

Couch to 2k



What community does your work support?

Couch to 2K (C2K) supports young people aged 11-18 to gain self-confidence, improve fitness, increase physical activity and have fun via weekly walking/jogging/running sessions over 6-8 weeks. Youth Workers support referrals via Great North Children's Hospital and health services for young people who are "inactive"/ otherwise not engaged in sport or physical activity.

What is the purpose of your work?

The aim is to offer young people a fun, supportive and non-intimidating session to increase self-confidence and improve fitness. Typical referrals included young people with diabetes, kidney transplant patients, young people with Cystic Fibrosis etc. The project addresses a gap in provision for those who are not engaged in any sport or physical activity and who do not take part in PE at school. Each individual who takes part receives £55 sports voucher prior to starting so items such as trainers, running clothes etc can be bought to remove barriers to participate.

What outcomes have been achieved to date?

100% of the young people who took part in 2020 said that prior to C2K they would usually be at home all day, playing on game consoles or watching television, and wouldn't often go outside. Every young person said that the sessions were fun and all said that they would like to continue to attend sessions each week (even after their timed 2K run). All reported an increase in their physical activity and all felt more confident.

Can your project model be applied elsewhere?

Yes, the project can be applied elsewhere. Key steps for success: Speak directly to the young people and their parents before the project begins to answer any questions. Hold sessions outside of school hours. Ensure sessions are Youth Work led. Develop clear referral routes/partners. Remove as many barriers to participation as possible. Keep the sessions informal. Never mention weight or weight loss, sessions must be about meeting new people, trying new things.

"This targeted exercise intervention is done in such a carefully planned and engaged way that it has made a big impact." Network review panel



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