

Leadership, Coaching and Volunteering (LCV) Programme 2020-2021

Process and outcome evaluation

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“The value of this initiative? The opportunity for a young person to be recognised, selected and for someone to invest time in them. The same young person wanting to improve and better themselves and move forward.”

Chris Ripley, LCV Lead, Bosworth Academy



“There’s never been more of an appetite [for this initiative]. A willingness to be involved in something social and bigger, positive, sociable so that they can contribute to other young people having a good time.”

Dave Burston, LCV Lead, Wellsway Academy

Index

Executive Summary.....	4
Part One: Background.....	10
2020-2021 Programme.....	10
Programme context and opportunity.....	12
YST response to schools' anticipated needs.....	12
Evaluation overview	13
Part Two: Programme design	15
Part Three: Delivery and Impacts.....	18
1. School recruitment	18
2. Young Coaches and Activator recruitment.....	20
3. Coaching Academy: delivery and participation	22
4. Girls Active Coaches Virtual Event: participation	26
5. Young Coaches and Activator event and festival delivery.....	31
6. Leadership and Volunteering Insight Tool.....	37
Part Four: Impacts.....	39
Impacts of delivery on Young Leaders.....	39
Impacts	39
Impacts on staff	47
Impacts on beneficiaries.....	48
Part Five: Key reflections moving forwards.....	50
The role of leadership.....	50
The training offer	51
Delivery.....	51
Girls Active Camp.....	52
Further opportunities	52



Executive Summary

The value of leadership

Youth Sport Trust's Leadership, Coaching and Volunteering (LCV) programme supports and develops the coaching and leadership skills of girls aged 14-17 in 48 lead schools¹ across England, each working with up to 4-6 other local schools to recruit and train Young Coaches / Activators. In doing so it seeks to develop their coaching aspirations longer-term and to engage wider audiences through peer-led, 'like-me' delivery. In its current form, the programme has run for four years, focusing on young female coaches.

This year's LCV programme revealed the enduring high regard in which 'like me' leadership is held by school leaders. Against a backdrop of extensive restrictions to school life and teaching, 273 schools participated in the programme this year (an average of 6 schools per region): 109% of the targeted recruitment volume. Amongst this cohort were several new schools for whom the virtual training offer made attendance possible.

Previous participants cited the value of young, visible role models, of continuity to their leadership programme and of the unique ability of peer leaders to empathise with and engage the least active students as reasons for ensuring its implementation this year. They recognised the hugely positive impact of peer leadership on young people's social and emotional wellbeing (both for leaders and beneficiaries), giving young people autonomy and agency and a way for young people to be part of something collective. Even those students in Y10 and Y11 needed opportunities to 'play' and to create / lead others following an extended period of restrictions and peer leaders were deemed to be well placed to deliver these. Finally, opportunities to lead their peers was known to build self-esteem and self-confidence amongst young leaders themselves.

Pre programme questions of this year's cohort revealed considerable appetite to participate and to contribute. In a context of lost opportunity in the previous 12 months this was particularly marked. 82% of girls agreed or strongly agreed that COVID-19 has caused them to miss out on leadership opportunities whilst 85% felt that the pandemic has caused them to have fewer opportunities to volunteer in PE, Sport or Physical Activity. 75% also agree or strongly agree that they are now more motivated to become a young leader whilst 86% agree or strongly agree that they are more motivated to want to give back and volunteer their time.

Participation

From the 279 schools recruited to the programme 1,751 girls were recruited as Young Coaches and Activators, representing an average of 39 girls per LCV lead school. Of these, 1,612 girls were aged 14-17 years (100% of the recruitment KPI). This is a considerable achievement given schools'

¹ Three of this year's lead schools were unable to deliver any activity due to local restrictions. Data in this report pertains to 45 successful programmes.



necessary increased focus on academic outcomes for those girls in Year 10 and 11. 8% of these Young Coaches and Activators were identified as having a special educational need or disability (SEND) whilst 17% are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME²) groups. In 13 areas a total of 128 girls previously trained as Young Coaches and Activators in 2019-2020 opted to participate once again (6% of the female and male workforce).

All Young Coaches / Activators across 43 county areas attended the Coaching Academy with 1,620 (92%) completing all four training modules. Barriers to completion of all four modules were extrinsic rather than a product of perceived value, i.e. the product of timetabling changes, difficulties in reaching young people, available time.

Blended training offer introduced this year

Take up of either the virtual, face to face or blended training models offered this year were prompted by the individual circumstances of schools and LCV Leads, their level of familiarity with material or a platform and young people's needs. Solely virtual delivery was by far the most successful this year (in terms of reach), with this approach adopted by 49% of LCV leads. 28% adopted a face-to-face delivery model, whilst 23% a combination of both.

Online training materials within the Coaching Academy were well received: deemed to support accessibility, flexible delivery and easy to use. However, face to face delivery was found to particularly assist the development of students' self-confidence, application of skills taught and for content to be easily tailored to ensure their understanding.

Staff also commented on the value of the Coaching Academy in terms of engaging face to face with the most withdrawn students and helping to build confidence. Where (even normally confident) students were incommunicative they had to work harder than ordinarily to build rapport. This issue was particular to those delivering training face to face and posed a challenge for several staff, however overcoming it was seen to have had considerable positive impact.

Girls Active Virtual Event

100 girls attended the Girls Active Coaches Virtual Event, which simulated many aspects of the live event including the allocation of Young Coaches into teams and the opportunity for Young Coaches to select a sport about which they were interested in finding out more from a coaching perspective.

Delivery

² Youth Sport Trust is currently reviewing its use of the acronym BAME which is recognised to be not necessarily adequately inclusive and / or fully understood..



989 female coaches delivered activity for one term (or longer) collectively engaging 5,608 young people (both boys and girls) in wider sporting opportunities (90% of the target total engagement of 6,250 young people).

4,684 females represent 84% of all those engaged and of these, 2,829 girls (60%) did less than an average of 60 minutes physical activity per day across the week. 8% have a disability or special educational need whilst 26% participants are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups.

Events and festivals took many guises, including both virtual and face to face where timing or local restrictions permitted this. Many of the events and festivals delivered provided young people with social, fun and accessible ways of being active, thus tackling the recognised issues for some young people of lowered self-confidence, isolation and self-esteem as well as inactivity. Young Coaches / Activators demonstrated energy, inclusivity and a light-touch with regards to the design of events that could also be delivered within a short period by an audience perhaps only able to attend on one occasion.

‘Activity through play’ suited mixed ability groups taking place within one year group or ‘bubble’ during lesson time. Though these sessions meant that more active students were involved in events than might ordinarily, they had the side benefit of engaging with the hardest to reach.

Lead staff worked hard to identify and create opportunities for young people to lead and some creative examples emerged this year that will translate into future years. One LCV Lead commented that the use of bubbles may continue to be used by some schools post COVID: her perspective was that like-me peer leadership would then become more powerful than ever.

Students revealed considerable ambition, with one “undertaking a quad kids athletics festival involving 100 students over two days.”.

Festival feedback reveals from participants reveals not only hugely positive impacts on their motivation, opportunities to connect with others and overall happiness but also imply genuine enjoyment.

- 89% strongly agreed or agreed that the festival inspired them to be more active
- 94% strongly agreed or agreed that the festival gave them more opportunities to connect with friends
- 92% strongly agreed or agreed that the festival has made them feel happier.

Impacts on young leaders

Young Coaches / Activators were surveyed at the outset and close of their respective programmes. Their answers reveal the positive impact of participation on their self-confidence, their confidence in their leadership and on their overall happiness (wellbeing).

- Prior to taking part in the Coaching Academy 75% of girls agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of COVID-19 their confidence in their leadership skills has diminished whilst 75% also agreed or strongly agreed that they were now more motivated to become a young leader. 86% agreed or strongly agreed that they were now more motivated to give back and volunteer their time.

Following the programme 83% of lead staff confirmed that the amount of time that girls spent volunteering through physical activity and sport had increased either 'very positively' or 'positively'. 83% of lead staff felt that the ability of young people to achieve their potential [via volunteering] had increased very positively or positively.

90% also confirmed the opportunities for young females to take on leadership and volunteering development opportunities have increased a 'a lot' or 'a bit'.

- Post programme survey revealed how young people's coaching specific aspirations were met via the programme. 92% of respondents stated that the programme supported their personal coaching skills and inspiration (an outcome sought by 86% at the start of the programme) whilst 66% stated that it had given them a greater understanding of how to support others (sought by 51% of respondents at the start of the programme).
- At the outset of the programme 72% felt valued in their school and a sense of belonging (scored themselves a 7 or above), 88% felt happy with the relationships they had with their friends, 70% felt positive and able to cope day to day and 81% feel confident in their own abilities and the choices they make to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

At the end of the programme respondents were asked to reflect on how the same areas of their lives had been impacted as a result of their experiences as a Young Activator this year:

- 72% strongly agreed or agreed that they feel more valued by their community and have a stronger sense of belonging
- 74% strongly agreed or agreed they were happier with the relationships they had with friends
- 75% strongly agreed or agreed they feel more positive and able to manage my day-to-day life
- 85% strongly agreed or agreed that they feel more confident in their own abilities and choices³

Data also revealed the significant positive impact of participation on girls' activity levels and well-being:

- 83% of respondents confirmed that participation had had a 'positive' or 'very positive' impact on girls' overall health and wellbeing.

³ Q6 Post programme survey



- 83% of respondents confirmed that the amount of time that girls spent participating in physical activity and sport had increased either ‘very positively’ or ‘positively’.

Staff perspectives on Young Coach / Activator impacts

100% of lead staff perceive the programme to have a positive impact on Young Coaches’ social, emotional and physical wellbeing. (67% perceive this to be by ‘a lot’).

- 83% of respondents confirmed that the amount of time that girls spent volunteering through physical activity and sport had increased either ‘very positively’ or ‘positively’
- 83% of lead staff felt that the ability of young people to achieve their potential [via volunteering] had increased very positively or positively.

At the outset of the programme 80% of girls felt empowered to inspire and to mobilise others (score themselves a 7 or higher) when asked about their personal leadership skills. Post programme, this figure had increased further, with 85% of girls now scoring themselves a 7 or higher.

Conclusion

The perceived value to the school community of a youth leadership model endures amongst school leaders, both in terms of engaging inactive students in sport and in terms of the social and emotional benefits to the wider community of young role models. Despite timetabling and other challenges, senior leaders in existing schools welcomed the opportunity to implement the LCV programme this year whilst several schools joined the programme for the first time. The value of ‘Like me’ leadership is augmented where bubble-based teaching has restricted students’ exposure to others older or younger than themselves, impacting their maturity and social skills.

This year’s delivery evidenced the value of making community sport leadership and volunteering opportunities available to young leaders, whether a formal alliance with a local club or more informally. Ideally these young leaders will also still have opportunities in school to design and lead their own activities.

Face to face training supports positive outcomes in terms of Young Coach / Activator self-confidence, practical application of leadership skills and interpersonal skills. Ideally this will be at the core of any LCV programme, with online resources complementing this and used where helpful.

A flexible training offer addresses some school participation barriers. LCV Leads and SGOs can then build on these relationships with a view to engaging schools more broadly.

Recommendations

- Many LCV leads exceeded delivery expectations this year, enabling their young leaders to initiate and support larger events with a much greater reach than had been assumed possible given the



multiple restrictions posed by COVID-19. If some stability and cross-curricular delivery resume 2021-2022 year it should be possible to return to previously targeted reach figures.

- This year's virtual event was impactful and received positively by participants. It enabled some Young Coaches / Activators to attend that might not otherwise due to geography or disability. However, a physical event provides extensive opportunities for young people to be challenged (socially and from a leadership perspective), to develop their self-confidence and leadership skills and to be exposed to inspirational leaders.
- During the two periods of school closure many young people discovered activities that appealed and that they continue outside school. There may be merit in making the discovery of these activity part of a school community 'activity' audit and exploring how they can be included within young leaders' considerations.
- Young leaders can widen the extra-curricular offer and help to engage hard to reach students. However, there is currently no mechanic within the programme to support their further engagement with school sport or community sport. There may be merit next year in exploring the potential for year-on-year engagement of young (previously inactive) people whether as mentors, in further clubs and events or as Young Coaches / Activators.



Part One: Background

2020-2021 Programme

Youth Sport Trust’s Leadership, Coaching and Volunteering (LCV) programme supports and develops the coaching and leadership skills of girls aged 14-17 in 46 lead schools across England, each working with up to 6 other local schools to recruit and train Young Coaches / Activators. In doing so it seeks to develop their coaching aspirations longer-term and to engage wider audiences through peer-led, ‘like-me’ delivery. In its current form, the programme has run for four years, focusing on young female coaches.

At its heart, the programme comprises four elements:

1. Training: Academy for up to 1,250 Young Coaches across 200-300 schools across England
2. Activation: Peer-led delivery by Young Coaches to support engagement amongst less active girls
3. Development: A Camp for 100+ hand-picked Young Coaches over the course of a weekend
4. Best practice: Dissemination of YST’s insight tool that evidences and helps to develop schools’ provision for the personal development of all pupils

In 2020-2021 Youth Sport Trust (YST) adapted the programme to reflect the restrictions imposed on schools due to COVID-19. However, its essence, ambition and key features remained the same:

Primarily for girls:	Both in the development of Young Leaders and as a beneficiary audience
Empowering:	Up to 1,250 girls aged 14-17 nationwide trained to lead virtual and face to face activities as a dedicated workforce within their own settings
‘Like Me’:	Young Coaches / Activators to reflect those from cohorts with appetite for the role but also typically under-represented within coaching
Aspirational:	A development Camp for girls that demonstrate coaching aptitude.

Leadership, Coaching & Volunteering Programme Young People's Development Journey

1. RECRUITMENT VIA THE SGO NETWORK FOR WIDEST REACH

LCV leads attached to 50 schools each recruit
25 girls aged 14-17 from between 4-6 schools



2. DEDICATED TRAINING BUILDS SKILLS AND SELF ESTEEM



1,250 girls participate in a Coaching Academy to develop skills, knowledge and creativity. Academy is also a valuable tool for building motivation and signposting further coaching development opportunities.

3. YOUNG COACHES EMPOWERED TO ACTIVATE THEIR PEERS

Each Young Coach to target and support 5 young people virtually or face to face with an activation offer



4. THREE DAY DEVELOPMENT CAMP BUILDS ON APTITUDE



100 Young Coaches and Activators also participate in a dedicated YST Camp

5. MAXIMUM COACHING OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED

Girls are given further opportunities to lead their peers e.g. a festival or other event.



Programme opportunity

The emotional and well-being benefits to young people of being trained as Young Coaches and Activators or to take part in the programme were perceived to be of particular significance at the outset of this academic year, over and above those ordinarily attributed to the initiative and previously evidenced. LCV lead staff reported young people's **social confidence** having been negatively impacted due to the restrictions of lockdown during 2019-2020 and formal seating plans / forward-facing classrooms when back in school. Many noted young people as being **less mature** than they might ordinarily be at their respective ages due to limited access to school years above and below them. More sedentary lifestyles were perceived to have undermined **activity levels** and **body confidence** for some young people.

Disengagement / impact on self-confidence was reported by some lead staff to have hit the least academically confident girls hardest, possibly a result of the additional challenges of online learning.

YST response to schools' anticipated needs

Alterations to the 2020-2021 programme were intended to ensure continuity in the event of school closures, permit schools to deliver in way(s) that complement new practice and that support young people's specific emotional and practical needs. They recognised the potential barriers to school participation and were intended to address these and reduce workload on lead staff.

Key changes included:

- Flexible training model:
 - o Virtual training permitted and resources for this provided including new skills videos
 - o Cascaded delivery of training (by local staff) encouraged
- Flexible delivery model
 - o Young Coaches / Activators to work in pairs (if they would like to do so) to deliver their activity to support and challenge one another
 - o Each Young Coach to target and support 5 young people rather than 10, during the summer term if necessary. If needed, delivery to take place in bubbles, targeting any young person that might benefit from positive engagement with physical activity.
 - o Engagement with young people via face to face, remotely or a combination of these
 - o Support with virtual events given via creative ideas and tech (e.g. TopYa⁴)
 - o Schools encouraged to explore the potential wider physical, social and emotional benefit(s) of the programme including for girls adversely affected by lockdown
 - o Engagement of 2019-2020 cohort where possible
- Virtual Event in lieu of residential model

⁴ TopYa! is a global online learning platform that utilises video-based micro challenges in a gamified app environment to drive participation and skill development.

- Reduced reporting requirements (extent of data required from LCV lead staff each term).

Evaluation overview

Considerations

For this evaluation, qualitative methods and additional survey tools sought to complement and build upon participation data submitted by lead schools. A methodology was developed that could support nuanced collection of insights from all stakeholders without face-to-face interactions by the researcher. Methods sought to always ensure a positive experience for young contributors and their informed consent. Qualitative methods employed included wide use of telephone interviews with lead staff and associates and cascaded research methodologies where relevant to engage young people and their beneficiaries⁵.

Research objectives

Overall, evaluation has sought to understand:

Delivery models employed and their relative effectiveness

1. What leadership, coaching & volunteering (LCV) can look like when delivered remotely / virtually and the impact on young people of successful delivery of these within their communities
2. The support that young people need and the extent to which participation in / delivery of the LCV programme can address these needs
3. How quality control is ensured within a cascaded model (this applies to training primarily)

Individual and collective programme outcomes

1. The physical, social and emotional impact of participation on Young Activators' well-being, self-confidence, aptitude and desire to reach and influence others.
2. The impact of this year's programme on school relationships, capacity, recognition of the value of coaching & leadership and appetite to embed this further.
3. [Retrospectively]: impact of engagement with the programme on last year's cohort's appetite, direction and resilience: how / if this benefitted them during the summer term and what they bring to this year's programme.
4. The extent to which the LCV programme drives up the standard of coaching and activation within partner schools:
4. The extent to which the programme supports an incremental, positive experience of coaching amongst participants (and the extent to which virtual delivery and participation also support this)
5. Explore the extent to which girls deliver the projects defined within their training sessions over the following weeks
6. Focus on the journey of girls through Camp [in whatever form this takes] and its impact on them and their school / peers afterwards

⁵ Within this to understand whether there is inherent value for young people in supporting the research process amongst their peers

Research methodology

Lead staff were selected to participate in either the direct or indirect methodologies outlined below. In this way 100% of LCV leads would have an opportunity to contribute to the evaluation and the broadest range of experiences captured. Actual extent of direct and indirect research was slightly impacted by year groups or individuals having to isolate and the difficulties posed for LCV Lead staff in reaching all cohorts. However a wide range of geographical areas, programme models adopted and delivery formats were explored, and additional anecdotal feedback gathered throughout the year from all staff.

Direct research

- Pre and post programme survey amongst Young Coaches / Activators
 - 630 and 112 completed responses received respectively
- Pre and post programme tele-interviews with 25 lead staff
 - 25 pre interviews and 21 post interviews conducted
- Post-programme interviews with stakeholders in 25 partner schools
 - 16 interviews conducted
- Zoom discussions with 5 pairs of Young Coaches / Activators following YST Virtual Event
 - Conducted by LCV lead staff rather than directly

Indirect (facilitated) research

- 5 focus groups with Young Coaches / Activators conducted after the Coaching Academy
 - 5 groups delivered by LCV staff
- 5 focus groups with Young Coaches / Activators conducted after delivery / festival
 - 5 groups delivered by LCV lead staff
- 5 focus groups with Young Activators conducted after the Virtual Event
 - 5 groups delivered by LCV lead staff
- 20 focus groups with young participants following one or more sessions
 - 12 groups delivered by either Young Coaches / Activators or by LCV lead staff

Part Two: Programme design

LCV programme design

45 LCV lead staff successfully delivered a tailored version of the programme in their region this year. All worked closely with their lead school, their wider network of schools and the SGO network to identify the most useful and relevant training and delivery model for their area and additional training needs for support staff where cascaded delivery was required. In some areas planned approaches had to be revised due to local school closures and further delivery barriers, but the extent of school engagement and reach achieved is testament to existing LCV Lead Staff relationships, to programme momentum and to the positive contributions made by Young Coaches and Activators during the preceding academic year.

“We’ve changed our plans repeatedly: from face to face, to collective virtual, to cascaded training and delivery. Ultimately a different approach was required for each interested setting.”⁶

In some areas lead staff chose to work with partner organisations, whether to support reach at a time when direct access to young people was hindered, to dovetail with existing high quality online training provider offers or to enhance the local training offer via a joined-up approach.

Programme case study 1: John Spence Community High School

In Tyne and Wear Adam Pilkington chose to collaborate with RISE, who ran an existing Leadership & Volunteering Programme designed to recruit, develop and deploy volunteers aged 13-25. Their partnership enabled Young Coaches and Activators to access additional development sessions including interviews with Newcastle Eagles player Drew Lasker, Olympic swimmer Chris Cook and inclusive dancer, model and campaigner, Kate Stanforth. The collaboration was broadly successful and supported effective recruitment of young people, good use of practitioner time and relationship building. However, these benefits were slightly undermined for Adam by lack of first-hand programme impact insights, some lack of clarity around ownership and social media shares and ability to deliver training tailored to young people’s prior experience and school context.

Programme case study 2: Carre’s Grammar School

In Lincolnshire, Carre’s Grammar School planned a joint training and development programme for aspirant coaches in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Lionesses. Working together they would have greater impact and still ensure quality control. The training and delivery experiences of 144 Young Coaches and Activators recruited from a wide range of secondary schools would be an integral stage

⁶ Tim Liptrot, LCV Lead



in a coaching pathway that would ultimately support the development of nine young female Level 1 football Coaches that would support club sport.

Lead staff explored interest in an on-demand Coaching Academy, promoted to schools via a How To video and a one-minute overview. Football partnerships would steer Young Coaches towards volunteer opportunities at local Wildcat Centres across the County where cross-bubble delivery was permitted. Girls would have further opportunities to demonstrate their coaching skills at a summer schools' festival.

Though linked to football, training would develop team building and problem-solving skills for young leaders and would link young people back into school coaching opportunities as well as those in the community.

Delivery of the planned approach was ultimately thwarted due to COVID-19, however early planning revealed the extent of leadership opportunity inherent in community sport and the benefit of signposting this for young leaders.

Programme case study 3: Bay Leadership Academy

Tim Fletcher, LCV Lead attached to Our Lady's Catholic College and Bay Leadership Academy in Lancashire, worked in collaboration with the University of Cumbria to develop their programme. Young Coaches aged 14-17 participated independently in self-serve online training modules developed in conjunction with university students who themselves have an interest in sports leadership.

Tim's priority was to maximise engagement amongst young people with minimum impact on school staff. The programme was introduced to students in lesson time for them to access and work through independently. Young Coaches could deliver activity within their school (where permitted) or could support a centrally run virtual school sports day. Young Coaches in three schools ran a break time programme whilst those in a further eight schools put on lunchtime festivals for students in their bubbles.

In other areas LCV Lead staff amended the timing and / or priority focus for their leadership programme in order to maximise leadership opportunities for young people.

Programme case study 4: Ribston Hall High School

Chery Hall, LCV Lead attached to Ribston Hall School in Gloucestershire opted to deliver her Coaching Academy early in the academic year and promote delivery pre-Christmas for those young people able to do so. Schools that joined her network this year chose to deliver their training in-house (cascaded model) rather than attend the virtual training event offered.



Young Coaches were invited to set Christmas holiday challenges for feeder primary schools and chose to also record Christmas dances shared with their own schools at the start of December with students invited to follow the actions in class for five-minute activity breaks. An Active Advent Calendar was also created by the girls and shared with all audiences. In response to their experiences staff in several primary schools requested coaching and leadership training for their Year 6s, which Cheryl was also able to deliver.

The extent and range of activities implemented by girls prompted real engagement amongst local primary schools and fostered further creativity amongst Young Coaches.

“At the moment it’s around fun, engaging, physical activity sessions. They’re coming up with great ideas and are going to have a real buzz when they realise who’s involved from the wider primary community.”

Programme case study 5: Harris CofE Academy

Initial plans for cascaded delivery across Warwickshire were thwarted by repeated school closures and staff turnover. Harris Academy, the Lead School for the area, was unable to support any extracurricular activity but identified 25 Year 10 girls to be trained to lead activity within their PE lessons with a particular focus on wellbeing.

Training took place face to face on one day, with girls taken off-timetable. Named Coach Activators, girls would run a wellbeing warm up for their peers at the start of their lessons and to a wider audience when extracurricular events would permit this. Two coach mentors from previous years were unable to work directly with the girls but could support them virtually.

The primary challenge was girls’ lack of confidence leading their peers. Training sought primarily to build this by inviting students to shadow members of staff and to become involved in the planning process. Over time their role would expand to include observation, warm up, co-deliverer and then leadership.

“One girl volunteered and wouldn’t have been considered but when put in a leadership position and working with younger students she’s shone. She’s had excellent feedback from the primary school who said how organised she was. It’s very exciting.”

Part Three: Delivery and Impacts

The following sections detail how much was achieved this year, looking in turn at each aspect of design and implementation:

1. School recruitment
2. Recruitment of Young Coaches / Activators
3. Young Coach / Activator Coaching Academy
4. Girls Active Virtual Event
5. Young Coach / Activator event delivery including festivals
6. LCV Insight tool

1. School recruitment

Context

Lead staff recognised that 2020-2021 cross-curricular opportunities might be hampered by COVID-19 related restrictions (shorter lunchtimes, staggered timetables, year-group bubbles) and potentially also by curriculum recovery efforts across all subjects, particularly for young people due to take public examinations. School priorities would also hinder the extent to which staff had time to share information about available initiatives and the ways in which they would be able to do this. The impact of this might extend to some schools' participation in the LCV programme.

However, there was also optimism that sports leadership programmes would still be prioritised, at least in schools that felt able to overcome the logistical challenges. In their pre-programme interviews LCV lead staff shared the following perspectives of senior school staff which in turn highlight the perceived possible impacts of the LCV programme on school communities and young people:

1. Leadership programmes give young people autonomy and agency.
2. Leadership provides a way for young people to be part of something collective: lacking for much of the previous year.
3. Even those students in Y10 and Y11 need opportunities to 'play' and to create / lead others following an extended period of restrictions.
4. Peer-led coaching delivered by students in Y9-11 offers younger students access to positive, empathetic role models and supports aspiration
5. Opportunities to lead their peers builds self-esteem, self-confidence and well-being amongst Young Coaches and Activators.

Furthermore, throughout the previous academic year, many Young Coaches and Activators had maintained their motivation, engagement with the LCV programme and sense of identity as young

leaders. This was testament to the personal and individual importance of the programme for young participants and to ensuring continuity of the scheme. School leaders were positive about the value of giving these Young Coaches further opportunities to participate during the forthcoming academic year.

School participation

273 schools participated in the LCV programme this year (an average of 6 schools per lead). This represents 136% of the targeted recruitment volume of 200 schools. Amongst this cohort are several new schools for whom the virtual training offer made attendance possible.

- 16 lead staff worked with three schools or fewer to deliver their programme and of these, seven worked solely with their lead school. In these instances, their training model often replicated the standard LCV offer with face-to-face training, though girls' activation activities were impacted.
- 14 LCV leads recruited between 4-6 schools to participate in this year's programme (the targeted number). These schools included many new schools where a LCV lead had been unable to gain commitment from prior participants.
- A further 13 LCV leads each recruited from a greater number of schools (from 7-37). These staff had a positive response to the virtual training offer (including cascaded delivery of training by local staff) and took a pragmatic approach to training (selection of discrete modules according to a school's available time).

Interviews with LCV staff highlighted the imperative this academic year of a flexible recruitment and training model. Individual school responses to government guidelines differed drastically within every County and any invitation to participate had to permit each setting to take part on their own terms. Engaging time poor staff was the barrier, rather than any lack of understanding of the value of LCV programme. The modular training programme and flexibility around timing, recruitment and delivery all helped LCV staff to start conversations within their network and to explore what each school needed.

"I asked about getting something going in November and this was met with resistance. Everyone tucked in and looked after themselves. It's become the new norm and now they're more susceptible to closing down to other bits and pieces."⁷

One LCV Lead commented that a generic letter from YST that explains the initiative, its heritage and opportunity would be a useful tool to support dissemination to new schools or around the SGO school networks where local PE staff are less forthcoming.

⁷ Tim Fletcher, LCV Lead Lancashire

2. Young Coaches and Activator recruitment

Schools were allowed a similarly flexible approach with regards to recruitment. They could nominate girls (and boys) or advertise for participants and were able to expand eligibility outside the 14–17-year-old age bracket. In some cases whole year groups (bubbles) were recruited, though more commonly young people within one year group were invited to put themselves forward.

COVID-19 restrictions impeded inter-year leadership in many settings from the outset. Logistics of young people moving around schools was complicated, whilst equipment often had to be sanitised after use. However once on-board, schools made significant effort to ensure the fullest experience for both leaders and beneficiaries, not least to counteract some of the impacts of school closures on young people:

- less able to regulate their emotions.
- more sedentary
- body image issues
- lack of physical motivation
- lowered resilience
- less ability to negotiate, compromise and communicate.

From the 279 schools recruited to the programme 1,751 girls were recruited as Young Coaches and Activators, representing an average of 39 girls per LCV lead school.

Of these, 1,612 girls were aged 14-17 years, which represents 92% of the overarching cohort and meets the recruitment KPI. This is despite three lead staff being unable to deliver this year and is a considerable achievement given schools' necessary increased focus on academic outcomes for those girls in Year 10 and 11.

- 8% of these Young Coaches and Activators (135) are identified as having a special educational need or disability (SEND) (consistent with 2019-2020 representation)
- 17% (291 girls) are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups (versus 24% 2019-2020)
- Figures regarding the socio-economic status of young people recruited as Young Coaches and Activators are not available. However at least one LCV Lead noted the potential to recruit, train and work closely with young people permitted to remain in school during the two periods of closure. These young people included many whose household income makes them eligible for free school meals and who, in some settings, might be less likely to volunteer for leadership opportunities.
- In 13 areas a total of 128 girls previously trained as Young Coaches and Activators in 2019-2020 were rolled over to this year and acted as Mentors to their younger peers. These girls had

commonly responded positively to virtual engagement and activation opportunities presented by their PE Lead during the previous summer term. They represent 6% of this year's total female and male coaching workforce

- 128 girls trained this year across 13 regions had previously participated within sessions run by Young Coaches and Activators. Whilst they represent just 7% of girls trained across all 43 regions this year, they represent 22% of girls trained within their own communities. This robust figure implies the positive impact of participation on these girls' motivation and interest in coaching and that changes in school participation, programme delivery and access by age groups is likely to have hindered the involvement of previous beneficiaries in other areas.

A further 511 boys were trained as Young Coaches and Activators in 21 regions as part of this year's programme. This was often driven by school demand for a leadership opportunity for boys that would address similar social and emotional issues to those experienced by girls, but as commonly by the logistical restrictions imposed by COVID-19.

- Boys represent 23% of the total cohort of 2,262 young people recruited nationwide and 33% of the audience where a mixed gender programme was delivered.

"We gave young people hands on coaching opportunities prior to the Academy to whet the appetite of a wider cross section. PE lessons were just starting to get back to normal. We've tried to make the lessons as engaging as possible."⁸

⁸ Tim Fletcher, LCV Lead Lancashire

Recruitment and training

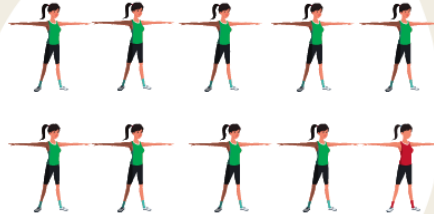
**2,262 young people trained as
Young Coaches and Activators**

2,262

Recruited from 279 schools by 45 LCV leads

Of these, 1,751 are girls

1,612 girls are aged 14-17 years:
92% of the overarching cohort and
100% of the age-related KPI.



**135 girls have special educational
needs and disabilities**

They represent 8% of the overarching audience and
are represented within 65% of the LCV network.

**290 girls are from Black, Asian
& Minority Ethnic groups**

They represent 17% of the overarching audience
and are represented within 84% of the LCV network.



**A further 511 boys trained as
Young Coaches and Activators**

They represent 23% of the overarching audience and
are represented within 52% of the LCV network.



3. Coaching Academy: delivery and participation

Lead staff approached all training, sensitive to the challenges that some girls will have faced in the previous year. By no means common to every student, or setting, the impacts of these on participants' social and emotional confidence seem to have been significant. Amongst those that completed the pre-programme survey 75% agreed that their confidence in their leadership skills has diminished. Furthermore, some students exhibited less patient with one another and / or were less empathetic with one another. Some had become insular, used to things being done their way and sought instant gratification.

It is to many Young Coaches' credit that despite the above they were still willing to attend training. Their responses to the pre-programme survey demonstrate real appetite for engagement and personal development. 80% of girls agreed that COVID-19 has caused them to miss out on leadership opportunities whilst 84% feel that the pandemic has caused them to have fewer opportunities to volunteer in PE, Sport or Physical Activity. whilst 75% also agreed that they were now more motivated to become a young leader.

"A colleague said that every third girl had pastoral notes re. low self-confidence, mental health issues or body issues. We were encouraged not to ask direct questions and to treat carefully."⁹

"There seemed to be a lot of issues around isolation and loneliness. My primary intention was to promote friendship and connectivity"¹⁰

YST made it possible for lead staff to offer this year's Coaching Academy virtually, face to face or via a combination of both. Solely virtual delivery was by far the most successful this year (in terms of reach), with this approach adopted by 49% of LCV leads. 28% adopted a face-to-face delivery model, whilst 23% a combination of both. Whilst there were periods in the year where face to face delivery may have been possible, most lead staff sought to deliver within more certain parameters.

"More responsibility taken on by teaching staff due to covid and not allowing external people in."

Online training largely drew on a combination of YST's online resources, the newly created videos and lead staff members' own content. This was then disseminated as a self-serve resource for students or more commonly, used by teachers in each school for local delivery. Lack of time meant that most local PE staff were not interested in 'train the trainer' type resources to support their own delivery.

1,620 female Young Coaches / Activators across 37 regions completed all four training modules.

"Pupils from the local academy have really engaged with developing videos to support at home activity. The training that we have delivered has benefitted lots of leaders - they just have not had many opportunities to put their training into action!"

92% of all female Young Coaches completed all four training modules. Where these existed, barriers to completion of all four were consistently extrinsic rather than a product of perceived value, i.e. the product of timetabling changes, difficulties in reaching young people, available time. Lead staff note the inherent value of the philosophy module but sometimes chose to prioritise other training when a Young Coach's experience of delivery had been hampered:

⁹ LCV Lead, Anthony Gell

¹⁰ Amy Turlle, LCV Lead, Leyton 6th Form College

- Introduction – Start of your journey: completed by 95% young people
- Understanding your participants: 91%
- Planning and leading sessions: 95%
- Philosophy and Ethics: 86%

“For some students the leadership training sessions, or the delivery sessions, were the first active sessions they had undertaken face to face since the COVID restrictions.”



Figure 1 Screenshot from a short video compiled by Croydon School Sport Partnerships to permit mentors to introduce themselves to their mentees where they'd not had an opportunity to meet in person.

Different responses to virtual and face to face training amongst schools and lead staff are prompted by their personal circumstances, level of familiarity with material or a platform and young people's needs. On balance, there is a great deal of warmth towards the use of online training materials within any Coaching Academy, but face to face delivery supports the development of students' self-confidence, application of skills taught and permits content to easily tailored to ensure their understanding.

**Coaching Academy:
respective merits of a virtual versus face to face offer**

Face to face

Easier to see participant reactions and to adapt
 Promotes communication and relationship building
 Can adapt to all learning styles
 No reliance on technology or technological skills
 Offline application of skills taught easily incorporated
 No technological safeguarding issues

Virtual

No geographical barriers
 Can help overcome accessibility issues (SEND)
 Flexibility to deliver around other activities
 Missed sessions can be caught up
 Links to online content can inspire and support signposting



Figure 2 The relative merits of online versus face to face training resources

Online resources were found to be thorough, accessible and easily navigated. The new videos were impactful though would benefit by more explanation / content if to be accessed independently by young people.

“The USP [of the online learning resources] was the sense of them being accessible to those with an SEND. It was pitched spot on as being relevant and opened their eyes to the needs of all young people. Key notes from Kate Grey etc really bangs the drum for disability sport and makes it more normal. Unique but easy to use. Different but not challenging.”¹¹

Staff commented on the value of the Coaching Academy in terms of engaging with the most withdrawn students and helping to build confidence. Where (even normally confident) students were incommunicative they had to work harder than ordinarily to build rapport. This issue was particular to those delivering training face to face and posed a challenge for several staff, however overcoming it was seen to have had considerable positive impact.

“It was like drawing blood from a stone to begin with. We showed them the 5 more years video: tumbleweed. Literally no communication.”

They've missed out on last year's cohort as role models. Even the fact that they're back involved is a good thing. So this is a really good thing.”

Seth Foster, LCV Lead School Leicester noticed a real improvement over the two days he was with his Young Coaches. “I would say that I was shocked by how much had been lost by COVID. The

¹¹ Dave Burston, LCV Lead

discussions, the get up and go attitude - a vast difference. It's always quiet at the start but this went on until 2pm. However Day 2 was a breeze." Seth noted a tangible improvement in terms of the girls working together and listening to one another's ideas over the course of the two days and could see them working independently in the group.

Maxine Smiles-Cook, LCV Lead School Berkshire noted a similar lethargy and lack of confidence amongst her Young Coaches. She found YST's written and video resources invaluable. "I was completely shocked at the fallout from COVID. I had the crème de la crème and they had low confidence, were mono syllabic and took a lot of warming up. But I was really chuffed I had the two days. They were buzzing by the end of Tuesday!" Her mentors were a powerful presence: they enabled girls to work with motivated young people close to their own age.

Immediate impacts of training on Young Leaders

Whether delivered face to face or virtually, the Coaching Academy gave young people an extracurricular personal development opportunity and a chance to consider and plan the delivery of their own events. To have been selected for training was motivating for many, whilst the sessions themselves gave many participants a new sense of themselves and their potential.

"The sessions were a great way to improve my self-esteem. I was unsure about working with people out of my friend group or people I'm not usually around but in this case it was amazing."¹²

"I learnt that as an individual I have potential to be a young coach and inspire others. I also learnt the key components of being a young coach and how to lead an activity. I liked how we all worked together and tried our best. Even better if - we had another session :)"¹³

Lead staff and their wider network worked hard to identify opportunities for young leaders to put their knowledge into practice. Communication with each group was facilitated by tools such as WhatsApp and SPOND, on which Young Coaches could post details of planned events.

4. Girls Active Coaches Virtual Event: participation

"I spoke to the girls after the Virtual Event: they said it was different to normal, made a difference to being stuck indoors, had purpose behind it. It gave them something to be proud of, they'd achieved something and could see it unfold on the day."¹⁴

100 girls attended the Girls Active Coaches Virtual Event, held online from Friday 11th June at 3pm to Sunday 13th June at midday. The event simulated many aspects of the live event including the allocation of Young Coaches into teams to which they would return repeatedly over the three days

¹² Young Coach feedback gathered by Agata Maj, LCV lead (London)

¹³ Young Coach feedback gathered by Agata Maj, LCV lead (London)

¹⁴ Mollie Boone, LCV Lead, Shooters' Hill 6th Form

to collectively explore and develop the topics being introduced and the opportunity for Young Coaches to select a sport about which they were interested in finding out more from a coaching perspective.

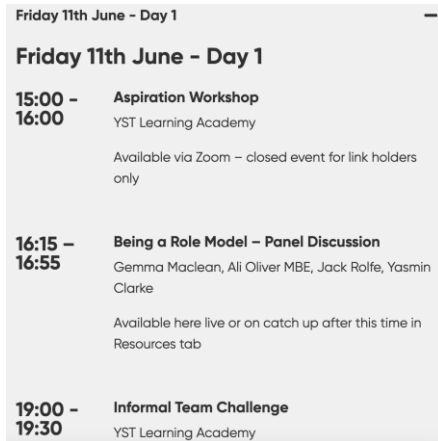


Figure 3 Snapshot of the Girls Active Virtual Event timetable, which promoted engagement via short, accessible workshops, an array of delivery styles and maximum interaction



Figure 4 Partner organisations and keynote speakers contributed to social media over the course of the weekend

The Girls Active Virtual Event website¹⁵ saw regular visitors over the weekend and at its peak on Friday 286 unique viewers. Over the three weeks prior to and during the weekend it saw 1,231 unique page views.

¹⁵ Website Stats: Friday 286 Viewers; Saturday 249 Viewers; Sunday 168 Viewers

Over the weekend, the channels saw the following performance.

Twitter	
Impressions	236,561 up 77%
Engagements	2726 up 114%
Post Link Clicks	164, down 41%
Engagement rate per impressions	1.2% up 21%
Videos	4380 views, up 963%
Likes	465 up 77%
Other post clicks	1939 up 238%
Twitter followers gained	25
Messages sent	56
Messages received	417 down 13.3%

Instagram	
Impressions	22,751 up 635%
Engagements	265 up 155%
Profile actions	83 up 98%
New followers	33 up 50%
Messages sent	69 up 1625%
Received messages	23 up 21%
Stories	54 in total, up 5,300%
Story tap backs	505
Story impressions	9979 up 3604%
Average reach per story	182 (down 48%)
Engagement rate (of stories)	1.2% down overall, but due to rise in vol
Video views	485

Figure 5 YST social media traffic attributed to the Girls Active Virtual Event. Source: Thread & Fable, 2021



Figure 6 YST used social media to drive further engagement with resources amongst non-participants

The most popular sessions over the course of the weekend were Being a Role Model (Panel Discussion), the Sport Sessions: NGB/Activity Providers and the Aspiration Workshop (YST Learning Academy). Least popular were the keynote talks, the podcasts and the Content in Action session. These last three event types also happened to be the least interactive.

What were your top 3 sessions and why?	Responses
Being a Role Model – Panel Discussion	43%
Sport Sessions: NGB/Activity Providers	37%
Aspiration Workshop: YST Learning Academy	31%

Figure 7 Q10 post programme survey Which were your top THREE favourite sessions and why?

“The workshops were good as they showed for values that you need as a coach, and we went through scenarios.”

Empathy workshop - because it gave me lots of new ideas I had never thought about before, in helping and understanding the people you are coaching, for example to always monitor both yours and their body language, to help them feel comfortable

“Being a role model session because I love to look up to people and I would love for people to look up to me one day.”

Impacts of the Girls Active Virtual Event on Young Coaches

“I really enjoyed myself over the weekend at the Girls Active Virtual Event. I’ve learnt so many new things and really enjoyed being in the group I was in. We have made a group chat with all the girls in red team.... The team leaders were also amazing! I also thoroughly enjoyed the talks, especially the one with Amy Dowden. Thank you so much for nominating me for a spot!”¹⁶

Overall, young people report positively on their experiences at the Girls Active Virtual Event: both in terms of its design, accessibility and relevance and its impacts on them personally. Young people’s familiarity with virtual learning environments, sensitive timekeeping by YST staff, a combination of on and offline activity, the calibre of speakers and Team Leaders and the atmosphere of the event collectively retained engagement, supported interaction and supported useful outcomes. It is testament to the profile of the event and young people’s pride in having been selected to participate that the vast majority turned their cameras on for the duration.

The primary benefits of these teams over the weekend were the personal connections they permitted young people to make with Team Leaders and other young leaders like themselves and, inherent within this, the extent to which these interactions challenged and discomfited participants. Just as in the residential Camp in Loughborough, these sometimes-daunting social interactions within a safe space cause young people to develop in confidence and appetite for more challenge.

“I feel like I became a lot more confident as we had to be unmuted and have our cameras on. It was an amazing opportunity, and I enjoyed every aspect!”

Figure 8 Q11 Post programme survey. Was there anything else you enjoyed about the weekend?

The autonomy given to girls at times during the weekend within breakout sessions coordinated by Team Leaders had a dual impact. Empowering girls to use that time to work as a group without oversight both motivated them and built their confidence as leaders. It also allowed them some ‘down time’ where they could interact naturally and unprompted by a course leader: something that happens regularly during the residential weekend.

“It helped with my leadership because when we were separated from our sports leaders it was exciting to interact and come up with a plan to present back.”¹⁷

Whilst a number of sessions were highlighted by individual Young Coaches as having impacted them personally, the Team Leader groups and the Goose Chase Challenge were notable for being highlighted as both the most enjoyable and valuable aspects of the weekend. Undoubtedly this is due in part to the opportunities these presented for fun, social interaction, but participants also noted that these sessions gave them insight into what good leadership looked like (fun, welcoming, non-judgemental) and ideas for a fun, accessible competition device that they could incorporate into their events.

¹⁶ Young Coach feedback gathered by Agata Maj, LCV lead (London)

¹⁷ Feedback from a Young Coach, Sprowston Academy

“My coach Jemma was amazing and helped to encourage my group throughout the weekend! I feel as though I have learnt so many new skills, that I can use both in my coaching and my life in general!”

Figure 9 Q11 Post programme survey Was there anything else you enjoyed about the weekend?

Young Coaches with considerable delivery experience reported the value of the Empathy Workshop (part of the YST Learning Academy) which one girl said would help her to “to think about other people’s situations, how you could help them if they are struggling to do something, put yourself in their situation.”¹⁸

Girls were invited to comment in the post programme survey on way(s) in which the Virtual Event might have been improved. Most respondents chose not to answer this question or to indicate that it couldn’t have been improved, there were requests for more physical elements, greater interactivity within the sessions that were pre-recorded and a more concise timetable. The latter appears not to be driven by a lack of perceived value within the offer but the difficulty of remaining engaged within an online learning environment for a whole weekend.

School Sports and Sports Leaders News



Youth Sport Trust – Girls Active Virtual Camp

Eleanor H and Sophie H from year 10 were selected to attend the YST virtual girls coaches camp 2021 over the weekend. Both girls had an amazing time and made some great friends, albeit on a virtual platform. The live events and podcast resources were superb and Mrs Allen even managed to watch a few sessions. Eleanor has written about their experience below.



Over the weekend Sophie and I took part in the Girls Active Coaching Event. Due to the global pandemic we have been in over the past year, the event had to be taken part in virtually rather than three days at Loughborough University. Even though everything was over Zoom and shown via live streaming we still had lots of fun and managed to meet new people through the course. With our team we competed against others over a virtual platform, Goosechase. An app we used over the few days completing various tasks set by our leaders.



At this event we also learnt new ways to lead. Our goals to take away from the weekend were to use new and innovating techniques in our leadership and coaching. This will help to encourage getting more girls involved in sport. I would just like to thank Mrs Allen for nominating myself and Sophie in this fantastic opportunity as we hope to make a difference in the future.

Figure 10 Highfields School Newsletter, June 2021

Girls were asked in the post programme survey what impact(s) the Virtual Event had on them:

¹⁸ Feedback from a Young Coach, Sprowston Academy

- **82% agree or agree strongly that the weekend gave them inspiration** and new ideas for delivering coaching sessions
- **86% agree or agree strongly that the Camp helped them to better understand girls' barriers** to participating in physical activity
- **92% agree or agree strongly that they enjoyed themselves**
- **84% agree or agree strongly that they developed skills** they can use elsewhere in their lives
- **46% agree or agree strongly that they made new friends.**

How much do you agree with the following statements about the weekend?	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It gave me inspiration and new ideas for delivering coaching sessions	18%	64%	16%	2%	0%
It helped me to better understand girls' barriers to participating in physical activity	30%	56%	10%	4%	0%
I enjoyed myself	40%	52%	8%	0%	0%
I developed skills I can use elsewhere in my life	27%	57%	16%	0%	0%
I made new friends	22%	24%	36%	16%	2%

Figure 11 Q9 How much do you agree with the following statements about the weekend?

5. Young Coaches and Activator event and festival delivery

“They seemed really proud of what they've achieved, of how they're handling themselves, of taking control. A sense of achievement.”¹⁹

Lead staff reflected spontaneously on the inherent value of event delivery for Young Coaches as well as for beneficiaries. They saw events as an opportunity for young people to represent their school, to work outside their comfort zone and to take risks. Where Young Coaches were able to lead events with other year groups or with a feeder primary school these presented opportunities to meet other people. Lead staff recognised that young people’s confidence to do all of these had decreased over the previous year and that they had become more insular.

LCV Leads also commented on how motivated both SGOs and school PE staff were with regards to creating delivery opportunities for young people. Where schools engaged well with virtual competitions, young leaders could help promote these within their own bubble.

It was harder for young people to find coaching points when leading people their own age or when leading a virtual activity. Lead staff ensured that Young Coaches / Activators focused on getting participants to participate and to achieve and highlighted the value they were bringing to beneficiaries in doing so. Chris Ripley, LCV Lead at Bosworth Academy that it was easier for boys to

¹⁹ Mollie Boone, LCV Lead, Shooters' Hill 6th Form

be social whilst doing something physical but that staff and students alike all had greater awareness of wellbeing and mental health, and the need to relax and socialise.

The strongest ‘sell’ for peer-group events or for festivals where these took place appears to have been the social opportunities these presented. This suited mixed ability groups where activity had to take place within one year group or ‘bubble’ and though it meant that more active students were involved in events than might ordinarily, it also had the side benefit of engaging with the hardest to reach.

“If we’d done the motivations audit before lockdown it would have been fitness, but now even the most sporty do it because of fun and friendship. The social side. It’s an easier sell.”

Diverse, creative and tenacious nature of delivery



Figure 12 Cheerleading event at the Portman Road festival implemented by Young Coaches / Activators, Suffolk

Events and festivals took many guises, including both virtual and face to face. Where timing or local restrictions permitted face to face delivery, Young Coaches demonstrated energy, inclusivity and a light-touch with regards to the design of events that could be delivered within a short period by an audience perhaps only able to attend on one occasion. Activities chosen for delivery reflect their understanding of young people’s needs and err more towards fun, social and inclusive games than in previous years. Increased interest in more solitary activities such as cycling and yoga was also noted by some young leaders as a product of school closures, though this was not reflected in their choice of activity. Above all, young leaders demonstrated an understanding of their unique ability to engage and influence their peers and of the power of ‘like me’ delivery, rather than simply seeking to replicate the style and content of teaching staff.

“Sometimes adult coaches don’t fully understand the lack of motivation kids can have to conventional sports. I like to think we realise that by being more relaxed than adults can be, the kids had more fun and therefore were more willing to take part.”

COVID restrictions demanded that face to face activity be sometimes delivered within a Young Coach’s bubble (usually therefore with their own year group). Where broader (distanced) mixing

was permitted, this was sometimes limited by staggered lunchtimes. However, lead staff revealed creativity in overcoming these barriers by initiating leadership opportunities within lessons and community sports-based events.

“Leaders have been unable to deliver a festival due to COVID restrictions, but taster sessions have been given to year 7 pupils during curriculum lessons.”

There were opportunities early in the summer term for some Young Coaches to deliver festivals as part of primary school transition events. Though young people were unable to visit their new school or to meet other incoming Year 7s, older students put on events for them in their own school setting. A side benefit of this approach meant a less daunting initial leadership opportunity for Young Coaches, many of whom will go on to deliver further events in the Autumn term within their own schools.

“They put on a carousel of different activities Parachute games, target games, running relays and team building skills.”



Figure 13 Festival delivered by 14 Young Coaches from King Edward VI SGO that involved 56 young people in Years 3-6 from five primary schools participating in carousel activities hosted by Ipswich Town FC. Coaches representing three of the schools engaged in the Academy and facilitated six activity stations such as cheerleading, archery and parachute games.

Virtual activity was sometimes delivered to a whole class in a primary setting by a Young Coach via zoom or an equivalent. More commonly however events were pre-recorded, though this impacted on young people’s ability to see the impact they had.

“The festival was delivered in a virtual format. Each girl sent recording of the chosen activity which was then put together and presented to the group of participants.”

Lead staff worked hard to identify and create opportunities for young people to lead and some creative examples emerged this year that will translate into future years. One LCV Lead commented

that the use of bubbles may continue to be used by some schools post COVID: her perspective was that like-me peer leadership would then become more powerful than ever.

Students revealed considerable ambition, with one “undertaking a quad kids athletics festival involving 100 students over two days.”:

- 21 Young Coaches / Activators at Shooters Hill 6th Form ran a Y7 inter-form cricket competition attended by all girls in that year group. Girls commented that the Coaching Academy had given them the knowledge and confidence to design and run the event. Mollie Boone (LCV Lead) observed that in addition to this the girls brought personal determination, personal investment and excellent communication skills to the event which collectively contributed to an "enjoyable, noisy, team-building, happy, vibe."
- Another LCV Lead obtained permission from their Head Teacher to bring together a small number of girls together from different year groups. Young Coaches / Activators successfully ran a lunchtime event for targeted inactive students for 3 or 4 weeks prior to a timetable change.
- One Young Coach / Activator that had been quiet during her training initiated a basketball club at her school. She ‘came alive’ during these sessions and was ‘excellent at progression, differentiating, encouraging others and taking a lead’. Planned roll-out of her club was stalled but is planned for the Autumn.
- In Cornwall, Young Coaches / Activators took responsibility for co-leading the national school sports event that took place in the summer term, leading outdoor events for 160 primary school children.
- Agata Maj, LCV Lead attached to Park Hill Junior School trained 20 Young Coaches and Activators that collectively enabled 6,091 female participants to access wider sporting opportunities as a result of their activities. These reach figures have been suppressed from overarching analysis in order not to skew average performances, but activity was notable for being both hugely impactful for participants and Young Coaches / Activators.

“I’m thinking of two girls that are on the start of their leadership journey. One was enthusiastic and one was more tentative. They’d not been involved since primary: it was nice to see them realise and lead in that Y4 event and to see the actualisation of their leadership skills. Their first experience and they were straight into it, showing their initiative and coming up with their own ideas.”²⁰

²⁰ Seth Foster, LCV Lead, Holmfirth High School



Figure 14 Weekly lunchtime netball club initiated by Young Coaches / Activators at Sheldon School, Wilts.

Extent of delivery

33 lead staff submitted delivery data related to young coaches that had delivered activity for one term. Whilst those in the remaining nine regions confirmed that those Young Coaches and Activators in Year 10 or below will deliver activity at the start of the next academic year. In all these instances both virtual and face to face delivery was impeded by large numbers of Young Coaches and Activators having to isolate and by school closures, with school staff having to amend timetables and deprioritise extra-curricular activity.

Across the 33 regions²¹ that submitted delivery data²²:

- **989 female coaches delivered activity for one term (or longer)**
- Collectively via their sessions **they engaged 5,608 young people in wider sporting opportunities**. This figure represents 90% of the target total engagement of 6,250 young people but an over-performance against KPIs when viewed as an average reach per participating school (170 young people reached per region versus an average target reach of 145 young people)
- **4,684 females represent 84% of all those engaged**: an average of 143 per participating region
- **Of these, 2,829 girls (60%) did less than an average of 60 minutes physical activity per day** across the week
- **390 participants have a disability or special educational need** (8% of all female participants)
- **1,247 participants are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups** (26% of all female participants)
- **924 participants were male** (16% of the total cohort reached).

“One of the girls worked with others on the academy to deliver a sports day style festival for pupils in their school.”

²¹ Data for one region has been suppressed from the following reach figures. Extensive virtual activity delivered to the primary school community supported significant reach (>5k young people) and impact, but these numbers will distort the overarching delivery picture if included here.

²² Youth Sport Trust termly data reporting, summer 2021



Figure 15 Parachute games at a festival run by 14 Young Coaches / Activators, Warwickshire

"I feel inspired to be more active."				
Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
54%	35%	9%	2%	0%

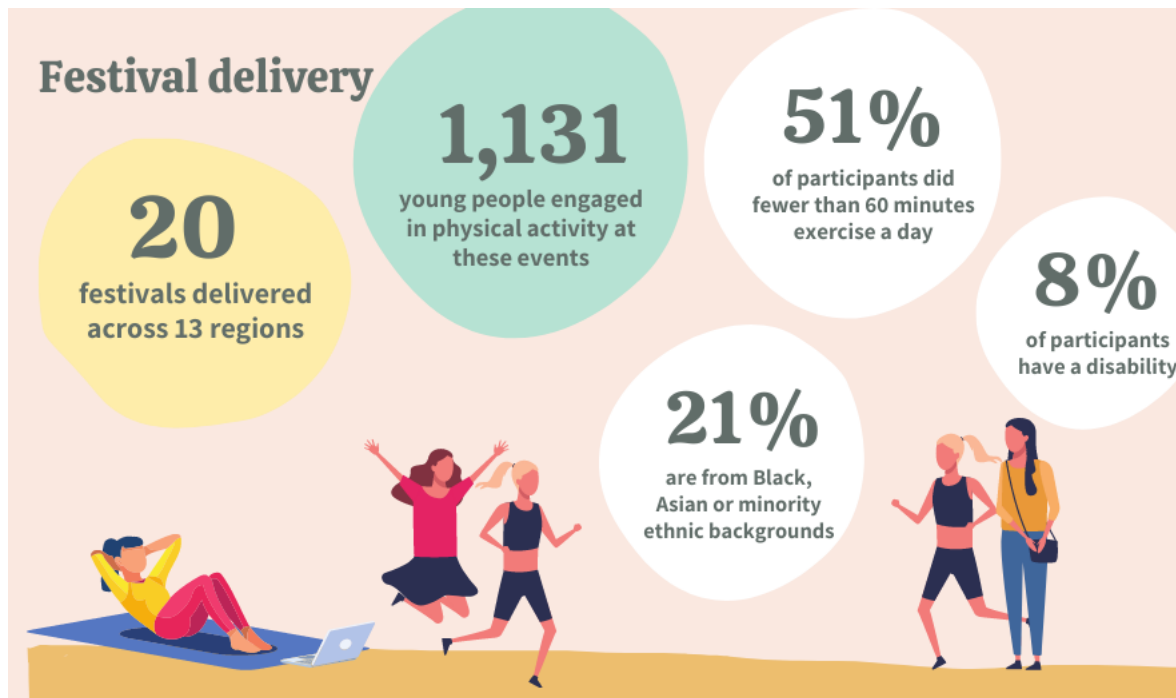
"I've had more opportunities to connect with my friends."				
Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
66%	28%	5%	1%	0%

"I feel happier."				
Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
62%	30%	6%	3%	0%

At least 20 festivals were also delivered across 13 regions with a further seven regions planning to deliver their festivals in the autumn term. Lead staff commented on the nature of the festival(s) their Young Coaches and Activators delivered, which included carousel / multi-station events, virtual challenges, a Get Active sports festival and inter-form sports. Collectively these festivals reached 1,131 young people, of which 51% did less than 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

- 51% previously did fewer than 60 minutes exercise a day
- 8% of participants had a special educational need or disability
- 21% of participants were from are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic groups
- 43% of participants were boys.

Fewer festivals took place than targeted (and planned), primarily due to the large numbers of students sent home to isolate during the summer term and the impact of this on staffing and available leaders / beneficiaries. Several LCV Lead staff plan to facilitate festivals in the Autumn term, to be delivered by returning Young Coaches / Activators.



Leadership and Volunteering Insight Tool

The Leadership and Volunteering Insight Tool (L&V Insight Tool) offers secondary schools the opportunity to evidence their school’s “intent to provide for the personal development of all pupils”, through use of the YST’s free Leadership and Volunteering Insight Survey.

The tool looks at four key components: overall school population, the proportion of pupils involved in leadership activity intra-school, inter-school and in the community. It then helps to identify barriers and challenges which lead to leaders being involved in activity at all levels. Data from across county areas is joined to allow the school to see their individual results and for trends across the county to be identified. The intention is that findings will support schools to build a diverse ‘like me’ workforce is effective and in turn to increase the participation and activity levels of less-engaged young people in sport and physical activity.

YST sought to achieve 400 L&V completed surveys nationwide this year, working with LCV Leads to disseminate and explain the tool and to help develop an action plan in response to findings. Opportunities for schools to implement changes to address under-represented audiences within their leadership and volunteering workforce have been limited this year, however still achieved in some areas.

Overall, the Insight Tool was completed by 75 schools were completed across 17 LCV regions. This represents 19% of this year’s target and an average of 4 completed surveys in each of these areas.



A further 850 young people were provided with an opportunity to engage in leadership or volunteering opportunities due to the data arising from completed Insight Tools, an average of 11 young people per school:

- 629 of these young people were female: 74% of the total
- 11% have a special educational need or disability
- 20% are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups
- 20% are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

Part Four: Impacts

Impacts of delivery on Young Leaders

“Sheer joy from young leaders at being able to plan, lead and deliver SOME activities for other students this year! These leaders were awesome in Year 7 but have not delivered anything in eighteen months due to COVID. They were literally over the moon to get the opportunity.”

Impacts

All Young Coaches / Activators were invited to complete a pre-programme benchmarking survey upon being recruited. This comprised 20 tick-box questions and could be completed online (paper version also available). 908 Young Coaches completed the questionnaire, providing useful insights into their social, emotional and physical wellbeing, their motivation and confidence with regards to leadership and their aspirations for the programme. 278 of these participants were boys: for the purposes of this evaluation solely those answers submitted by 630 girls have been considered.

The same set of questions was asked of the same cohort at the end of the summer term when 112 girls completed this survey. Their responses evidence further programme impacts and are cross referenced below.

Impacts on Young Coaches: Social, emotional and physical wellbeing

“Last year’s leadership students have shown interest too: they miss involvement, miss being with their mates, miss things that pull them together. For us sports leadership is a way for students to come together and be part of something as well as developing their skills.²³”

Young leaders enjoyed working together and the positive impact this had on both the impact of their leadership impact and their personal relationships. Many spoke of the positive impact of joint delivery both on their ability to manage a large session effectively and of complementary leadership skillsets.

“I think me and my partner shared very well. I’m a little more confident explaining the activities and she’s more confident controlling the kids and elaborating on instructions later. We both spoke to the kids for similar amounts, and we both did setting up at different points while the other talked.”

As part of the pre-programme survey girls were asked when they were first recruited to the programme. 6% of participants were initially recruited to the 2019-2020 LCV programme and had chosen to repeat the year. These girls may have previously participated in the Coaching Academy

²³ Chris Ripley, LCV Lead, Bosworth Academy

and are sufficiently motivated and confident with regards to their coaching abilities to pursue the opportunity for a second year. Their answers are included in the below.

Girls were asked to rate their happiness levels in both the pre and post surveys. Young Coaches were largely happy at the start of their participation in the programme: 71% scored themselves as being 7 or above in a 0-10 scale where 0 = not at all happy and 10 = completely happy. This figure remained largely consistent when asked at the end of the summer term: 70% scored themselves as being 7 or above. This reveals considerable resilience on the part of these girls, given how few extracurricular opportunities they had been able to access and the challenges in ensuring regular attendance at school.

	0 (Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (Completely)
Pre programme survey	0%	1%	1%	3%	4%	9%	11%	23%	23%	16%	9%
Post programme survey	0%	1%	1%	2%	6%	5%	16%	20%	25%	15%	10%

Figure 16 Pre and post programme survey data: Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? 0 is not at all and 10 is completely.

Girls were asked questions in the pre and post surveys that explored their emotional and physical wellbeing and their sense of belonging and connectedness.

Overall, responses to the pre-programme survey revealed a largely positive mindset, evidenced most of all in their social relationships. Girls' answers imply a considerable degree of personal resilience too, given their experiences in the previous year:

At the outset of the programme:

- **72% felt valued in their school and a sense of belonging** (scored themselves a 7 or above)
- **88% felt happy with the relationships they had with their friends** (7 or above)
 - (39% scored themselves 10/10 when asked this question)
- **70% felt positive and able to cope day to day** (7 or above)
- **81% feel confident in their own abilities and the choices they make to maintain a healthy lifestyle** (7 or above)

Answer Choices	1 (Not at all)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (Completely)
I feel I am valued in my school and have a sense of belonging	1%	1%	2%	3%	11%	10%	19%	25%	16%	13%
I am happy with the relationships I have with my friends	0%	0%	1%	2%	4%	5%	10%	15%	24%	39%
My emotional well-being: I feel positive and able to cope day to day	1%	2%	3%	4%	10%	11%	14%	22%	20%	14%
My physical well-being: I feel confident in my own abilities and the choices I make to maintain a healthy lifestyle	0%	1%	1%	3%	5%	10%	14%	22%	24%	21%

Figure 17 Pre programme survey How would you rate the following? Rate from 1-10 where 1 is Not at all and 10 is Completely.

At the end of the programme respondents were asked to reflect on how the same areas of their lives had been impacted as a result of their experiences as a Young Activator this year:

- **72% strongly agreed or agreed that they feel more valued by their community** and have a stronger sense of belonging

- 74% strongly agreed or agreed they were happier with the relationships they had with friends
- 75% strongly agreed or agreed they feel more positive and able to manage my day-to-day life
- 85% strongly agreed or agreed that they feel more confident in their own abilities and choices²⁴

These self-reported impacts are particularly significant given disruption to girls' lives this academic year and the difficulties that some may have faced during the summer term with regards to implementing their preferred event or festival.

Strong sense of community and personal agency

At the end of the programme respondents agreed or agreed strongly that they:

72%

feel more valued by their community and have a stronger sense of belonging



feel more positive and able to manage their day-to-day life

75%

74%

were happier with the relationships they had with friends



feel more confident in their own abilities and choices

85%

²⁴ Q6 Post programme survey

Activity levels

Findings re. Young Coaches' physical wellbeing at the start of the programme are borne out by their self-declared activity levels. 66% claim to be active 60 minutes a day on four days or more a week. However only 12% claim to be active every day.

None	1%
1 day	3%
2 days	10%
3 days	19%
4 days	19%
5 days	21%
6 days	13%
7 days	12%

Figure 18 Q9 Pre programme survey In the past week, on how many days have you taken part in 60 minutes or more of physical activity that makes you feel warmer and makes your heart beat faster?

The post programme survey does not reveal any positive shift in physical activity levels: indeed, the percentages of girls being active 6 or 7 days a week had actually decreased from 25% of respondents to 19%. This is likely due to the impact of school closures, restricted timetabling and cross-curricular delivery and bubble-based teaching, all of which had a greater impact on young people during the late Spring and Summer term than earlier in the academic year.

None	0%
1 day	5%
2 days	5%
3 days	21%
4 days	30%
5 days	21%
6 days	10%
7 days	9%

Figure 19 Q13 Post programme survey In the past week, on how many days have you taken part in 60 minutes or more of physical activity that makes you feel warmer and makes your heart beat faster?

Impacts on Young Coaches' leadership confidence and aspirations

Opportunities to see first-hand the impact they have on others is motivating and powerful for Young Coaches / Activators. 'Real-time' responses from young participants allows them to adapt their approach and to develop their leadership style accordingly. Even less successful sessions can have a positive impact on a leader's self-confidence, where a new skill set has been identified and developed that will have future relevance.

Feedback from Young Coaches / Activators gathered by LCV Leads reveals their pride in putting on events for their peers, and the pleasure they gained from seeing the enjoyment these prompted. Many young leaders commented that their events were often 'the first' put on in school for a while and reflected on what they had made possible for their peers.

“People have got lazy. We got them moving again. Even if they didn’t learn anything it boosted their self-esteem and kept them in a positive frame of mind.”²⁵

Opportunities for Young Coaches / Activators to deliver events or to support a PE lesson over consecutive weeks supported the greatest growth amongst young leaders, as did having the opportunity to deliver as a team. However, one off events still represent a real learning opportunity for aspirant leaders: demanding that they initiate, plan and implement an activity, communicate effectively, time manage and support participants.

“As the sessions continued, I felt as though I learned more and became more positive and confident about myself and how to manage a big event.”²⁶

The delivery challenges faced by young leaders are the same as those documented in previous years. The difficulty in engaging someone that doesn’t want to participate is greater, however, when someone is your own age or has been obliged to attend a PE lesson. One Young Coach / Activator commented that patience was her most developed area and that she had a new respect for PE teachers. The following quote from one young leader reveals her nuanced understanding of the value of ‘like me’ leadership and her potential to engage her peers.

“It was difficult knowing how to control the kids! They were quite excitable. I really want to improve knowing what to say to get them more under control without ruining any of the fun. I think there’s a difficult balance I have to strike there!”²⁷

At the outset of the programme 80% of girls felt empowered to inspire and to mobilise others (score themselves a 7 or higher) when asked about their personal leadership skills. Post programme, this figure had increased further, with 85% of girls now scoring themselves a 7 or higher.

		1 (Not at all)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (Completely)
My leadership skills: I feel empowered to inspire and mobilise others	Pre-survey	0%	1%	1%	1%	7%	10%	16%	23%	22%	19%
	Post-survey	0%	1%	0%	1%	4%	9%	17%	25%	28%	14%

Figure 20 Pre and post programme survey: How would you rate the following? Rate from 1-10 where 1 is Not at all and 10 is Completely.

Pre programme questions asked about the impact of COVID-19 on girls’ leadership experience, confidence and motivation reveal considerable need, coupled with considerable appetite to participate and to contribute:

²⁵ Young Coach / Activator feedback from Sheldon School gathered by Jessica Pierce, LCV Lead Abbeyfield School

²⁶ Young Coach / Activator feedback gathered by Jessica Pierce, LCV Lead Abbeyfield School

²⁷ Young Coach / Activator feedback gathered by Ben Moyle, LCV Lead

- **82% of girls agree or strongly agree that COVID-19 has caused them to miss out on leadership opportunities.**
- **85% feel that the pandemic has caused them to have fewer opportunities to volunteer** in PE, Sport or Physical Activity
- **25% of girls agree or strongly agree that their confidence in their leadership skills has diminished** whilst **75% also agree or strongly agree that they are now more motivated to become a young leader**
- **86% agree or strongly agree that they are more motivated to want to give back** and volunteer their time.

Because of COVID-19...	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I've missed out on opportunities to develop my leadership skills	34%	48%	15%	3%	0%
I've had less opportunities to volunteer in PE, Sport or Physical Activity	43%	42%	11%	4%	1%
I have lost confidence in my leadership skills	7%	21%	44%	25%	4%
I am now more motivated to become a young leader	27%	48%	23%	2%	0%
I am now more motivated to want to give back and volunteer my time to things that are important to me.	37%	49%	12%	1%	0%

Figure 21 Girls' responses to Q6 Pre-programme survey

264 boys responded to the pre-programme survey. Their responses reveal some notable differences between the two genders in terms of perceived lost opportunity and diminished confidence. Boys do not seem to be as negatively impacted:

- **74% of boys agree or strongly agree that they'd missed out on opportunities to develop their leadership skills** (versus 82% of girls)
- **66% feel that the pandemic has caused them to have fewer opportunities to volunteer** in PE, Sport or Physical Activity (versus 85% of girls)
- **15% agree or strongly agree that their confidence in their leadership skills has diminished** (versus 25% of girls)

Neither does COVID appear to have had the same impact on boys' aspirations to lead others and / or to volunteer as it has done on girls:

- **61% agree or strongly agree that they are now more motivated to become a young leader** (versus 75% of girls)
- **73% agree or strongly agree that they are more motivated to want to give back** and volunteer their time (versus 86% of girls)

Because of COVID-19...	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I've missed out on opportunities to develop my leadership skills	33%	41%	21%	4%	1%
I've had less opportunities to volunteer in PE, Sport or Physical Activity	39%	38%	15%	5%	3%
I have lost confidence in my leadership skills	3%	12%	43%	25%	16%
I am now more motivated to become a young leader	22%	39%	30%	8%	1%
I am now more motivated to want to give back and volunteer my time to things that are important to me.	25%	48%	25%	2%	0%

Figure 22 Boys' responses to Q6 Pre-programme survey

The post programme survey invited girls to reflect on their confidence in their own abilities²⁸. From a scale of 1-10 where 1 = Do not agree and 10 = Agree fully, 78% of participants scored rated their self-belief as 7 or higher.

Young Coach programme aspirations

“Never been more of an appetite. A willingness to be involved in something social and bigger, positive, sociable, that they can contribute to other children having a good time.²⁹”

The skill and knowledge gap evidenced by the pre-programme survey underpinned girls’ aspirations for the LCV programme. Girls signed up to the programme primarily to develop their coaching skills (85%) and skills that they can use elsewhere in their lives (83%). Increased self-confidence was seen as a potential benefit of participation for 71%.

Develop my coaching skills	86%
Greater awareness of what girls in my school want from PE, sport and physical activity	51%
Increased self-confidence	74%
Develop skills I can use elsewhere in my life	83%
Chance to spend time with friends	29%
Other	7%

Figure 23 Q3 Which of the following do you hope to gain from participation in the Young Coaches Academy programme? Tick all that apply.

Post programme survey reveals how coaching specific aspirations were met via the programme:

- 92% of respondents state that the programme supports their coaching skills and inspiration (an outcome sought by 86% at the start of the programme)
- 66% state that it has given them a greater understanding of how to support others (sought by 51% of respondents at the start of the programme)

²⁸ How would you rate the following? Rate from 1-10 where 1 is Fully disagree and 10 is Fully agree

“My self-belief: I feel confident in my own abilities”

²⁹ Dave Burston, LCV Lead, Wellsway School

The programme has had a very positive impact on both girls’ self-confidence and in terms of giving them skills for use elsewhere (69% and 73% respectively report this impact), though did not quite live up to expectations in this regard for some respondents, perhaps since transferable skills and self-confidence are developed via hands-on experience.

Coaching skills and inspiration	92%
Skills I can use elsewhere in my life	73%
Increased self-confidence	69%
Greater understanding of how to support others	66%
Chance to spend time with friends	48%
Greater involvement in school life	46%
Insight into new sports	33%
Other (please specify): Show	2%

Figure 24 Post programme survey: Which of the following have you gained from participation in the LCV programme? Tick all that apply

LCV leads were asked a series of questions within the summer termly reporting questionnaire pertaining to the impact of participation in the programme on their Young Leaders and Activators and on their network’s ability to develop volunteer opportunities for young people. 43 lead staff submitted responses on behalf of the 893 female coaches they collectively represented.

Physical, social and emotional well-being

Young leaders benefited emotionally from seeing the ‘smiles’ on their participants’ faces and from initiating extra-curricular events after an absence of these. Having been through the same experiences as their peers they were able to understand the benefits of socialising through sport and felt proud at being able to make a difference.

“Lockdown has messed with lots of peoples’ heads. This has led to a huge lack of motivation among many kids. This has led to a loss of fitness, a loss of people wanting to continue to do sport after so long locked away at home, etc.”³⁰

The data arising in response to the following two questions reveals significant positive impact of participation on girls’ activity levels and well-being.

- **83% of respondents confirmed that participation had had a ‘positive’ or ‘very positive’ impact on girls’ overall health and wellbeing.**
- **83% of respondents confirmed that the amount of time that girls spent participating in physical activity and sport had increased either ‘very positively’ or ‘positively’.**

“Girls discovered abilities they didn’t know they had and engaged pupils who had previously been reluctant to fully participate in physical activity.”

³⁰ Young Coach / Activator feedback gathered by Ben Moyle, LCV Lead

“Unexpected benefit of the programme? For the activators: continued social interaction.”

Young Coaches and Activators’ propensity to volunteer

Staff were asked to comment on the amount of time girls spent volunteering through physical activity and sport. Given the considerable restrictions presented by COVID-19 their responses to the following questions are remarkable. Several lead staff noted that whilst school-based leadership opportunities were limited through much of the academic year, girls had been inspired by their selection and training to explore community-based opportunities.

- **83% of respondents confirmed that the amount of time that girls spent volunteering through physical activity and sport had increased either ‘very positively’ or ‘positively’**
- **83% of lead staff felt that the ability of young people to achieve their potential [via volunteering] had increased very positively or positively.**

Impacts on staff

Lead staff were asked to comment on the impact of the programme within their school network in terms of staff understanding of and commitment to volunteering opportunities for young people. Responses imply that the programme is successful in engaging and educating wider school staff in how they can help develop a peer-led leadership and volunteering culture within their communities:

88% state that the programme has increased the competence and confidence of the adult workforce to effectively identify the needs of female young people and develop appropriate workforce opportunities by ‘a lot’ or ‘a bit’

90% state that the opportunities for young females to take on leadership and volunteering development opportunities have increased a ‘a lot’ or ‘a bit’.

- **79% state that the LCV programme has increased the diversity of girls taking part in leadership and volunteering development roles ‘a lot’ or ‘a bit’.** It is possible that this aspect of the programme was negatively impacted by the propensity of less academic / less confident girls to have disengaged a little during school closures and fewer opportunities to positively motivate their participation via face-to-face contact.

Peer recommendation within the sector is highly influential and practitioners would not lightly recommend an initiative to one of their peers and lead staff members’ responses to the question ‘How likely are you to recommend doing the programme to other schools? (0 = very unlikely, 10 =

very likely)' are therefore key. Lead staff scored the LCV programme an average of 8.7 and a median of 9, suggesting perceived value, relevance and accessibility.

Impacts on beneficiaries

Feedback from both LCV Leads and from Young Coaches / Activators demonstrated the value of emphasising the fun, social aspects of their events both for their inherent benefits and since this would be a powerful 'hook' for attendees. With many events taking place within class 'bubbles', attendance was not necessarily limited to inactive students, and it was therefore important that activities were accessible to all.

Young leaders certainly intuited the above. Their own perspectives plus verbal and survey feedback gathered from participants after each event reveal emphasis on fun engagement, activity through play and an inclusive delivery style.

"Teachers should let their hair down more and have fun with us. Crash Bandicoot was amazing fun!! Definitely want to play it again! And "Crossy Road" was such fun. I didn't think I would laugh so much!!"³¹

Attendees at the festivals put on by Young Coaches in 13 regions were invited to score the impact of their experiences on their social and emotional wellbeing and on their motivation. Most of these festivals took place during the summer term following the second set of school closures, when young people had once again lost opportunities to be active with friends and to socialise.

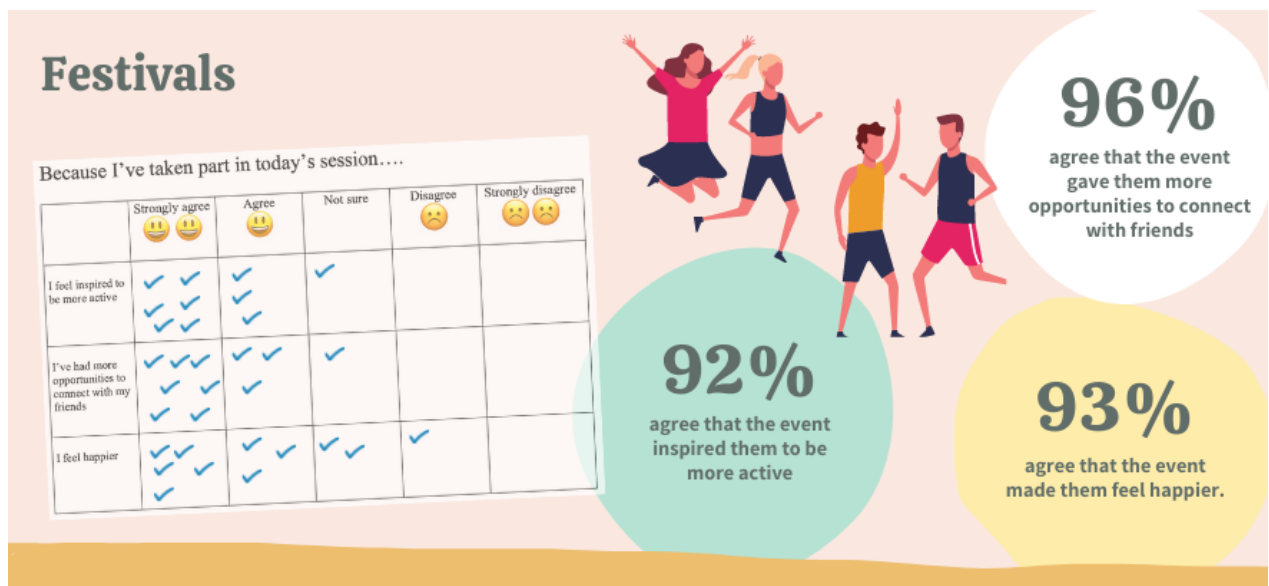
Responses were captured via a simple tally sheet that Young Coaches were able to deploy at each event so that data was gathered immediately after participation. Feedback reveals not only hugely positive impacts on participants' motivation, opportunities to connect with others and overall happiness but also imply genuine enjoyment.

- **92% strongly agree or agree** that the festival **has inspired them to be more active**
- **96% strongly agree or agree** that the festival **has given them more opportunities to connect with friends**
- **93% strongly agree or agree** that the festival **has made them feel happier**.

The summer termly data invited lead staff to comment on the impact of the LCV programme post COVID-19. This allowed reflection on the specific needs of young people following school closures and reduced physical activity, as well as on the changing requirements of schools. 100% of lead staff perceive the programme to increase opportunities for girls to engage in sport and to be supported to do so by school staff. All staff also agree that the programme helps improve the social, emotional and physical wellbeing of participants by either 'a lot' (53%) or 'a bit' (47%).

³¹ Participant feedback collected by a Young Coach / Activator and Nancy Murdoch, LCV Lead Somerset

- **47% felt that the programme improved the capability of the school workforce to support girls to be and remain physically active by ‘a lot’.** (53% by ‘a bit’)
- **53% felt that the programme increased the breadth of opportunities available for girls to engage in sport and physical activity by ‘a lot’.** (47% by ‘a bit’)
- **53% felt that the programme helps improve the social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of the festival participants by ‘a lot’.** (47% by ‘a bit’)



"I feel inspired to be more active."				
Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
60%	32%	7%	1%	0%

"I've had more opportunities to connect with my friends."				
Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
71%	25%	3%	0%	0%

"I feel happier."				
Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
67%	26%	5%	2%	0%

Part Five: Key reflections moving forwards

The role of leadership

- The perceived value to the school community of a youth leadership model endures amongst school leaders, both in terms of engaging inactive students in sport and in terms of the social and emotional benefits to the wider community of young role models. Despite timetabling and other challenges, senior leaders in existing schools welcomed the opportunity to implement the LCV programme this year whilst several schools joined the programme for the first time.
- School staff recognise that young leaders share their peers' recent experiences and are uniquely able to empathise and identify with them and in turn to connect with and energise them. In turn, young leaders demonstrate a nuanced understanding of activity and approaches that are most compelling and accessible to those with low confidence or morale.
- The value of 'Like me' leadership is augmented where bubble-based teaching has restricted students' exposure to others older or younger than themselves, impacting their maturity and social skills.
- Enthusiasm amongst newly recruited Young Coaches / Activators without opportunity to have seen other students deliver in the role during the previous year evidences the innate appeal of like me leadership and how easily it is understood by young people. Equally the high numbers of young people that chose to repeat their involvement is testament to its perceived value and appeal.
- Young leaders intrinsically understand the role of 'play' in helping to rebuild confidence, energy and engagement amongst young people or when working with mixed ability groups. They are well placed to incorporate both playful content and a playful approach within their delivery.
- This year's delivery evidenced the value of making community sport leadership and volunteering opportunities available to young leaders, whether a formal alliance with a local club or more informally. Ideally these young leaders will also still have opportunities in school to design and lead their own activities.
- There is a risk that a 'lost' year of extra-curricular activities may result in some schools opting for a narrowed offer or engaging less with other schools. A flexible training and delivery model for the LCV programme will diminish attrition where this is a risk.
- There is also a small risk that some schools will perpetuate use of the staggered timetable which impacts contact between year groups. Young leaders can be encouraged in these instances to support lesson delivery (for other groups whose lessons coincide with their break), whole school events, primary school transition events or again, community sport.

The training offer

- Face to face training supports the greatest outcomes in terms of Young Coach / Activator self-confidence, the practical application of leadership skills and their interpersonal skills. Ideally this will be at the core of any LCV programme, with online resources complementing this and used where helpful.
- An online learning offer is a valuable tool alongside face-to-face delivery to maximise engagement where geography or a young person's needs demand. Ideally young people will interact with resources as a group and be given offline opportunities to put ideas and information into practice.
- A flexible training offer including the opportunity to access virtual training materials widens participation amongst schools concerned at the travel commitment, or commitment to training dates. LCV Leads and SGOs can then build on these relationships YOY both with a view to engaging leaders in face-to-face training in subsequent years and to engaging these schools in wider events and fixtures.
- 'Train the trainer' materials to support practitioners and to support quality control of cascaded training should be brief, video-based and emphasise the unique impacts of like me delivery. They should reinforce to PE staff the need to identify and create leadership opportunities for young leaders.
- Time permitting, young people that take up the online training offer should also benefit by some face to face 'live' interaction (as a group) with the LCV Lead. This will help build pride in young people at having been selected for participation and help convey that they are part of a wider leadership and volunteering workforce.
- *Selection* as a Young Coach / Activator plays a strong role in young people's developing self-esteem and interest in leadership. If an online Coaching Academy is offered as a self-serve model for all students within a year group or offered within class, there is merit in still identifying young people that will go on to deliver events for their peers.

Delivery

- There is scope for a cascaded training model / the offer of online training materials to support an earlier start to the LCV programme each academic year and for young people to have more time subsequently to deliver. This could still be part of a hybrid offer, where some (ideally face to face) training elements are delivered following early delivery.



- YST took a pragmatic decision this year to reduce their engagement and delivery expectations of Young Coaches / Activators. However many LCV leads exceeded these expectations and enabled their young leaders to initiate and support larger events with a much greater reach. Assuming that restrictions on schools are lessened this year it should be possible to return to previously targeted reach figures.

Girls Active Virtual Event

- This year's virtual event was impactful and received positively by participants. It enabled some Young Coaches / Activators to attend that might not otherwise due to geography or disability. However, a physical event provides extensive opportunities for young people to be challenged (socially and from a leadership perspective), to develop their self-confidence and leadership skills and to be exposed to inspirational leaders.
- Year 11 students were able to attend this year's event due to changes to the examination process for most. Streaming elements of any future event so that they are available to those students otherwise unable to participate would extend its reach.
- Students unable to attend Camp but able to access live streamed content might be encouraged to do so together e.g., at school or other premises, so that they can benefit to an extent by this shared experience.

Further opportunities

- During the two periods of school closure many young people discovered activities that appealed and that they continue outside school. There may be merit in making the discovery of these activity part of a school community 'activity' audit and exploring how they can be included within young leaders' considerations.
- Young leaders can widen the extra-curricular offer and help to engage hard to reach students. However, there is currently no mechanic within the programme to support their further engagement with school sport or community sport. They may be merit next year in exploring the potential for year-on-year engagement of young (previously inactive) people whether as mentors, in further clubs and events or as Young Coaches / Activators.