

# More than 630,000 children supported to have better wellbeing through sport & play

Thursday 16 January, 2020

Young people developed important life skills, did better in school and felt a greater sense of wellbeing through sport and play, new research shows.

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) has today revealed through its annual Impact report that it helped 630,000 young people benefit from training and opportunities to participate in high, quality inclusive sport and play last year.

Evaluation of the children's charity's work across its programmes in 2018/19 shows sport and play has helped young people to become more confident, empathetic and resilient.

The charity is on a mission to pioneer new ways of using sport to improve children's wellbeing and give them a brighter future. This year marks 25 years since the charity was founded in 1995.

**The YST 2019 Impact report published today includes evidence that through the power of sport and play, YST's projects and programmes are having a positive impact on young people's wellbeing by:**

- **Increasing young people's confidence**, 77% of young people reported their confidence had been improved
- **Supporting young people to be more resilient**, 80% of young people reported they felt more resilient
- **Improving attainment, attendance and behaviour in school**, 77% of teachers said they had seen a positive benefit in attainment, attendance or the behaviour of pupils because of the support of YST

The charity passionately believes that turning the tide on inactivity can help tackle some of the big challenges facing young people today. This comes at a time when national research shows that young people are chronically inactive and facing significant challenges, from struggles with obesity and mental health to lack of confidence and feelings of isolation.

**Ali Oliver, Youth Sport Trust Chief Executive, said:**

"The Youth Sport Trust is built on a passionate belief in the power of sport to impact positively on young lives and empower young people to tackle life's big challenges.

"The world young people are growing up in has changed considerably since we were founded in 1995. As our charity enters its 25<sup>th</sup> year, I firmly believe play, sport and Physical Education are more important today than at any time in our history: increasingly sedentary lifestyles, the digital age and an increasingly turbulent world are contributing to a wellbeing crisis for this generation.

"The impact we have been able to achieve on young people's lives in 2018/19, working in partnership with a range of complementary organisations and funders reaffirms our long held belief that when delivered in the right way, sport can equip young people with the skills to succeed, contribute to their overall health and happiness and empower them to become leaders of tomorrow."

YST works in partnership with other charities, schools, community organisations, government, and business. It develops innovative content, builds confidence and expertise through training and mentoring and galvanises partnerships and networks into action, all building a brighter future for young people through play and sport.

**Rhys Jones, from the Rhondda, is a young person who has been supported by the YST's Young Ambassador programme in partnership with Sport Wales.**

He said: "The Young Ambassador programme has been absolutely phenomenal, it has not just changed

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my life, it has given me a life. I started out a shy, young kid who was scared of his own shadow, and the sport brought out the confidence in me.”

**Ben Smith, Ambassador for the Youth Sport Trust, said:**

“I am proud to be an Ambassador of the Youth Sport Trust. The charity's values and aims align very closely to my own and it is amazing to think that 630,000 children across the last year are now accessing the life changing benefits that come from sport and play as a result of the YST's work.

“It is an exciting year ahead not only for the charity and my role as an ambassador, but also for my charity the 401 Foundation as we prepare to undertake the USA 2020 Challenge and raise £1million to help them continue their work and legacy.”

To read the full 2019 YST Impact Report, go to: [www.youthsporttrust.org/our-impact](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/our-impact)

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