

CPG on Children and Young People
Thursday 14 March 2013
13:00 – 14:30
Committee Room 2, the Scottish Parliament
Chair: Alison Johnstone MSP

Access to sport for young women and girls

Attendees:

Kezia Dugdale MSP
Alison Johnstone MSP
Dougie Arneil, Children 1st
Kim Atkinson, Scottish Sports Association
Jeni Bainbridge, Children in Scotland
Diane Cameron, Senscot
Sara Collier, Children in Scotland
Sally Cowburn, Office of Alison Johnstone
Laurene Edgar, Sports Leaders UK
Lorna Goodwin, Carers Trust
Tracy Griffen, Personal Trainer
Emma Grindulis, Together
Jim Gunn, West DL Trust
Jane Harvey
Kate Higgins, Children 1st
Nigel Holl, Scottishathletics
Keith Irving, Living Streets Scotland
Lesley Kelly, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships
Laura Kemp, Central Scotland Youth Project
Cath Logan, Big Lottery Fund
Heather Lowden, Scottish Disability Sport
Mark McGeachie, Robertson Trust
Lewis McNaughton, Scottish Parliament
Clare Mackle, City of Edinburgh Basketball Club
Carrie Manning, Prince's Trust
Jacquie Morgan, Central Scotland Youth Project
Andy Mount, West Lothian Youth Action Project
Jenn Mowat, Enable
Fiona Muir, Youth Scotland
Eloise Nutbrown, Save the Children
Karen Piaskowski, Scottish Government
Ben Peggie, Young Scot
Norma Pilcher, Scottish Government
Colin Rennie, Fields in Trust, Scotland

Lisa Ross, Mindroom
Rebecca Simpson, Youth Scotland
Ross Simpson, Scottish Student Sport
Kim Smith, YMCA Scotland
Steven Smith, LGBT Youth Scotland
Linda Whitmore, Enable

Apologies:

Marco Biagi MSP
Alison McInnes MSP
Fiona McLeod MSP
Tavish Scott MSP
Leah Benson, Circle
Jackie Blair, Spark of Genius
May Chamberlain, Relationships Scotland
Mo Colvin, RNIB Scotland
Helen Davis, West Lothian Youth Action Project
Kathleen Deacon, Scottish Marriage Care
Jacqui Dunbar, Barnardo's
Liz Ely, Zero Tolerance
David Ferrier, Includem
Ian Findlay, Paths for All
Rob Gowans, Scottish Youth Parliament
Maurice Frank, Personalised Education Now
Lorraine Herschell, Partners in Advocacy
Fiona Jones, CI@n Childlaw
Charlene Kelly, Relationships Scotland
Richard Knott, Salvation Army
Sara Lurie, Fostering Network
Maria MacKay, YPeople
Sharon McCluskie, Play Scotland
Cathy McCulloch, Children's Parliament
Lesley McNab, CHAS
Brian Magee, COSCA
Liz May, Action for Sick Children Scotland
Felicity Mehendale, Royal Hospital for Sick Children
Nicky Miller, CYCA
Louise Morgan, Carers Trust
Muriel Mowat, Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
Calum Munro, Highland Children's Forum
Sarah Paterson, Youthlink Scotland
Mandy Powell, University of Loughborough

Katie Rafferty, NDCS
Morag Rennie, Central Scotland Youth Project
Tracy Rodger, CLIC Sargent
Maggie Simpson, SCMA
Jim Stephen, Children in Scotland
Bob Stewart, Foursquare
Chris Wiles, British Psychological Society
Megan Wilson, Sense Scotland

13.15 – Welcome

Alison Johnstone MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the members of the CPG on Sport and the three guest speakers – Tracy Griffen, Fiona Muir and Heather Lowden.

The minute of the previous meeting was approved.

Alison welcomed Kezia Dugdale MSP and invited the CPG to consider and share any further points they would like her to raise at the upcoming meeting with Alasdair Allan MSP on the topic of cyberbullying.

Alison shared some worrying statistics around women in sport currently: Only 5% of sports media coverage features women, For every 53 articles written about sporting men, there is one about a woman; and women’s sport receives only 0.5% of the total sponsorship income into sport (men get 62.1%).

The Fair Game For Women In Sport Campaign is currently petitioning the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to consider the inclusion of a women’s sport event on the list of protected events shown on free-to-air TV. At the moment, the list ensures that 19 events such as the FA Cup Final, the Grand National and Wimbledon remain on the BBC, ITV1 and Channel 4. Only six of these events have both male and female competitors - the others are men only.

Tracy Griffen, Personal Trainer and Author

Tracy started her business in Edinburgh in 2005 and is passionate about the importance of girls getting into exercise from a young age. Eighty percent of her clients are women and she has found consistently that if women were active when they were younger,

getting back into fitness and physical activity is easy, if not, this proves to be a real struggle. On a biological level, the 'blueprint' for fitness is set in childhood, with the number of fat cells set by age 17. Tracy stressed the importance of early intervention and targeting of young girls in order to prepare them for later life. The particular sport is not crucial but activity and being fit is important. She has found that the crucial aspect of this aspiration is making sure that physical activity for children is fun and engaging. Edinburgh is a great city to be active in – it's not too hot!

Fiona Muir, Girls on the Move Development Worker (Youth Scotland)

Fiona described the remit of Girls on the Move as a programme, established in 2005, to increase the physical activity level of girls across Scotland. This followed on from the '*Lets make Scotland more active*' publication in 2003, which uncovered alarming levels of inactivity within this group.

The programme seeks to develop in the young girls important life skills, to improve their physical fitness, and to engage hard-to-reach groups in physical activity such as those with mental health issues, those from a BME community, those with disabilities and those exhibiting risk-taking behaviour. It aims to provide life and leadership skills and improve self-esteem.

Their leadership programme encourages young people aged 12-25 to gain skills to become active leaders within their communities and it is fully accredited. They deliver various qualifications, the most popular of which is dance based. Their courses can be delivered over 4-8 days and as 1 day certificates as both residential and non-residential. There are no formal qualifications or experience required to join a course, the prerequisites are motivation, enthusiasm and determination.

Girls on the Move are contacted daily by girls from all over Scotland who are interested in participating and developing leadership skills, increasing their performance skills, working on personal development, building confidence, meeting others, having fun and developing dance skills.

They use a youth work led approach, which is tailored to individual learning needs and targeting young women who might be finding life challenging who could benefit from using physical activity as a release and approaching situations in a different way. The young participants

gain life skills and personal and social skills that are transferable. The programme provides unique opportunities to inspire young women to learn skills to enhance confidence and improve their employability. It is delivered by a professional team and provides young people with an accredited qualification.

Heather Lowden from Scottish Disability Sport, the Scottish governing body for all sports for people of all ages and abilities with a physical, sensory or learning disability.

Heather highlighted the importance of partnership working in their approach. They work together with Children 1st and Scottish Athletics amongst other and focus on what they call 'intersectional' demographics ie a person with 2 or more 'protected characteristics', for example, a woman with a disability. She asked the group to consider the barriers to being physically active for this group.

Following the Paralympics, our disabled athletes often appeared on the social rather than sports pages of the printed press. How do we address this? Heather directed the group towards the Wales where a media group has been set up to promote women in sport.

We also need powerful role models like Libby Clegg, Karen Darke and Steph Reid (all silver Olympic medallists) and ensure that we use their achievements effectively to inspire young people with disabilities. There were 27 Scots athletes at the Paralympics – 25% were women. We have to support them and make sport more appealing.

There is currently an increase in women going into disabled sports but we need to make many more improvements. To make sport more appealing for women, another route is to support female coaching. Scottish Disability Sport (SDS) have found that women are interested in increasing their skills and knowledge.

With regards to education and training, SDS advocate for raising the bar on core PE funding and investing in using this to promote activity in schools as well as improving confidence and support among teaching staff around the three models of inclusion (open, modified and discreet provision) and developing an appropriate model of inclusion within schools. Inclusion does not have to mean everyone doing the same thing. An example of modified inclusion is wheelchair tennis where the ball can bounce twice; for discrete provision this might mean a specific sport such as Boccia.

Another significant issue put forward by SDS is how to access CYP with disabilities now more are in mainstream education. A report by SCCYP said that policies often refer to “all children” but this can sometimes make those with a disability invisible. We need to get meaningful numbers participating to show the difference.

13.40 – Group discussion

Kezia Dugdale MSP said that coverage of women’s sports was a wider gender equality issue and that the lack of female leadership within sports was important - only 22% of sports body board members are women. It was agreed that this is an area that needs a kick-start to progress.

The relationship between sport and schools is very important basketball is a good example because, in this sport, men and women share the same facilities and training. It was agreed that schools facilitating community sport is key and Portobello High School in Edinburgh was marked out as one community learning space that is doing particularly well in this area.

Nigel Hall from Scottish Athletics, previously worked for England Netball. In New Zealand the TV companies and Government created legislation on the profile of female sport in the media. 15-20 years ago it was decided a certain proportion of coverage should be of women’s sport. Netball was chosen and as a result, in New Zealand netball players are famous public figures. It was suggested that this would be a good example of a country study to present to BBC Scotland.

Following the Olympics, Scottish Athletics have noted an influx of teenage girls rather than teenage boys, aspiring to be like Jessica Ennis. Her fit physical figure has been very appealing and the imagery of sport is an important consideration for attraction to sport. The social aspects of taking part in sport are important, especially when considering how to attract young people – perhaps we don’t focus on this aspect enough. The chance is approaching, with the Commonwealth Games in 2014, to create some Scottish heroines, which will help to embed aspiration. Scottish Athletics are currently recruiting new board members.

Clare Mackle, City of Edinburgh Basketball Club, said that with indoor sports the biggest barrier is the cost of premises for training and sport practice. In Spain, there is no cost for after school activities and premises are opened up for community use but currently in some

parts of Scotland, clubs are paying between £19 and £45 per hour for hall hire: resources are scarce and expensive.

Rose Anderson - the Scottish basketball star - has said playing sport changed her life - it introduced her to team spirit, discipline and structure which led to education through a US scholarship. She is an invaluable role model. There is now some momentum behind girls in basketball and this issue needs focussed attention to maintain progress. The price of and lack of adequate facilities was raised as a significant barrier. New campus schools in Scotland are not being built with spectator space, and the halls are not big enough.

Alison said the importance of facilities in new-build schools was an issue that had been raised with her during her time as a councillor. Sport is also a great example of preventative spending.

Kim Atkinson, from the Scottish Sports Association, said the issue of employer support for volunteering was something the CPG on Sport had looked at. They have also discussed whether Sport Scotland should be a statutory consultee on school planning and new builds. Ideally, the group felt, every facility that has received public money would be open to the community. She also said it can be useful to use the story around the athlete to generate media coverage.

With Single Outcome Agreements currently being re-worked it was put to the group that now is our chance to think about what we would like to ask of local authorities in terms of providing sporting opportunities for young people in schools.

Fiona said that as a bare minimum, children need to 'move' every second day ie physical activity 3 times a week for 30 mins. Tracy reported that engaging young people very young is much easier and more sustainable than starting later. We need to make PE feel safe and teachers need to consider the importance for young people of their appearance and bullying. Holistic programmes outwith the curriculum need to be developed in order to address these barriers.

Equality of access to good quality PE was also raised as an important point. We need to currently demonstrate that young, disabled women are accessing quality PE. The issue of access also extends to poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage and Eloise Nutbrown from Save the Children raised these as barriers which prevent young people from accessing certain opportunities. Any strategy that is developed would need to access these inequalities. 25% of children leaving primary

school in Scotland are unable to swim – this is higher in disadvantaged communities.

Andy Mount, West Lothian Youth Action Project, noted the lack of coverage of the women's 6 nations as opposed to the mens games. The same is seen in football.

Dougie Arneil, Safe Guarding in Sport, said that things have moved on in last 15-20 years. More success=more coverage. Scottish Rugby is now more integrated. If the Scottish Government is serious about Children playing sport it must be driven through schools – a universal service - not just in 2 hrs of PE, but by being given the chance to young people to perform at every level. This is especially important as it one can never know at what stage a child or young person will kindle that love for sport. Physical activity needs to start young, like music.

Mark McGeachie from the Robertson Trust, said on the one hand, school sports - driven in and by schools through active schools and clubs - have the capacity to lift people out of negative behaviours and present a wonderful opportunity. On the other hand, community sport can trump school sports because sometimes school itself is part of the problem.

If a disenchanting youth would like to participate in sport, it is highly unlikely they will choose to stay on in the school setting to do so. Some advocate a more youth work led approach by going out to groups of young people and appealing to them in their own community setting. A complete focus on school-based sport that has the potential to exclude those who would not engage through school.

Alison noted that one size doesn't fit all and sometimes school sport can alienate certain groups. 'Midnight Football League' was given as a good example of youth work sports intervention.

Keith Irving, Living Streets Scotland, noted the example of Hearts bringing both boys and girls onto the pitch at half time and inviting along female athletes like Eilidh Child.

Fiona said that dance leadership is their most popular course, it is sometimes seem as 'not exercise' and is very social. There have also been a number of popular TV shows about dance. Hockey is also up and coming, they are being asked about it a lot.

Tracy reported other popular physical activity for girls is hula

Hooping and skipping – not always competitive but give a joy of moving and a natural high. Heather said women's football had increased in popularity but there were fewer opportunities for disabled women.

In terms of sports for disabled girls and young women, the group agreed that choice is a very important element and that hopefully, within the 22 events for disabled people in the Commonwealth Games 2014, some good role models would emerge.

Jim Gunn from Scottish Cycling found that success had come from investment in a velodrome facility and the success of the Olympics and Paralympics.

Ross Simpson, from Scottish Student Sport said that University sport slightly bucks the trend as female sports clubs have been thriving. In that sense, University is an anomaly in terms of the discussion thus far. Pathways from school are very important, especially as there is very little provision in colleges for sports.

Kim Smith, YWCA Scotland said they asked girls and young women aged 9-19 what the barriers to sport inclusion were. They reported feelings of self consciousness, peer pressure and lack of confidence in physical appearance. Swimming was particularly singled out as a sport with particular barriers - that girls are not only shy of boys seeing them, but other girls too. They, too, reported that cost accessibility were significant barriers.

Nigel highlighted the value of walk-to-school week - kids run and walk to school and teachers report they exhibit improved concentration as they have burnt off their breakfast. Physical activity in the morning, especially for primary schools would be hugely beneficial nationally and many agreed that we are currently missing a trick by not having this in place.

Alison thanked everyone for their insightful contributions. She applauded the positive stories heard by the group and stressed the need for us to collectively see more women in sport media. Alison offered to write to the Minister for Sport picking up on the issues raised, in particular the cost of premises to hire (and preventative spending argument), having Sport Scotland as a statutory consultee on new build schools, and the fact that 25% of our primary school leavers are unable to swim. She will circulate a copy within both CPGs

(Sport and CYP) and looks forward to the day when Scotland's netball players are mobbed on Princes Street.

Next Meeting – Thursday 16th May.