proactive engagement approach with sport. WG needs to support and help where sports are striving to make a contribution to the wider physical activity and health agenda. Alternatively WG could make clear what each major sport's contribution is for clarity.
- Cricket (as shown elsewhere) is impacting on all sectors of under representation; women and girls cricket is growing together with initiatives to support this, Black and Minority ethnic cricket programmes, we contribute to the welsh language through our support of coaches and leaders in welsh, disability cricket is another strand where cricket is making itself more accessible to all sections of the community and are connecting with the LGBT community through strong visual support to Stonewall at Glamorgan Cricket's headquarters.

**Q.4. Barriers to increasing the levels of physical activity among children in Wales, and examples of good practice in achieving increases in physical activity, and in engagement with hard to reach groups, within Wales, the UK and internationally.**

- As well as elevating PE to the same inspected levels as numeracy and literacy, each child needs to have a greater level of self-awareness as to how they relate to the CMO guideless;
- Increasingly NGBs and sports foundations are setting out to create sport for good projects. Generating Social Return on Investment (SROI) common measures across Wales will open up the true impact of the immense range of activities that are not articulated by current KPIs.
- Sports have very limited numbers of development staff and rely on huge numbers of fragile volunteer bases with large amounts of churn. The expectation of the FGWB act though is of impact at scale across Wales, therefore the expectations and reality of capacity to deliver are both at odds with each other.
- The concept of sport participation should be broadened away from just the playing of cricket as there are also lots of other activities, preparing the pitch, coaching, training, even parents throwing a ball at their children, where people participate in physical activity. Cricket is not always given credit for these linked activities that are absolutely central to our sport. So by virtue of being an engaged parent or volunteer cricket is driving participation levels up in all areas and not just in those playing a game once a week.
- Through our All Stars Cricket we are able to encourage every new parent to bowl a few overs in the back garden with their children. Through this adults are also contributing to their own physical activity guidelines if they are engaging with a ball around for 30 minutes. Many of these adults may be currently inactive and by association through a child will now be doing an activity once a week. If some of these people are in groups that have low levels of sports participation then this becomes doubly beneficial.
- We in Cricket are very keen to explore targeted approaches towards hard to reach communities.
  - We have the tools and expertise for example reaching out to urban deprived areas on Cardiff, but not the capacity to deliver into these communities.
  - Our success in BME communities across Cardiff, Swansea and Newport has received critical acclaim;
  - In partnership with and led by Glamorgan Cricket, we have contributed to the Home Office Prevent agenda through cricket's power to bring together, inspire, and provide safe spaces for young people to consider what British values mean and how they connect with the Spirit of Cricket. By using the strong connections to British values (belonging, fair play, justice, tolerance, respect between all faiths and cultures) and the SSE SWALEC's inspirational impact which enhances the learning experience, many young people grew their awareness around intolerance of others and of themselves, appreciating the virtues of British Values and how to apply these in challenging situations. This was achieved by the exploration of British values by running three workshops across 46 sessions and 52 safe spaces. The project was enjoyed by young people with no previous interest in cricket. The students had a growing awareness of their own power to make others feel that they belong and a desire to reduce conflict and intolerance by increasing respect and acceptance. It provided their schools with a key feature of future reduction in conflict and intolerance.

- Cricket Wales believes it would be beneficial for members of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee to view the following video  
<http://www.glamorganccricket.com/playcricket/beyond.html>

**Q.5. Physical activity guidelines and how we benchmark physical fitness in children.**

- Sports like cricket that have the expertise in delivering within the school environment should be given credits for the hours they deliver which contribute to a child's 'hour a day' physical activity recommendation.

**Q.6. Measurement, evaluation and effectiveness of the Welsh Government's programmes and schemes aimed at promoting physical activity of children AND Q.7. Value for money of Welsh Government spending to promote exercise in children.**

- Having government programmes alone is not the answer to ensuring every child meets PA guidelines. A collaborative approach with key sports like cricket is essential so a range of offers is open to young people so, with teachers help, they ensure that their personal goals of reaching an hour a day, are met. The evidence of Dragon Sport and 5x60 has meant that pupils can decide to opt out, whereas if they have to find something to reach their daily goals, the presence of a varied range of sport providers means the menu will be interesting and will offer a menu of basic movement skills.

**Q.8. The role of schools, parents and peers in encouraging physical activity, and the role of Sport Wales, NHS Wales and Public Health Wales in improving levels of physical activity.**

- The contribution of major sports like cricket to health should be viewed in terms of our impact across the whole continuum and life cycle, from primary schools into community and then onto healthy activity, volunteering, watching and following options. This means that sports like cricket offer a full range of options rather than activities which are not sustainable, not available locally and disappear from view once the school day is over. Cricket has a whole life offer from cradle to grave, from local community activity to the big ticket high performance event at Glamorgan, that means that engaging cricket as one means of helping children realise CMO guidelines is not only effective for their school days but also for life and well-being.

**9. Conclusion**

- As well as making a large contribution to the health of young people, cricket is determined to contribute to wider social sport-for-good activity. The creation of measures that help assess social return on investment are key to this however WG should bear in mind current activities that cricket is pursuing that go well beyond the pure 'health' agenda.
- An example of this is the growing numbers of students visiting the SSE SWALEC for educational and inspiration tours and the parallel relationship we have with the community police service, who are finding these activities to be of great service to their cadets, and to generating firmer relationships with BME communities.
- The progression from school based activities into the community and throughout the life cycle is an item that previous WG programmes have missed almost completely. The effort that goes into future sport and PA programmes for young people MUST connect strongly with community sport and PA provision to ensure whole life engagement through the vehicles of sustainable local sport clubs and associations.

- Even within our core business of cricket development there are enormous spin-off benefits such as community cohesion, the development of skills and experiences making people more employable through leadership and volunteering. The latter is provided for by a large programme of courses for volunteers in all corners of Wales. Core life skills are generated through cricket in young people such as teamwork, coping with winning and losing and communications.
- Many cricket clubs own or manage local assets which are important parts of the fabric of local communities.
- From these examples it is clear that we at Cricket Wales, in partnership with Glamorgan Cricket, are committed to use cricket for broader good, and we welcome efforts to work collaboratively so that with additional resources we could do even more.

For further information, please contact 