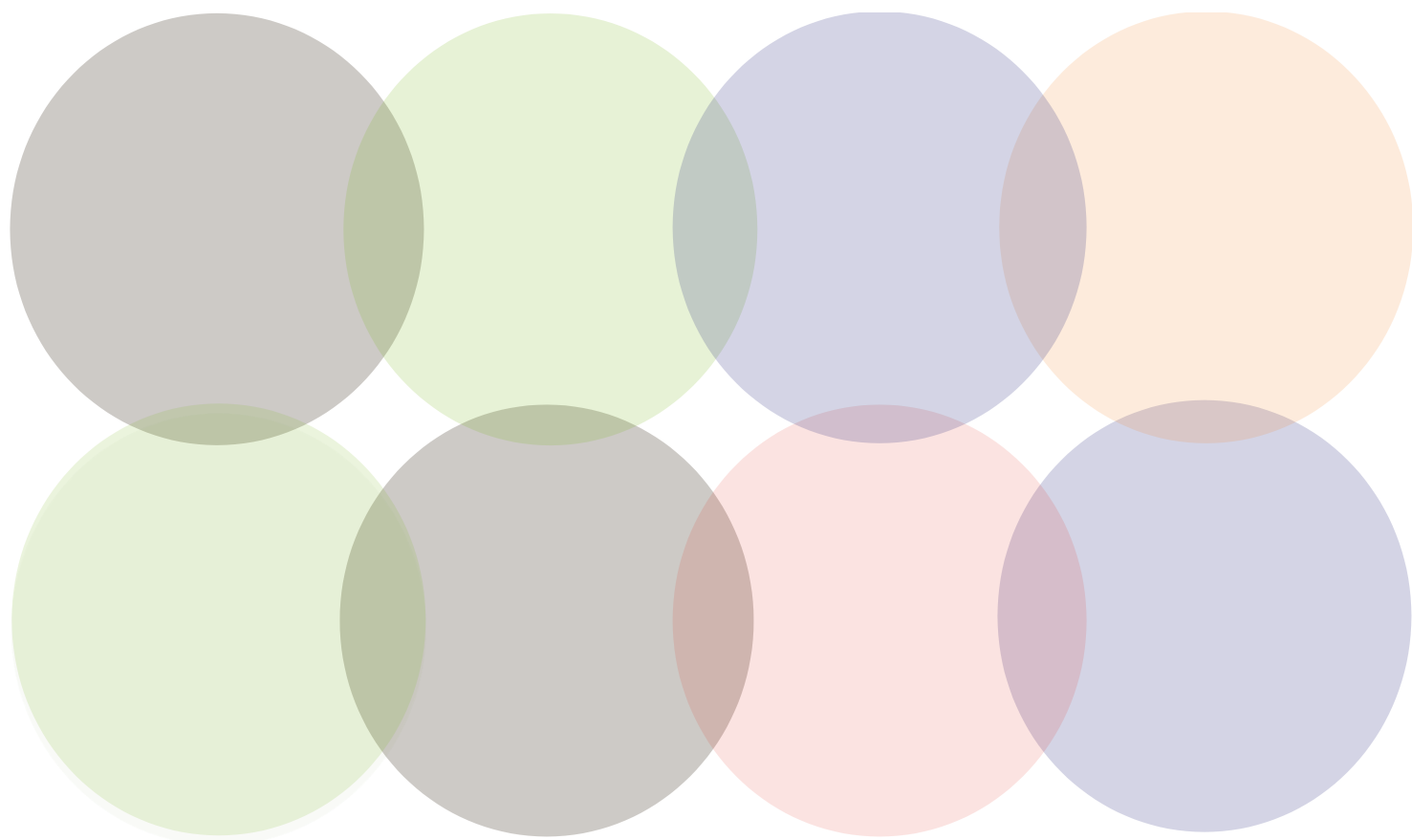


spear

centre for sport, physical education
& activity research

Change4Life Sports Clubs Research 2016: Part One Executive Summary



April 2016

About *spear*

The Centre for Sport, Physical Education & Activity Research (*spear*) is located within the School of Human & Life Sciences at Canterbury Christ Church University. *spear* undertakes a range of theoretically-informed analyses, from critical commentaries and reflections on current policy and practice, to commissioned research, evaluation and consultancy.

The Centre's research is funded by a range of national and international funders such as the International Olympic Committee, World Health Organisation, Terres des Hommes, Department of Health, Department for Education, English Federation for Disability Sport, Mencap, Access Sport, Youth Sport Trust, UK Sport, Sports Coach UK, Sport England and Sport Wales. Recent work has focused on sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing in schools and communities.

Research conducted by *spear* has helped guide and inform public policy by contributing to the wider evidence base used by policy makers, providing a rationale for government and commercial investment, and steering programme improvements that enhance the experience of practitioners and participants.

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Change4Life Sports Clubs Research 2016 undertaken by *spear* and commissioned by Youth Sport Trust. Report produced by *spear*.

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Executive Summary

About the programme

Change4Life Sports Clubs are funded by the Department of Health and managed by the Youth Sport Trust. The clubs were introduced into primary schools in 2011/12 and aim to increase the physical activity, health and wellbeing of less active 7-9 year olds through the provision of fun multi-sport themes and healthy lifestyle activities. The success of the clubs has resulted in additional funding to expand the programme as a central part of a broader healthy lifestyle offer in schools. This is supported by the development of a hub of expertise focused in the areas of greatest health inequalities (priority areas) to support and share effective practice among schools and local authority Health and Wellbeing boards.

About the evaluation

In 2015, *spear* produced a Lifetime Impact Evaluation of the Change4Life Sports Clubs (2011-2015). The evaluation incorporated a controlled experimental evaluation NESTA rated 4-5. The Change4Life Sports Clubs Research 2016 builds upon the Lifetime Evaluation with new data from children, schools and public health directorates to address three key objectives:

1. Demonstrate the wider impact of the Change4Life Sports Clubs
2. Assess the value for money and return on investment of the Change4Life Sports Clubs
3. Capture good practice for embedding and sustaining the programme (locally and nationally)

Part 1 examines the evidence of the wider impact of Change4Life Sports Clubs to address objective 1. The research evaluates programme impact on healthy lifestyles, behaviour and engagement, and explores how the programme supports whole school agenda and public health priorities. Six area profiles provide a geographical context to the wider impact of the programme. Data informing the Change4Life Sports Clubs 2016 Part 1 Report are drawn from the survey returns of over 9,000 children participating in over 550 Change4Life Sports Clubs and from just under 500 children in 15 control schools. Survey completions from over 1,000 club deliverers and SGOs, telephone interviews with 12 stakeholders and data from 8 site visits complements and triangulates the experimental data allowing the experiences and perspectives of a broad range of stakeholders to be presented.

Change4life Sports Clubs delivery outcomes across 2011-2016¹

Number of...	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 (interim)	Change 2011/12 - 2014/15
Clubs established	4,074	4,012	5,910	7,015	7,481	+72%
Children participating	62,598	70,207	102,324	119,376	74,901	+91%
Young Leaders developed	4,136	6,025	10,715	17,737	14,198	+329%
Coaches trained	2,058	3,812	6,293	8,038	4,987	+291%

¹ Figures for all years are drawn from full year monitoring data, except 2015/16 – figures for 2015/16 are drawn from interim monitoring data (Autumn 2015) as full year data not available at time of writing. Therefore percentage change shows 2011/12-2014/15.

Impact on healthy lifestyles

- Change4Life Sports Clubs have a significant, positive impact on participants' activity levels, with a 67% increase in children achieving 60 active minutes every day and over 41,000 additional children meeting CMO recommended levels of physical activity.
- Inactivity among participants has decreased significantly, with almost 7,500 previously inactive children lifted out of inactivity over 12 weeks of participation in Change4Life Sports Clubs.
- Wellbeing and individual development has increased significantly, with participants reporting enhanced social and emotional skills and attributes after 12 weeks of the programme.

Impact on behaviour & engagement

- Change4Life Sports Clubs are seen to support behaviour and engagement in school, with SGOs and deliverers reporting positive impacts on children's confidence (99%), aspirations (92%), behaviour (67%), attendance (52%) and cross-curricular learning (70%).
- Improvements in behaviour, communication, confidence and aspirations are reported by club leads at site visit schools, all of which impact on learning across the curriculum by enhancing children's 'availability to learn'.
- Participants' confidence and ability to positively engage in school life is seen by club leads at site visit schools to be enhanced through participation in the Change4Life Sports Clubs.

Embedding & sustaining

- Training and supporting young leaders aids the delivery of Change4Life Sports Clubs by increasing capacity, nurturing respect and enhancing sustainability.
- Involving non-PE and non-teaching staff in the Change4Life Sports Clubs increases capacity, maximises participation and helps embed healthy lifestyle teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- Working collaboratively with partners and parents can help sustain programme impacts by encouraging healthy lifestyle behaviours beyond the clubs.

Supporting whole school agenda

- Change4Life Sports Clubs support whole school agenda by improving pupils' health and wellbeing.
- All schools interviewed reported a positive impact on children's physical activity, confidence, self-esteem, social and emotional skills and engagement in school.
- Schools report that they are building sustainability into delivery of their Change4Life Sports Clubs by training and supporting school staff and young leaders.

Supporting public health priorities

- Change4Life Sports Clubs are used by public health teams to support the priorities of reducing childhood obesity and improving healthy lifestyle behaviours by increasing knowledge and understanding.
- The Change4Life brand is regarded as a recognisable 'quality mark' that encourages engagement with healthy lifestyle initiatives.
- The ability of public health teams to work collaboratively with local organisations to deliver a cohesive message and programme is sometimes hindered by the structural separation of local services and data-sharing protocols.

Recommendations

1. *Encourage schools to think big and start small; align Change4Life Sports Clubs to pupil health and wellbeing outcomes and provide ongoing support to maximise impact and embed the programme in schools.*
2. *Consider support for schools in developing partnerships with families and other organisations to maximise and sustain the impact of Change4Life Sports Clubs.*
3. *Promote the Change4Life Sports Clubs among Public Health Directorates to raise awareness, provide the impact data they require and increase programme sustainability.*