

2nd chance project



INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT OF THE AUTUMN-WINTER 2010 FOOTBALL ACADEMY AT HMYOI PORTLAND

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Photographs: Barry Clark

Part I: Introducing the Football Academy at HM YOI Portland

WHY?

As well as contributing to physical fitness and mental health, sport is widely acknowledged to be associated with an improvement in psychological constructs such as self esteem, motivation, self efficacy and locus of control. Research has found that participating in sport can contribute to the development of positive values such as self discipline, commitment and leadership, and can lead to improvements in emotion regulation, teamwork, conflict resolution and communication skills. As well as providing access to positive role models and peers, sport can promote an alternative, legitimate, and prosocial form of the sensation seeking, arousal or exhilaration needs that are often met through engaging in offending behaviour. A commitment to sport can provide an alternative positive identity to that of offender, and sporting activities can be used as a form of reward or a way of engaging with individuals who are typically 'hard to reach'.

WHO?

The 2nd Chance Project was established at Ashfield Young Offender Institution, South Gloucestershire, as a custodial programme designed to engage offenders and improve behaviour, achievement, skills and attitudes. The model draws on sport as one of several methods of engaging with, educating and training young people in custody as well as after returning to the community. The organisation provides mentoring, offers training and work experience placements and draws on strong links with national sporting organisations, as well as regional community-based clubs. In 2008, 2nd Chance were asked to support the Sky 1 Football Behind Bars televised series starring Ian Wright at HM Young Offender Institute Portland, a Prison Service establishment in South West England holding approximately 480 18-21 year-old sentenced males. Subsequent funding from the Football Foundation enabled the 2nd Chance Project to continue and expand their delivery in the prison after filming was complete.

WHAT?

The evaluation of the 2nd Chance Project sport Academy at Portland is managed and carried out by Dr Rosie Meek, a chartered psychologist and lecturer at the University of Southampton. The research is currently in its second year and will conclude in September 2011 with the publication of a full evaluation report to follow. The first interim evaluation report (Meek, 2010a) concentrated on the perceptions and experiences of participants of the first Football Academy, which took place in the spring of 2010. The current report continues and extends this focus in the context of the subsequent Football Academy, with an additional exploration of the perceptions of staff members involved in the development and delivery of the programme. In order to meet the aims of the research, qualitative data was gathered from six members of prison staff (resettlement and gym), as well as representatives from the community partner organisations involved in the programme delivery, specifically the 2nd Chance Project and Chelsea FC. These findings are supplemented with quantitative psychometric data and qualitative interview data collected from Academy participants at a number of different points before, during, and after their participation as part of the ongoing evaluation research.



Part II: The Academic research context

A substantial body of literature has paid attention to the benefits of sports-based diversion programmes in community settings, targeting those at risk of offending. Nichols' (2007) text makes a strong case for the role of sport in reducing youth crime, both as a form of diversion and in contributing to pro-social development. Nichols pays particular attention to the role of sport as a 'hook', in the manner in which it can promote engagement and ongoing participation, which may be particularly valuable when targeting those who may be hard to reach in other contexts. Once young people are participating, Nichols describes the process of improved self esteem, the development of responsibility, the accomplishment of related qualifications and sport serving as a catalyst for developing mentor relationships. It is widely accepted within psychological and criminological research that sport can also be used as a way of introducing positive values, a new peer group and an alternative form of excitement to young people who have been involved in - or are at risk of becoming involved in - offending behaviour.

Along with physical health and fitness, according to Coalter (2005) the potential benefits of sports participation include improved mental health, psychological well-being, self-concept, physical and global self-esteem, and locus of control, as well as sociopsychological benefits such as empathy, tolerance, co-operation and social skills. Coalter also highlights a broader set of sociological impacts such as increased community identity, social coherence and integration, and uses research evidence to promote the case that the most effective use of sport to address systematically anti-social and criminal behaviour is in combination with programmes that seek to address wider personal and social development. A subsequent assumption is that sport can be used to attract young people to integrated programmes that offer formal programmes in personal development, health awareness and employment training, which provides a good rationale for incorporating broader resettlement aims and activities in sports programmes for offenders. However, despite widespread academic attention to the role of sport in working with children and young people in community settings, few studies have looked specifically at the use of sport in custodial settings.

In one of the few prison-based studies available to date, Andrews and Andrews (2003) present a UK-based participant observation study which examined sports/physical activity and crime reduction over an 8 month period in the context of a secure unit in south England with 20 young people aged 10 – 17 years. The sport was delivered in the form of organised Physical Education classes as well as formal and informal sporting activities, and findings supported the use of sporting activities which de-emphasise regulations and winning and permit choice while providing positive feedback. Likewise, in Canada, Carmichael (2008) demonstrated the way in which organised sport programmes can contribute to reducing youth crime by encouraging a positive identity, improving empowerment, leadership, teamwork and self-governance. Carmichael suggests that organised sport programmes that develop social and cognitive skills, increase feelings of self-confidence and self-esteem, and facilitate mentoring opportunities with adult role models are most effective in reducing offending.

Although there is limited empirical evidence of a direct causal relationship between youth sport and youth crime reduction, there are several rationales as to why youth sport reduces youth crime. Nichols (1997) argues that as well as improving athletic ability and employment opportunities, sport can meet a need for excitement and risk-taking, increases feelings of empowerment and connectedness, improves problem-solving and decision-making skills, teamwork, self-esteem and cognitive competencies, and provides positive role-models and mentors. The design and delivery of the 2nd Chance Academy is based on these same principles, and the current research aims to offer some insights into the implementation and evaluation of this example of an innovative prison-based sports and resettlement programme.

Summary of previous research evidence:

- It is widely accepted that sport can be a powerful and effective way of improving psychological health, with important implications for working with young people in the criminal justice system
- Sporting programmes that target offenders and hard-to-reach groups should incorporate broader personal and social development components
- Staff should be aware of fostering an over-emphasis of winning, and should focus instead on promoting choice and feedback
- As they have proven to be a catalyst for the development of positive relationships, managers of sport-based programmes should make best use of these opportunities, and not underestimate the influence of those involved in delivery

Part III: The Autumn 2010 Football Academy

Academy overview

The second Football Academy at Portland YOI took place throughout October-December 2010 and was completed by a total of 15 young men between the ages of 18 and 20 years. Four of the participants completed the bulk of the Academy but were released from custody prior to conclusion. The Academy comprised a structured programme of football coaching, gym sessions and matches, supplemented with group-based activities and individual resettlement casework. The Academy was overseen within the prison by Alex Browne, Physical Education Instructor, with the resettlement component delivered by the 2nd Chance Project and community partners in collaboration with the prison resettlement staff. Sessions were organised around the development of football skills and fitness, as well as team-based activities and individual sessions which aimed to identify and improve resettlement needs, challenge negative attitudes, and establish positive working relationships between the Academy participants and a network of professionals, with the ultimate aim of preparing each individual for a successful transition from custody to the community. With support from Dorset FA, all participants completed their Level 1 coaching qualification. As well as receiving specialist coaching and guidance from prison gym staff and partner organisations such as Chelsea FC, a number of matches were organised, with one particularly noteworthy game taking place against a visiting community-based team of younger people who were in - or at risk of becoming involved in - the Criminal Justice System (see box 1).



**Box 1: Example of a community engagement activity -
extract from Nacro Press Release 9th November 2010**

A dozen young people involved in a football project which aims to increase participation in physical activity and reduce the risk of re-offending, have had the opportunity to experience life in custody following a trip to Portland Youth Offenders Institute.

The trip was organised by Bournemouth and Poole's Youth Offending Team and supported by Nacro, the crime reduction charity, to try and steer the young people away from re-offending. Chris Keenan, Youth Offending Team Health Worker, said: "The football project has proven to be a great way to provide a constructive leisure activity and I believe that combining this with a visit to the Portland Institute will deter these young people from getting into trouble in the future." The young people from Bournemouth and Poole played a football match against a team of young people currently serving sentences who told them about the harsh realities of being in prison and how they are now determined to put their offending behaviour behind them upon release. The accounts of prison life had a real impact on all the young people on the trip. "It was a real eye opener to what can happen if you lose control", said one young person, whilst another said, "I learnt a good thing from the lads in there - jail is a mug's game."

Councillor David Smith, Cabinet Member for Community, said: "I have no doubt that the visit to Portland Youth Offending Institute will have had a tremendous impact on these young people and made them look at things very differently. It was a real wake up call about what their future could be if they don't make positive changes in their lives now."

Dom Weir from Nacro, added: "The true power of football as a tool for positive engagement with young adults was the winner, both for the inmates at Portland YOI and the players who represented the YOT and Nacro".

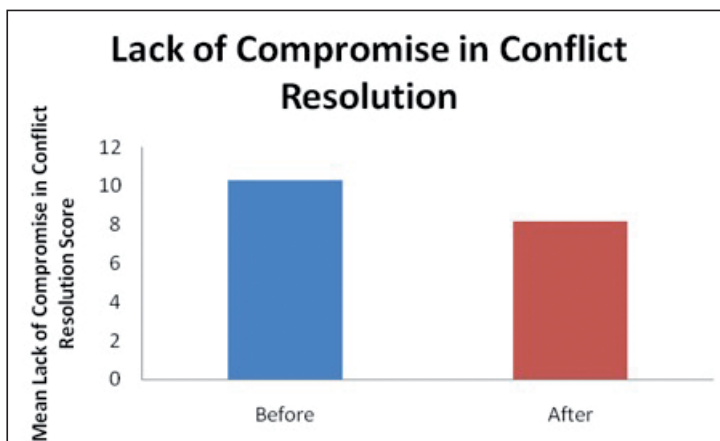
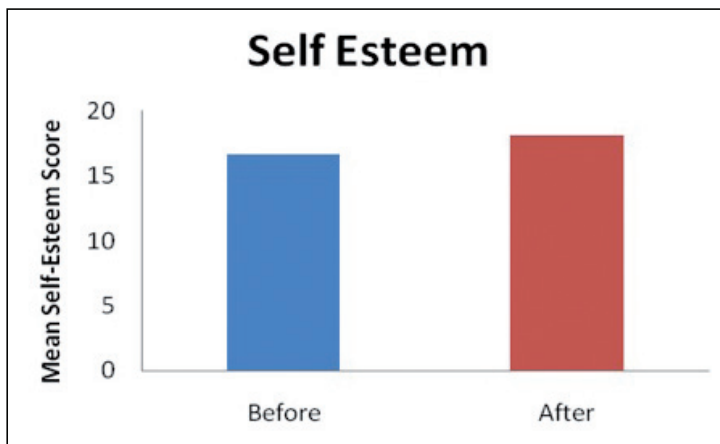


Research findings

Interim evaluation findings of Academy 2 are presented in the form of staff and participant perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the Academy, as well as identified areas of suggested improvements. Reflecting the findings from the previous Academy's interim report (Meek, 2010a), participant interviews carried out in the weeks and months after completion of the Academy were overwhelmingly positive about the initiative. As demonstrated in the previous Academy, sport proved to be an invaluable hook in engaging young people and establishing a constructive relationship with the 2nd Chance Transition Worker in identifying and developing resettlement plans. The prison and community staff involved in the Academy were also unanimously upbeat about the initiative. Despite identifying some areas for improvement, there was a consensus among staff that the Academy had been successful in meeting its aims and should continue to be used as a resettlement tool in engaging with offenders and managing the transition from custody to community.

Psychometric Measures

In the weeks between starting the Academy and completion, positive changes in the participants were observed in relation to many of the psychometric measures taken (see Appendix 1 for further details of each of the measures used). Modest trends in improvement were identified in self-concept, the use of non-violent strategies, overall impulsivity, impulsivity without aggression, overall problems in conflict resolution, general attitudes towards offending and perceived problems that contribute to reoffending. The most significant observed changes were in self-esteem and compromise in conflict resolution. Participant self-esteem increased significantly in the time from commencing and completing the Academy ($t(9) = 2.409, p < .05$), suggesting that participants' perception of their self-value increased as a result of participating in the Academy. Lack of compromise in conflict resolution decreased significantly from the beginning to the end of the Academy ($t(6) = 2.59, p < .05$) with average scores decreasing from 10.29 before the Academy to 8.14 following the Academy, indicating that participants identified less with lacking compromise in conflict resolution as a result of participating in the Academy.



Participant semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions

In order to explore their attitudes, experiences and perceptions of the Academy, each of the young men took part in a number of individual interviews before, during and after their participation. The interviews were supplemented with a series of focus group discussions. Interview transcripts were analysed in order to identify the key themes in the participant responses, which are summarised in the context of individual experiences prior to the Academy, perceived strengths of the Academy, and suggested improvements.

INITIAL INVOLVEMENT IN SPORT AND MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION

Prior to their involvement in the Academy, the participants reported having had a range of experience in football, from infrequent involvement in a school team to participation at a semi-professional level:

“Didn’t really do any do any sport before custody except play football when I was younger”

“The only real experience I have had is playing for the school team and even then I wasn’t that good”

“I have got a really strong passion for football. When I was young I used to play football every day, play football with my friends every chance I got and everything. When I was at school I used to be in the school team and then at college I was in the college team”

“Before I come to jail I used to play semi pro football”

Despite the diversity of their previous involvement in football, all of the participants reported that they had decided to apply for the Academy because of the fact that it would enable increased access to the sport during their time in custody:

“When I was younger I used to play all the time but as I got older and started getting into trouble I didn’t really play as much as I was always on the streets, and I’ve been in and out of jail since I was young man, but football has always interested me”

“I came back to jail and I came off what I was doing and all the stupidity I was involved in so I said do you know what I liked football when I was younger so I’m going to try and get back into football, so I thought I’ll just try out for the Academy and here I am...”

“Because of where I have ended up I stopped playing football and now I’m here I can’t understand why I stopped playing. I love it”

Despite football being the primary reason for applying to take part in the Academy, the participants remained committed to the other aspects of the Academy, thus highlighting the effectiveness of using sport as a way of engaging young people in other education and resettlement activities:

“Better than I thought it would have been, harder as well though”

“I just thought it was just football, football, football but there’s more to it than just football. There’s work as well and fitness as well as other things”

PERCEIVED STRENGTHS OF THE ACADEMY

When asked to reflect on what they saw as the best features of the Academy, the young men were in agreement that as well as improved fitness and ability, primary benefits included the improved team work / social skills, self control and a chance to improve resettlement opportunities.

Fitness, coaching and the benefits of branded involvement:

As expected from a football-based Academy, the participants cited the opportunity to improve physical fitness and develop their football skills as a major benefit of participating:

“It’s made me a better footballer as well, made my fitness improve as well, so there’re a lot of advantages”

Specifically, participants attributed much of their skill development and enjoyment of the Academy to the expertise of the coaching staff, from within the prison as well as Chelsea FC:

“I got fitter, developed my skills a lot better, because the Chelsea Coach and Mr Browne know what they’re talking about so, yeah helped me a lot”

“I joined the Academy just to play football because I love football but I didn’t realise you get to play football as much as you do, we’re out basically every single day playing football, had training and coaching from people from Chelsea. Obviously he’s got like the knowledge, he knows what he’s talking about, so it’s been good. I enjoyed it”

“Working with Ian is good. Professional opinion, that’s what it is... We were training yesterday and our team was getting battered and we couldn’t do anything right, he came on just told us just pass and move, by the next minute we were beating them, just because of a couple of words he said”

The coaching contribution of a football club as high profile as Chelsea was clearly valued enormously by the participants:

“It motivates us and makes us feel like it’s a really good opportunity to be in here and to have someone from Chelsea come and coach us and give us a few tips and that, it really motivates us”

“If he tells you something... obviously because he is connected to a club like Chelsea if he tells you something you know that he knows what he is talking about so you listen to it, you take notice of what he’s saying”

A clear benefit from the participants’ perspective was also the opportunity to gain coaching qualifications as a result of participation in the Academy, which opened up new future aspirations and opportunities for participants to focus upon after release:

“It just helped me a lot and I’d like to take this further, Level 2 and Level 3 and that, continue this when I get out”

“It gave an idea of what I want to do when I get out and it’s opened more chances for me to do certain stuff so... Coaching, got me links with teams and that so, it’s good”

“Obviously, yeah it’s good to get the qualifications and obviously that opens up doors for certain things. It opens up for higher qualifications for actual jobs so, it is beneficial”

Team Work & Social Skills

A key theme to emerge from participants' discussions of their experiences of the Academy was the way in which the experience had improved their ability to work as part of a team:

"This Academy has been very helpful for me because it's like taught me how to get on with people a lot more"

Others explained how the Academy had helped them learn how to approach conflict in a constructive way and empathise with others:

"Obviously before, when people used to get on my nerves I used to shout at them but right about now, I kind of learnt just to deal with it"

"I think I look at certain situations different now, like when people are moaning and stuff like that, they're doing it for a reason, do you know what I mean?"

Such changes in approaches to social situations were perceived by some to have contributed to overall improvements in social skills and consequent behaviour:

"Gained some friends and that. Just helped me with social skills and just, I don't know, makes you want to behave more in here"

"I've learnt a lot of new things, you know, how to be a team player and how to think before a situation, you know, keeping myself calm if anything was to happen"

Discipline & Reflection

Several participants explained how the Academy had encouraged them to become more disciplined and reflexive in their actions, prompting them to use alternative strategies to aggression in the face of adversity:

"Obviously, there's things like you got to be disciplined, you got to follow your instructions and you got to listen and that... It's made me a bit more calm... If you do something wrong, they'll shout at you but you can take it in a different way. I don't get angry with them back and shout back. I'm calm and that whereas before, maybe I would have shouted back and got in an argument or fight or something like that"

"Yeah discipline. My temperament is much more... it's better, it's very better. I think about how I should, you know, come across to people. Before I used to just get mad and just lash out and willing to fight, now I just take my time, be calm and the situations are much more better"

Moreover, participants referred to how newly gained approaches to reducing conflict had led to improvements in the prison, whilst instilling hope for the future:

"They should set up Academies in every jail. It would be much better, the atmosphere would be better. It lifts everyone's spirits. There would be less problems"

"The Academy has been good. It's kept me out of trouble since I've been on it, given me something to work for, given me some good chances for the future"

"I look at things different now and understand people better"

"I think the Academy has gone good. It's made me think positive. Made me think a lot better"

Football as a Resettlement Tool

A primary aim of the Academy was to improve resettlement opportunities and reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Indeed, participants indicated that the Academy re-instilled in them a passion for football whilst equipping them

with contacts and opportunities post-release, from using sport as a positive way of passing time, to specific work opportunities and improved attitudes:

“It’s got me back into football so, obviously, that’s a good thing and it’s going to help me to take up more time, isn’t it, so I’m not... so when I get out, I’m not just hanging around. So I’m doing something and then not messing about”

“Yeah because it’s given me some, I don’t know how to say it, like some stepping stones to get to where I want to get when I get out, some contacts....Yeah. I want to go into football coaching when I get out”

A key positive aspect of the Academy to emerge from the findings was the support offered by 2nd Chance in terms of providing contacts and information, beyond sport where necessary:

“That’s another thing he’s sorted out for me, looking for local teams and that just to play like weekend football, just keep busy so I don’t end up doing the same things, just trying to keep busy while I’m out there”

“Yeah, he’s helped quite a lot. He’s looked into some stuff for me for when I get out. He’s good, yeah. Like, because I like doing music, he’s looked for some studios near where I live and sorted out like where, because where I want to go back to college and finish my mechanics course so he’s got that sorted for me. Quite a lot, quite a lot”

“Justin already said that he’ll help get me in contact because I’ve got a little girl. Said he’d get me in contact and try and see about seeing her because I haven’t seen her for two years so I wouldn’t have known how to go about doing that. The same with what I just said about the cricket thing is if I can come out, I can get a job and get in contact with my daughter, obviously it’s a complete opposite from when before I came to jail where it’s different. I didn’t have anything to do, I didn’t see... My life weren’t going nowhere. Well, obviously now I met Justin, it’s just kind of helped me”

Support with resettlement was perceived to be particularly useful and engaging due to the independent and personable approach of the Transition Worker delivering it:

“He’s nice, he’s good, he’s good. Obviously, he’s doing it for a good reason, isn’t he. Well down to earth and stuff.”



You can relate to him more.... And he's chilled out, isn't he? He talks to you politely, doesn't judge you, so he's spot on"

"Probation, they only do their jobs because they get paid for it whereas Justin, he wants to help, do you know what I mean? He's not just doing it because he has to"

"Quite a lot there is the mentality of lock them up and throw away the key so it's good. I don't know if faith is the right word, but they still believe that there is something there do you know what I mean?"

"I haven't really seen anything at the moment because I haven't been released from prison but he seems quite good, he seems like he wants to help so yeah, I put trust and faith in it"

All participants planned to continue their involvement in football following release at varying levels, from casual involvement as a way of filling time, to football-related employment plans:

"I'm working with the London Youth thing so that'll be... doing a bit of coaching, getting more practice in and getting my Level 2. So, yeah I'll get that. And hopefully I'll just be playing football either way as well like semi-pro, any kind of way, just to keep myself busy and enjoy it"

"Well, to start with I'm going to do voluntary work within football"

"Just normal Sunday league. Just a spare time thing"

As well as the increased opportunities to engage in football both before and after release, the Academy was characterised by the young men as an inspirational and confidence boosting experience:

"Prison makes you feel empty. It is depressing. I don't show it but I have low confidence. Coming out with low confidence you're going to go out and go back to crime. It's better to come out with high expectations of yourself and the way you want your life to be through hard work"

"It inspires some people to do better things in life and it gives them that hope that they might have something for them outside and that"



PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO FUTURE ACADEMIES

When asked to report the weaknesses of the Academy, the majority of participants stated that there were none. As with the previous Academy, some participants referred to the adverse weather conditions limiting play, although they acknowledged that this was but a minor hindrance:

“Like, obviously disappointment because of the weather so the pitch wasn’t in use many times but other than that, everything went alright. It was a lot of fun”

In reflecting on how the Academy could be improved in the future, the key element suggested by almost all participants was to increase the length of the Academy, with the typical responses being:

“Just make it longer Miss. Make it longer or more matches”

“Probably could do with being a bit longer. Probably if you did it longer, you could play more games then”

Others suggested increasing the intensity of the Academy and having more training on grass:

“All day, not just afternoons, mornings as well. You get more time to work on certain stuff, so you get more time just so you sharpen your tools, do you know what I mean?”

“To be honest, I wouldn’t really make much changes but the only change I would probably make is have more time playing on the grass. And just some people they’re loud and don’t take things too seriously which can sometimes put you off, otherwise it’s perfect and I really like it”



Box 2: Illustrative case studies

Craig: “If I need anything then I know there’s always going to be someone there”

Craig¹ is a care leaver with a young son of his own. While serving a 2.5 year sentence, he participated in the Football Academy at Portland. Interviewed after his release, he described the positive impact of participating:

“I came out six months ago, and I got a job after a month of being out with [named] football club. I really enjoy it, coaching. Got the qualification whilst I was in prison and now I can use it my job”.

Craig attributed his success in securing employment to the coaching qualification he gained while participating in the Academy:

“I had the qualification and I told them I’ve just come out of prison and looking to change my life and that’s it really, they just took a chance on me I suppose. It’s brilliant...”

Q: Do you think the Academy helped you after release?

“One hundred per cent, well I wouldn’t have had the qualification, I wouldn’t have had the guts to go into a football club and say I’m unqualified but its something I want to do, but I had the qualification behind me so I went in there and just told them and so yeah a hundred per cent, the football Academy has done a lot for me.”

Although Craig demonstrated a great deal of self motivation, the positive relationship he had built up with the 2nd Chance Transition Worker was clearly a valuable and supportive one, not least since it contributed to him securing the work placement:

“I still speak to Justin every now and again so it’s been really good...To be honest I did the tough bit on my own, I had to learn to do it myself really, but if I need anything then I know there’s always going to be someone there and Justin sent a good email to the football club telling them about me”.

Because of his history of Craig’s offending and the nature of his new role in the community, the 2nd Chance Transition Worker was instrumental in ensuring that all the necessary communications and risk assessments were carried out with relevant individuals, and he continues to play an important role in supporting Craig in the community.

Alan: “Probably the best thing I’ve ever done inside”

Alan was released four months ago. After serving two different sentences of 1.5 years he has gained employment and continues to be involvement in football:

“I’m working. And still playing football as well... Just with my friends but we joined a 5-a-side league, and I’m looking for an 11-a-side team at the moment. And I’ve been going to the gym every day as well. With the coaching, I did think about it for a while but I need to be bringing money in at the moment. It’s definitely something I’ll look into in the future, but I just need to hold down a job for a while first”.

As well as inspiring him to continue his involvement in football, Alan is positive about the ongoing positive impact of his participation in the Academy:

“It’s probably the best thing I’ve ever done inside, easily. There wasn’t no trouble, like obviously in a place like that there’s always going to be trouble, but everyone got on. Yeah, it was good”.

Q: What about in preparing for your release?

“Yeah that was good, with Justin from 2nd Chance. Yeah, it helps a lot and it’s carrying on as well”.

¹Names have been changed.



The experiences of Academy staff: a thematic analysis

In order to supplement the data from the Academy participants and gain an understanding of the experiences and attitudes of the key members of staff involved in the planning and delivery of the Academy, responses were generated from a total of eight individual representatives of the prison and community organisations. These are summarised and presented according to the perceived aims and strengths of the Academy and the challenges associated with delivering it, issues around partnership working and replication, and suggestions for improvement.

AIMS OF THE ACADEMY

An inevitable challenge associated with partnership work is a risk that the different agencies involved will have divergent views of the aims of a particular project. Despite a number of different prison departments and external agencies being involved, and some evidence of initial mis-communication and tension between representatives of these different components, there was a clear consensus among the staff involved in the delivery of the Academy that the key aim was to engage participants through sport in order to produce positive psychological and behavioural change and support the transition from custody to community and reduce reoffending:

“I think it’s a brilliant concept to start with, using sport as a way of engaging young men in the process of change. People in this situation are looking to change their behaviour patterns and attitudes so they don’t end up back in this situation. That was the idea of it” (Gym staff)

“[The aims were] engagement through the use of football and workshops within custody through to resettlement back into the community” (Chelsea FC)

“The key principle, positive change in the sense that young people see something that’s different, being part of something that’s different within any custodial setting, where they can make a choice rather than being controlled and that’s my main, key element. But also then it’s providing them with an exit strategy for when they get out so it’s about their mindset being ready to get released” (2nd Chance)

From the perspective of staff members, equipping participants with transferable skills, qualifications and contacts to utilise upon release was a key component of achieving the aims of the Academy:

“To enable prisoners to develop new or existing skills whilst learning the benefits of team working and playing, as well as the value of competitive interactions. To train with professionals and gain qualifications. To be able to link with supportive agencies and organisations that can assist with career paths and resettlement related issues” (Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

In meeting the resettlement aims of the project, sport was perceived to be key to engaging young men in order to increase their future opportunities:

“To engage prisoners with an interest in a particular sport to enhance their training, education and self esteem whilst in prison and to improve chances of further training or employment on release. The overall goal to reduce re-offending” (Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

“To engage young men who may have had reduced opportunities in the past and to offer alternative ways to express themselves through sport. To offer opportunities on release both paid and voluntary and to reduce re-offending rates” (Head of Reducing Re-Offending)

Despite it being too early to assess whether the long-term aims of the Academy have been met, there was agreement among staff that, on the whole, these objectives had been achieved:

“To the greater extent I believe they have, most prisoners have had some form of placement from work to helping with community projects. They are far more self assured and willing to consider alternatives to a life of crime” (Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

“Listening to various feedback from the previous academies in many cases these aims have definitely been met”(Head of Offender Management and Resettlement).

Although there was a clear consensus among staff as to what the primary aims of the Academy were, there was some evidence of initial tensions between stakeholders, which is a common challenge in partnership work such as this. Of particular significance though is the manner in which stakeholders describe these as being positively resolved:

“Unfortunately not all of the staff were on the same page and it seemed that some departments were intentionally or unintentionally obstructive and internal politics made it hard for the PE department to meet their objectives. But when misunderstandings and clarity around the aims and objectives were understood, other departments worked together to help provide some telling interventions”(Chelsea FC)

STAFF IMPRESSIONS OF THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE ACADEMY

When asked to identify the positive aspects of the Academy, staff frequently referred to the manner in which it created a sense of achievement and positive identity among the participants. Staff cited the capacity of the Academy to instil a sense of accomplishment and team work into participants as a key positive aspect:

“Promoting a sense of belonging and pride to the prisoners”(Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

“A sense of achievement and of ‘belonging’ to a group, ownership. Development of essential life skills, confidence and team working skills”(Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

Moreover, it was felt that building such an ethos allowed for personal development which would have a long-term positive impact:

“Development of individual strengths and skills that lead to a worthwhile direction for the future”(Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

“The ability to engage offenders in a sporting environment and build teamwork, self esteem, confidence and give them the ability to stop their offending cycle when released”(Portland gym staff)

Specifically, some stressed the development of self-efficacy via the Academy which could be transferred to other domains upon release:

“Sport, it allows them to open up their mind to the fact that they’re able to improve in something that they’ve got control over. I think that’s the major thing in it and also then all of that you can map across to just general life anyway and then when they start getting that concept then it does have a major effect on their kind of outlook”
(2nd Chance)

Resettlement

The creation of resettlement opportunities was evidently seen as a key strength of the Academy, with 2nd Chance’s contribution in this respect being highly valued:

“Resettlement opportunities afforded through the 2nd Chance links with community groups”(Head of Reducing Re-Offending)

In particular, the personalised approach to resettlement support was perceived to be especially beneficial:

“The successes that I learned are more about if you can keep in contact with boys once they’re released, and they think you’re interested and they get that feeling from you that you’re interested enough to phone them

up and see how they're doing, that makes a massive difference to them....That's been quite successful with 2nd Chance obviously"(Portland Gym Staff)

In referring to improved relationships, staff highlighted how the Academy had enhanced prisoner - officer relations in addition to relationships with external organisations including employers, the third sector and the community:

"Improved staff/prisoner relationships and both have shared in enjoying the success both on and off the field. Better understanding by the local community of the positive work going on at Portland"(Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

"Outside Links, good staff prisoner relationships"(Portland Gym Staff)

"Creation of good relationships with community programmes and employers"(Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

STAFF IMPRESSIONS OF THE CHALLENGES OF THE ACADEMY

Delivery

As with any prison-based intervention, the challenges of delivering an innovative scheme of work in a custodial setting were recognised by the community partners and in terms of delivery, some felt that the delayed onset and irregular delivery of the resettlement programme around the prison regime impaired outcomes:

"I do stuff to build up to the end rather than it just being a case of jumping in at the end and that's something I feel like I'm doing a lot which is jumping in and then that doesn't have a good effect, it doesn't build up the young people's, kind of, perception, the client based perception of what it is they're doing which is frustrating"(2nd Chance)

"The main weakness was the concept of the project got lost in the day to day running of the prison. The prisons interests were always a priority at the expense of the participants"(Chelsea FC)

Additionally, the need for participants to be actively engaged in the Academy for the duration with a clear awareness of the structure of the forthcoming programme was highlighted:

"I think, we just need to definitely confirm the fact that they're there for the full course otherwise I can't and I haven't been able to really directly work with people as effectively as I possibly should have and the relationships haven't been built up from that resettlement side of it but also the young people haven't got what they needed out of it anyway so it's a pretty fruitless exercise.... Young people know what they're doing, they feel their structure is organised and that then has a knock on effect obviously on their selection side of it because you can then say right, you're all here for this amount of time, that's what we're going to do and then they get more out of it"(2nd Chance)

Time and staffing resources

In describing the challenges they faced in delivering the Academy all staff cited time constraints, in term of accommodating the Academy on top of their normal responsibilities as the primary challenge:

“The other constraint is that myself and the other staff involved have found that we actually have less time than we did when the TV series was filmed initially. Obviously, once the cameras went, you have to get on with the normal job, so this is about trying to accommodate as much as we can, Academy wise, alongside the rest of the stuff they normally have to do as part of their job” (Portland Gym Staff)

Indeed, time constraints were perceived to be a challenge across all departments of prison staff:

“Finding the time for my staff to have the input required” (Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

“Time to show a presence” (Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

Communication

Some level of mis-communication and tensions between different sectors may be seen as an inevitable feature of a collaborative initiative such as the Academy, and the primary weakness highlighted by all parties pertained to communication from both internal and external perspectives:

“Prisons are notoriously bad. Everyone complains about prison’s communication. We certainly haven’t lost out by working with resettlement... If anything we’ve gained something and I think that would be the truth of any of these groups in prison. Everyone needs to open up their doors a bit more and be more inviting to other groups and see if they can work together, because ultimately we all want the same end” (Portland Gym Staff)

From an external perspective, communication between stakeholders was perceived to be a weakness of the Academy that required improvement:

“Good feedback has been forthcoming for the Resettlement Department but less so for the wider prison community” (Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

“We did have our issues initially in the sense we weren’t sharing or communicating properly... Now we’re working with [resettlement contact] specifically more than anyone else and he’s been brilliant because it’s two ways, not just one way” (2nd Chance).

Staff suggested that communication and planning between stakeholders also presented challenges in terms of the smooth and effective delivery of the Academy:

“Communication between different parties and more consistency in attendance patterns for staff to ensure better organisation and planning of sessions, and dealing with many other issues for example kit etc” (Portland gym staff)

“Its good but it’s still a long way to go in the sense of communication and planning” (2nd Chance)

Communication about access to information was also identified as a challenge by one of the partners:

“For me the challenges were over access and contact to the Academy. The lack of information about young people concerning their resettlement has made the work in the community difficult. The dynamic nature of the young people having changeable contact details is a significant factor beyond anybody’s control but when they are moved around the secure estate it leaves gaps in the provision. Justin collated as much as possible and shared the information but I didn’t have access to any information outside of what Justin gave me” (Chelsea FC)

THE STRENGTH OF A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP WITH THE 2ND CHANCE PROJECT

In describing the success of the Academy, the partnership with the 2nd Chance project was thought to be extremely effective and beneficial by the prison staff, as well as community partners:

“Excellent, good people” (Portland Gym Staff).

“Yes, I think the fact that now that we’ve been in partnership with 2nd Chance, which has worked, it’s broadened our horizons in terms of understanding what prisoners need to keep them out of trouble after prison” (Portland Gym Staff)

“I feel that the loss of 2nd Chance will leave a huge gap at Portland. Should there be any chance at all of extending the work I will happily be involved in bidding processes or supplying testimonials to keep this going” (Head of Reducing Re-Offending)

“I found working with 2nd Chance a positive experience. Their style and experience of working in the secure estate helped foresee issues and avoid pitfalls as well as speaking in the language of the prison service” (Chelsea FC)

The value of the 2nd Chance partnership was particularly salient in terms of the resettlement element of the Academy:

“The links between 2nd Chance and the prison have been particularly effective with regard to resettlement issues. Excellent – really helpful. A clear understanding of the prison systems and a desire to work WITH the team” (Head of Reducing Re-Offending)

“Very well - they work closely with the prisoners and ourselves in Resettlement and it is a team effort. They clearly have the best interests of the prisoners at the heart of the project” (Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)



STAFF SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ACADEMY

In discussing improvement for future academies, most staff referred to the importance of maintaining and extending community partnerships in order to provide participants with the best opportunities:

“More community involved. Not necessarily just Third Sector but even Probation getting involved with it a bit more and then developing their skills. Also I think bringing in the football clubs a little bit more...same with rugby, same with any sport you use, multi-sports or whatever, if there’s all different organisations involved the young people get more value out of it and see there’s more out there for them” (2nd Chance)

“I would definitely see a need for them to continue and for the links to 2nd Chance being maintained as much as possible – particularly due to catchment area changes” (Head of Reducing Re-Offending)

Moreover it was felt that involving families and the prison staff as a whole would make the academies more meaningful to participants in the future:

“I’d like to probably have a lot more contact with their families on a more regular basis....It’s about trying to get the boys to see the importance of this, over and above just football. Just people to support them after prison is important I think. So we’ll try and pull more wing staff into it, get their families involved more, and just have more personal involvement” (Portland Gym Staff)

“Pull in staff that deal with them in the residential units. Get them a bit more involved in report-writing, looking at them, assessing how they’re doing on the wing, talking to them about it and just try and build the whole process so it becomes more meaningful for the boys” (Portland Gym Staff)

“I like the idea and concept of the programme but I think more focus needs to be paid to work after the Academy leave the prison as that is the area where they reoffend and it felt like lots of the Academy was about behaviour management and prison focused work and not behavioural change and long term objectives” (Chelsea FC)

Others referred to the potential aim of self-sufficiency in delivery, and although they acknowledged the need to maintain external partnerships in resettlement provision, this suggestion would lose the valuable element of the through the gate aspect that the 2nd Chance Transition Worker has so successfully achieved:

“It would be nice if it could be self-sufficient in many ways, but with partnership with outside agencies, so that when we’ve got a lad who comes through this process we’ve got names and numbers to phone up and say, “He’s come back to your area, I’ll put him in touch with you”, so they take over from there knowing the processes he’s been through” (Portland Gym Staff)

When asked about future academies staff recommended diversifying the type of sporting academies on offer, with the potential of running multiple academies simultaneously:

“It’s the same for any sport I think. If they’re interested in the sport, they’ll be able to learn from it so I don’t think there’s any difference in any sport but I think if there’s a passion for that sport then they’ll get a lot more out of it” (2nd Chance)

“I would like to see a Football and Rugby Academy running at the same time, maybe AM and PM. I think we need to have more sessions on identifying individual needs and problems and how they can be followed up after release” (Portland Gym Staff)

Similarly, increasing access to those with less sporting ability was seen as a potential area of improvement in future work:

“I would like to see more prisoners taking part and not just those who have a particular skill but include those who would benefit more generally....perhaps in another role other than playing...perhaps coaching, managing?”

Or publicising?”(Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

“I don’t think there is a waiting list for this which there should be but at the beginning it was kind of just a, you know, it goes through the selection process”(2nd Chance)

Reflecting the views of participants, it was noted that increasing the Academy team presence in the community would be beneficial in future:

“Teams from the prison being able to go out into the community representing the positive aspect of rehabilitation”(Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

REPLICATING AND EXTENDING THE ACADEMY MODEL

A significant challenge associated with the replication and expansion of successful small scale interventions lies in the difficulty of replicating the work of individual members of staff who have proved to be a critical feature of the success of a programme. Although it was mentioned that replication could be difficult due to the unique value added by Justin Coleman, the 2nd Chance case worker, replication of the project was still considered achievable by Justin himself:

“I feel the Academy has been a success largely due to the enthusiasm and endless contacts Justin Coleman has in the third sector and with sports clubs through the South of England. It would be very difficult to replicate”
(Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer)

“I think you just need a couple of organisations that are going to be consistent and it boils down to someone doing what they say they’re going to do. You need to select who it is that’s working with them quite broadly as well, somebody who has worked in both areas of prison and community,plus then the sports bolted on the side of it, someone who’s good at sports and development of sports and then you’ve got a model that will work I think, but it all boils down to consistency I think really”(2nd Chance)

Reflecting on the legacy of Football Behind Bars

In reflecting on 'Football Behind Bars' staff consistently referred to the positive publicity it generated and the opportunity it offered for refocusing the perspective on prisoner rehabilitation:

"The best thing was the positive publicity for the prison and demonstrating the work that goes on to reduce re-offending" (Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

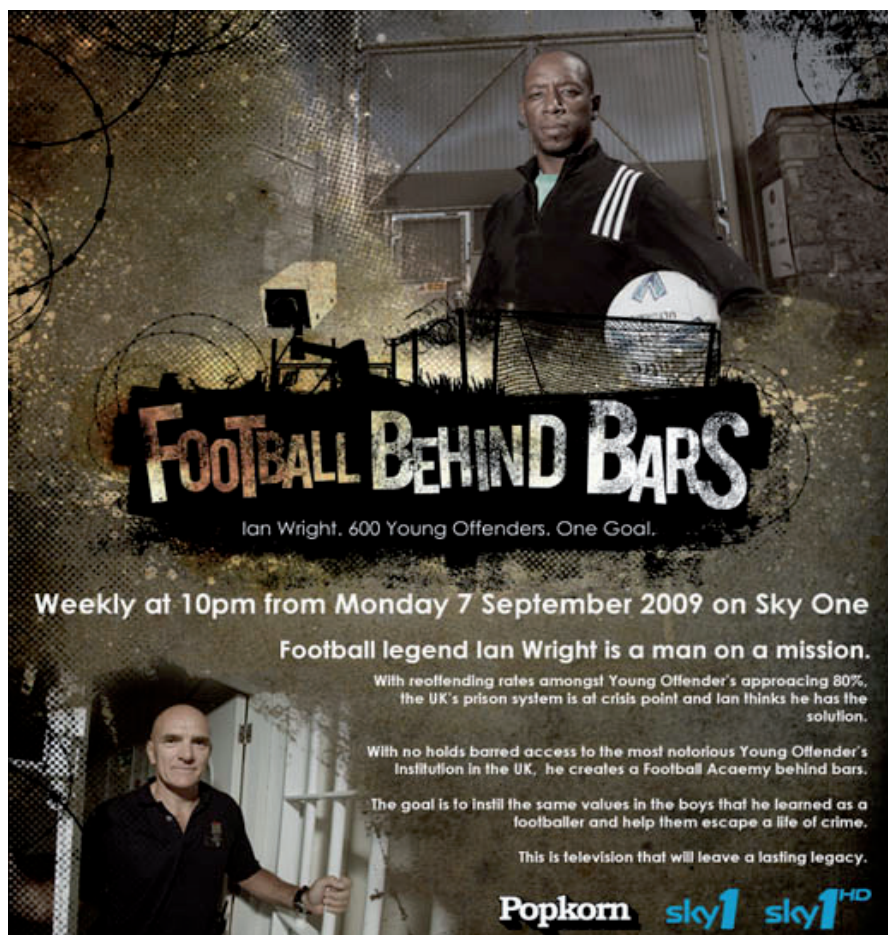
"Ian Wright was very genuine and supportive. The opportunity to show people what we have achieved" (Portland Gym Staff)

"It was an opportunity to change the perspective of Portland. How it's seen, how it's perceived by other people. It's seen as a half place where nothing happens. Boys are sent here as a punishment as opposed to anything positive coming out of the place and we thought that that was a brilliant opportunity to change the perception of Portland in one easy go. So we obviously jumped on board that opportunity and from that this has been born - so it's brilliant" (Portland Gym Staff)

"Gave staff a lift as well as prisoners. Demonstrated to staff the value of engaging young men through sport and made good links to Ian who is an excellent figurehead for this work" (Head of Reducing Re-Offending).

"The best part was the momentum that a high profile TV show and Ian's celebrity can have, not just on the participants but on the establishments that would open their doors to us. The down side was that without the cameras, doors were closed and things that were no problem before weren't possible for "security" or "operational" reasons... The concept of the Academy using sport to engage and promote resettlement as an effective tool is still true. The competitive games and the idea of workshops to challenge and promote behaviour change" (Chelsea FC)

Despite emphasising the positive aspects of Football Behind Bars, staff were also aware of the weaknesses of promoting resettlement in the context of a television production:



"Too many prisoners on the Academy to give them the individual attention that I have found makes a difference. As expected it was sensationalised for television too much" (Portland Gym Staff)

"Lack of communication between film company, department head and the other members of the PE department" (Portland Gym Staff)

"Negative comments from the community who felt that prisoners are being given more and better opportunities than young people who have not been in trouble" (Head of Offender Management and Resettlement)

Summary of staff responses

- Despite evidence of some initial challenges associated with partnership working, the Prison resettlement and gym staff, 2nd Chance delivery staff, and the Chelsea FC partner organisation were all overwhelmingly positive about the project and its aims, expressing unified enthusiasm for the partnership work associated with the Academy.
- Whilst acknowledging the value of community partnerships, some reference was made to the challenges of maintaining effective communication channels within the prison as well as between the prison and community partners. This is fairly typical of newly established multi-agency partnerships, and of particular note is that all staff respondents reported that communication had improved as the Academy had developed.
- Despite some initial reluctance to draw on external resettlement expertise, prison staff recognised the ‘added value’ of 2nd Chance as being in a strong position to engage with offenders across the transition from custody to community.
- Recommendations were made to continue and extend the Academy, with suggested improvements including broadening of the intake to include those with less sporting ability.
- As with any small-scale intervention which demonstrates a level of success, it was acknowledged that replication and extension of the model should be done sensitively and with careful attention to staffing so as not to jeopardise the value and impact of individualised attention from experienced, charismatic and well qualified staff.

Box 3: A note on methodological challenges

It is evident that the notion that sport can and should be employed as a means of tackling problem behaviours remains prominent, but as the few academics who have critically explored the evidence base have concluded, very little definitive evidence exists to support the assumption that sport is an effective way of reducing crime. Although Randomised Controlled Trials are widely recognised as the ‘gold standard’ of evaluation methodologies (Meek, 2010b), these are not necessarily practical or achievable in the context of prison regimes and small-scale programme delivery, and they also raise concerns regarding the ethical implications of denying treatment for those not selected for a particular programme. However, when programme managers or prison personnel select their participants or use some form of participation criteria they may be unwittingly undermining the quality of any evaluation based on reconviction data, or accused of ‘cherry picking’ participants who may present with low risk of reoffending, regardless of participation in a given intervention.

The system of measuring reoffending is a complex area and although reconviction rates are acknowledged as being an important indicator of intervention success, they should be used with some caution. One or even two-year reconviction data may prove to be too short a period for those who pose a serious risk to the public and an individual’s offending history should be taken into consideration when assessing their success in desisting from crime. For example, the achievement of abstaining from crime for one year may represent significant change for one individual but not for another. Likewise, an individual who participates in a programme and is subsequently reconvicted but for a less serious offence than originally convicted, could still be recognised as achieving a certain degree of success as reflected by their ‘improved’ offending behaviour. Subsequently, the most appropriate form of measurement for small scale prison-based interventions such as the Sport Academy at Portland will depend on what the intervention is aimed at addressing, and draw on an individualised or ‘baseline’ likelihood of reoffending. Of particular relevance in this context may be a ‘distance travelled’ approach which can reflect positive changes on a range of dimensions in each individual, and be used alongside or even in place of reconviction data.

Conclusion

With the methodological issues presented in Box 3 in mind, the current programme of evaluation research is sensitive to the methodological challenges associated with prison-based programmes, whilst recognising the increasing importance of providing quantitative evidence in the process of monitoring and evaluation. This second interim report contributes to a larger programme of ongoing evaluation research which continues to develop a better understanding of the positive short-, medium- and long-term impact of the 2nd Chance Sport Academy on young offenders. A subsequent report focusing on the 2nd Chance Rugby Academy at YO1 Portland is in preparation, and will be followed by the dissemination of the broader research findings following the conclusion of the Academy at the end of 2011.

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Appendix 1: PSYCHOMETRICS MEASUREMENTS

Beliefs about Aggression and Alternatives

The beliefs about aggression scale developed by Farrell, Meyer and White (2001) measures individuals' beliefs about the use of aggression and endorsement of non-violent responses to hypothetical situations. Respondents are asked to rate their extent of agreement with statements on a four point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Responses are then numerically coded and combined to create two subscales; Beliefs about Aggression and Use of Non Violent Strategies.

Farrell, A., Meyer, A., and White, K. (2001). Evaluation of responding in peaceful and positive ways (RIPP): a school-based prevention programme for reducing violence among urban adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 30, 4, 3-463.

Self Esteem

The Weinberger and Schwartz (1990) adjustment inventory measures an individual's perception of their self value. Participants are asked to rate the extent of their agreement with statements on a four point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Answers were then numerically coded and combined to create a self esteem score ranging between 7-35, with a high score indicating low self esteem.

Weinberger, D. and Schwartz, G. (1990). Distress and restraint as superordinate dimensions of adjustment: a typological perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 2, 381-417.

Self Concept

Drawing on Phillips and Springer's (1992) scale, a composite measure of self concept was created to assess an individual's sense of self-concept and self-confidence. Respondents were asked to rate their extent of agreement with statements on a four point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Responses were numerically coded and combined to create a self concept score, with the maximum score of 48 indicating a strong self concept.

Phillips, J. and Springer, F. (1992). Extended National Youth Sports Program 1991-1992 Evaluation Highlights, Part Two: Individual Protective Factors Index (IPFI) and Risk Assessment Study. Report prepared for the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Sacramento, CA: EMT Associates.

Impulsivity

Questions pertaining to impulsivity were drawn from Bosworth & Espelage (1995) Teen Conflict Survey and measured frequency of impulsive behaviours such as lack of self control and difficulty finishing things. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with statements on a four point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Answers were then numerically coded and combined to create an impulsivity score ranging from 4 to 20, with high scores indicating higher self reported impulsivity.

Bosworth, K., Espelage, D. (1995). Teen Conflict Survey. Bloomington, IN: Center for Adolescent Studies, Indiana University.

CRIAQ Measures

The CRIAQ questionnaire developed by Honess, Maguire & Vanstone (2001) was designed specifically to measure and monitor changes in aggression among offenders, particularly aspects of aggression targeted by prison/probation interventions such as impulsivity and conflict resolution. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with statements on a 5 point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, these were then numerically coded. Part one of the CRIAQ questionnaire relates to impulsivity and responses to this section were combined to create three impulsivity scores: IS - an overall impulsivity score, IN - impulsivity without aggression and IA impulsivity with aggression. Part two of the CRIAQ questionnaire focuses on conflict resolution with responses being combined to create a further four conflict resolution scores; CS - a overall score for problems in conflict resolution, CA - a aggression in conflict resolution score, CP - a physical violence in conflict resolution score and CC - a lack of compromise in conflict resolution score. On all seven scales a higher score indicates a greater identification with that particular mode of operating.

Honess, T., Maguire, M. & Vanstone, M. (2001) CRIAQ. M&A Research.

CRIME – PICS II Measures

The 35 item structured Crime PICS questionnaire was designed to measure individuals' attitudes towards offending on five distinct scales (Frude, Honess & Maguire, 2009). In the first section of the Crime-PICS II questionnaire participants rate their level of agreement with statements on a five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Answers are numerically coded and combined to create four scales; G Scale - a measure of the offenders general attitude towards offending with a low score indicating that an individual believes a offending lifestyle is not desirable; A Scale - a measure of the offenders anticipation of re-offending with a low score indicating that the individual does not anticipate re-offending; V scale - a measure of the offenders attitude towards his/her victims, such as whether they believed they caused harm, with a low score indicating the individual recognises their actions impact on the victim; E Scale - a measure of the offenders evaluation of crime being worthwhile, with a low score indicating that the individual perceives the cost of crime as being greater than its rewards. The second section of the Crime-PICS II questionnaire, the problem inventory, requires participants to indicate the extent to which they perceive something to be a problem on a four point scale ranging from big problem to no problem at all. Answers to the problem inventory are numerically coded and combined to create a P scale measuring the individual's perceptions of their current problems: the higher the score the greater the number and gravity of problems identified.

Frude, N., Honess, T. & Maguire, M. (2009). CRIME-PICS II. M&A Research.

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