

Summer holiday sport projects to help tackle serious violence and knife crime

More than 3,000 young people will be given places at sport and activity programmes this summer to help keep them away from possible violence and crime, Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright announced today.

Sport England will provide £400,000 of National Lottery funding to 49 projects in London, the North West, West Midlands and Yorkshire.

These include programmes that will offer coaching and mentoring training for young people who are at risk.

This summer's scheme follows the Prime Minister's knife crime summit held at the start of April at which government and sporting bodies agreed to work together on the issue.

Jeremy Wright, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said:

Sport is a powerful tool that can play an important role in turning young people away from crime and violence.

This scheme will reach thousands of young people in the most at risk areas and give them coaching, skills, and opportunities to thrive. I am confident that this programme will deliver real change and have a lasting impact on the participants and their communities.

Chief Executive at Sport England, Tim Hollingsworth, said:

We've only started to uncover sport's potential as a tool to engage young people at risk of being involved in knife crime. Our insight shows that regularly active children and young people are not only happier and healthier, they are more resilient and feel a closer connection to their peers and communities.

That's why we are pleased to be engaged to support community organisations with National Lottery funding to connect with young people in knife crime hotspots where interventions are needed most. The projects will offer a range of sport and activities involving mentoring and coaching sessions to reduce the risk of being involved in serious violence and boost the number of young people experiencing the massive benefits of getting active.

Successful projects include Haringey Sports Development Trust, in London, which will increase its midnight basketball sessions from two nights to five nights a week for three months. These sessions aim to give young people a positive activity at times when they could be drawn into violence.

All the successful projects will receive a copy of the Home Office's #knifefree campaign Partner Pack which includes information on the campaign, along with links to where they can download the campaign resources. The campaign aims to reduce knife crime by changing the attitudes and behaviours of young people aged between 10 and 21-year olds. It aims to increase awareness about positive alternatives to knife crime and work towards changing the false perceptions that knife carrying is widespread and makes you safer.

As part of the ongoing commitment from sports bodies to support young people in serious violence hotspots, The Premier League has also confirmed they will be expanding their flagship community programme Premier League Kicks. This uses the power of football and the value of sports participation to help youngsters in some of the most high-need areas.

Bill Bush, Premier League Executive Director, said:

The Premier League and our clubs are committed to complementing the work of Government, the Police and Sport England in supporting young people and being a positive influence in their lives. Work is underway to enhance our already successful Premier League Kicks programme, with over 90 Premier League and English Football League clubs able to apply to deliver projects in hundreds of high need areas across the country. Using their ability to regularly engage and build trusted relationships, the programme aims to inspire children and young people to achieve their potential and improve their wellbeing; working together to build stronger, safer and more inclusive communities.

ENDS

Notes to editors

- 3,242 young people will be able to benefit from the sporting programme through the summer investments. Sport England is funding 49 projects across England: 18 in London, 12 in the North West, 6 in the West Midlands and 13 in Yorkshire.
- More information on Premier League Kicks can be found [here](#)
- The Government will evaluate the summer programme to develop a longer-term strategy to improve the offer across several different stages; early intervention, custodial support and probation. This strategy will be informed by data collated over the summer about the effectiveness of the projects.