



training academy



***Empowering***<sup>TM</sup>  
COACHING

**FOR DOORSTEP SPORT**



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



## INTRODUCTION

“Empowering Coaching™ for Doorstep Sport” was a collaborative project between StreetGames and the University of Birmingham, funded by the Coca-Cola Foundation in 2014-16.

The purpose was to train Doorstep Sport coaches to become more empowering, and assess how effective the training was for both the coaches and the young people.

## WHAT IS EMPOWERING COACHING™?

Empowering Coaching™ is a theory and evidence-based approach to coaching which maximises the development of every young person.

Empowering Coaching is creating a supportive, intrinsically motivating, and enjoyable environment or climate in sport sessions. When coaches create an empowering climate, they:

- Acknowledge each young person's thoughts, ideas, feelings and perspectives
- Encourage every young person to try their best, develop at their own pace, put in maximum effort, and work together to achieve goals
- Offer choices for every young person (e.g. via different activities, opportunities to learn new skills and ways of working with other)
- Are socially supportive by caring for and valuing each young person and getting to know about them and their lives outside of the session

Research shows that when coaches are empowering:

- Young people say that their participation in sport is more fun and engaging
- Young people are optimally motivated to keep coming back to sessions
- Young people's health, psychosocial development and life skills are promoted

## HOW WERE THE COACHES TRAINED TO BE MORE EMPOWERING?

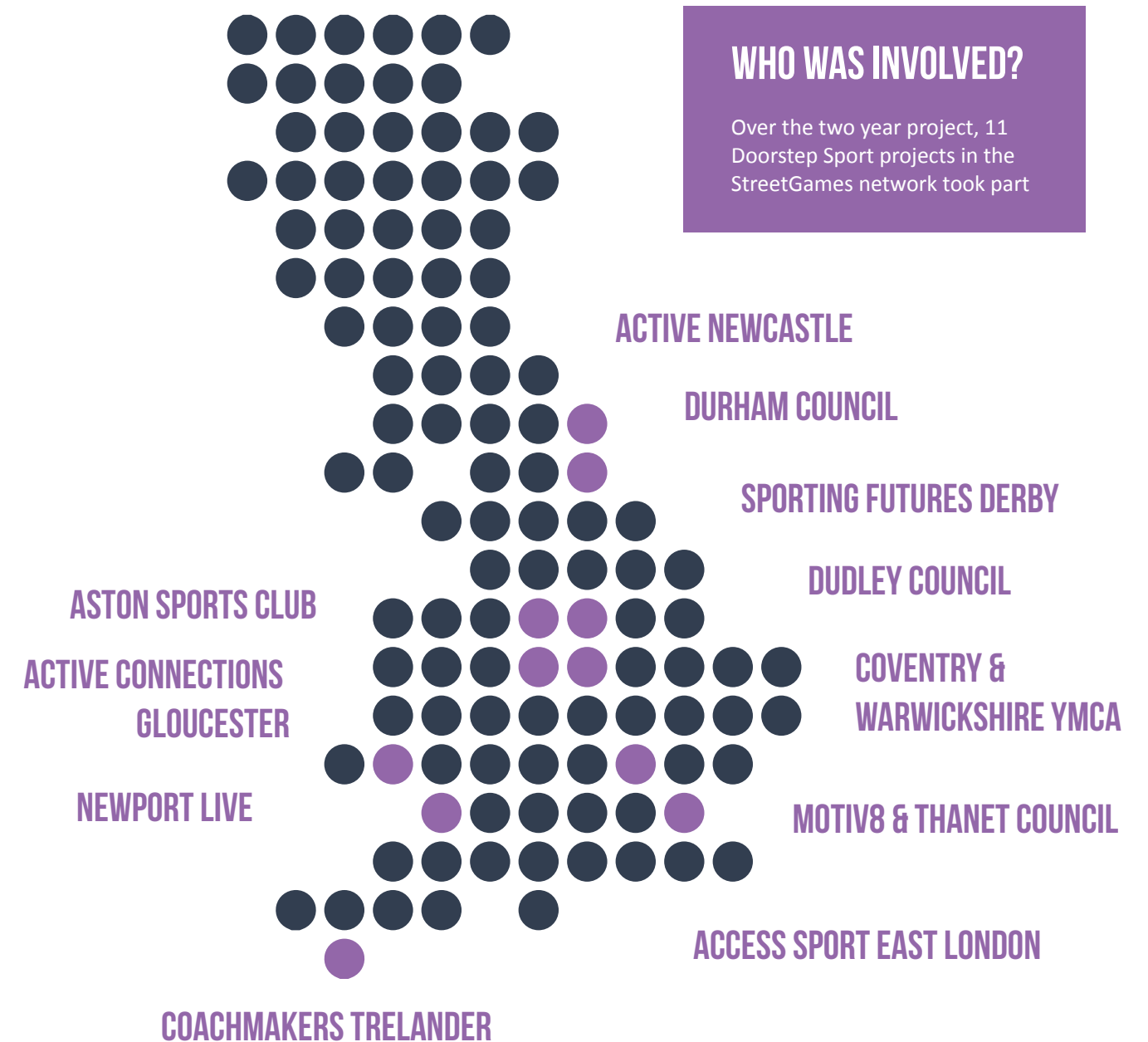
The project involved developing a bespoke workshop called ‘Empowering Coaching™ for Doorstep Sport’.

The training programme is a one-day interactive workshop delivered by experienced coach educators from the University of Birmingham, who are experts in sport motivation and youth development.



## WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Over the two year project, 11 Doorstep Sport projects in the StreetGames network took part





9

WORKSHOPS  
DELIVERED

72

DOORSTEP SPORT  
COACHES, LEADERS  
AND VOLUNTEERS  
ACROSS ENGLAND AND  
WALES ATTENDED

&gt;2,500

YOUNG PEOPLE PER WEEK ARE  
NOW ATTENDING DOORSTEP SPORT  
SESSIONS WITH MORE EMPOWERING COACHES

## HOW DID WE ASSESS WHETHER THE TRAINING WORKED?

To assess whether the training was effective, we undertook research with coaches and young people based at the projects. The data collected included:

- Workshop feedback forms from 56 trained coaches
- Interviews with 26 trained coaches
- Questionnaires from 903 young people
- Questionnaires from 127 coaches, leaders and volunteers



The coaches provided feedback on the **value of the workshop**:

I enjoyed the workshop

100%  
AGREEDThe workshop  
challenged my ideas  
about coaching/  
leading/volunteering92%  
AGREEDAs a result of  
this workshop, I  
now understand  
why adopting the  
Empowering Coaching  
approach is worthwhile99%  
AGREEDThe workshop  
effectively explained  
how coaches could  
integrate the principles  
of Empowering  
Coaching into their  
own practice98%  
AGREEDAs a result of this  
workshop I am now  
committed to becoming  
a more Empowering  
Coach99%  
AGREEDI feel confident that  
I can become an  
Empowering Coach in  
my sessions99%  
AGREED

'It made me think how important our work with young people can be, and by empowering people in sport we can make a difference'

'I've got mine [workshop booklet] in my bag, the little booklet we had you can look at it and think how you can use it in your session, being able to look at it and remember and seeing how to apply that, I'd look at it before the session. It's definitely something I can look at and plan my sessions around'

'I feel it had a good split between the theory content and the practical, it gives you a chance to get some knowledge on what Empowering Coaching is and means, and then be able to implement in practice sessions so they [coaches] can take it back into their communities or whatever they're doing in their project'

'I would say this stuff is important for all because if you get this part right, you'll get more people participating, then you can think about your technical and tactical aspects if that's what they want to do...some people will go straight in for technical and tactical aspects and kids will only do that for a certain amount of time...that's probably why there's a drop off because of the amount of pressure...if you go in this way it's around participation and developing young people, and the social element to it.'

'The practical was good, it allowed us to try and put the theory into practice'

'Very good and very relevant – applicable to all areas of our work'

'The workshop was interactive and informative'

'Other courses don't really cover this stuff, most are sport specific, like technical and physical side of games which StreetGames isn't really about...there isn't a lot of focus around the social aspect of it, motivation and self-esteem and things like that...there's definitely a market for it'



## HOW DID COACHES USE WHAT THEY HAD LEARNT IN THEIR SESSIONS?

Coaches told us they were able to implement what they learned from the workshop. They made some changes to their coaching approach, including setting individual goals, rewarding effort, offering leadership roles, encouraging cooperation, and ensuring young people actively inputted and co-created the sessions.

'If the game needs adapting for any reason, allow the children to come up with their own adaptations and test them'



'Praise effort not necessarily the highest achiever'



'Let the young people take the lead in the sessions... ideas for warm ups and cool downs. It encourages them to share ideas and show leadership'

'The big difference is from the young volunteers who came on the course, they've took a lot more of a leadership role within the session instead of stepping back and watching other people doing it. They have a lot more confidence to go out and deliver the sessions and change things up and come up with new ideas, suggest them to the group and to the kids, whereas beforehand they weren't involved as much as they should be. It comes out massively in their attitude and approach to it, they're a lot more open-minded to the kids, they ask them a lot more open-ended questions...if they do stuff wrong, they're asking them 'why?' 'what happened?' 'what can we do now?' I've seen them come on leaps and bounds in terms of their communication towards the kids'

'At the end of one session I ask the participants what they want to do next week, and I plan the session around their choices'



'I give every child a number to rotate around with so everyone gets to know and work with everyone. Each time players change position they have to discuss what they learned with the player taking their place'

'To be approachable and bond a relationship with the group so that if they need to talk about anything then I am there to help'



'Adapt the session to meet the needs of all and allow everyone to be challenged e.g. different choices of equipment, different sizes/ weights of bats and balls to make it suitable for everyone'

'Revisit last week's session to build on what each person did'



'I make sure everyone has a goal of something to work on, we want everyone to go home and feel like they got somewhere and they are better than they were last week. Even if it's something really small'

'Set certain goals and targets with them which they can work on individually, with a task focus putting effort in all of the time'

'Participants to come up with the rules giving them ownership of the session'



## COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS ALSO TOLD US THAT THE WORKSHOP HAD HELPED TO DEVELOP THEIR COACHING SKILLS

'Yeah, I've had, since the course, I've seen more opportunities to develop...I've got more confidence, I'm a lot more confident about taking a leading role, and I've started, well I've finished it now, but in that time I'm a Young Advisor now, so it's helped us feel more, not important, well, like I know I've got more of a role now. Just the ideas about developing, I don't think I would take more of a leading role if I hadn't done the *Empowering Coaching* side of it, because I think I know the tips and the different ways to do it more and how to do it'

'With a lot of coaches they just turn up to a session and coach from their manual, this sort of made me think differently about how to approach different aspects of coaching, whether that be drills, with individuals who misbehave, or how to give praise and encouragement, it makes the whole session have a more community feel to it...make it a lot more fun'



## HOW DOES EMPOWERING COACHING BENEFIT PARTICIPANTS?

The training the coaches received also had benefits for the young people and beyond, such as an **increase in participant numbers, a positive impact on the local community, and increases in participants' self-confidence, enjoyment of, and engagement in the sessions.**

'They seemed to have more fun'

'If you don't have the correct coaching manner, it affects the kids coming to sessions, and I think we've seen, since we've done the course definitely an increase in the number of kids....I think we've had a different approach to our coaching...I think it's probably definitely given them more of a choice in what they want to do rather than what we want to coach, because obviously it's their session not ours'

'...we work closely with the police as well and they say the crime rate's gone down....the crime and stuff has gone down massively when they're in our care, they're absolutely fantastic now...just shows that what we're doing is working because when they're not with us they're driving the youth workers crazy'

'Like before, the kids, if they didn't enjoy what we were doing they'd sit out, or mess around, but now the kids tend not to do that, but for half an hour they tend to play the sport....I think they know now that if it doesn't work, we can always take it back out as well, I think they're liking it, they know, it's like a democratic thing, they've voted, they voted for it, the sport they voted for might not win, but as a group they've decided on that sport, so it's not so much about us anymore, it's about them'

'Overall response was positive, I was able to get previously sedentary participants to get involved'

'They were really positive about having the 'power' to come up with their own rules instead of being told what to do'

'I've seen some of the kids who will hide away in their shell sometimes have come out and they seem to have grown a lot in their confidence since now we give everyone a chance to speak up, and not only the loud boisterous ones'



Data from the questionnaires undertaken with 840 young people showed that:

Having an empowering coach is associated with numerous positive outcomes for the young people whilst in the sessions. As the empowering climate increases, the young people experience greater:

Need satisfaction (feelings of competence, autonomy and belongingness)

Intrinsic motivation (engaging in the activities because they choose to and because they are fun)

Engagement (increased enjoyment and concentration, lower boredom)

Well-being (feelings of personal energy)

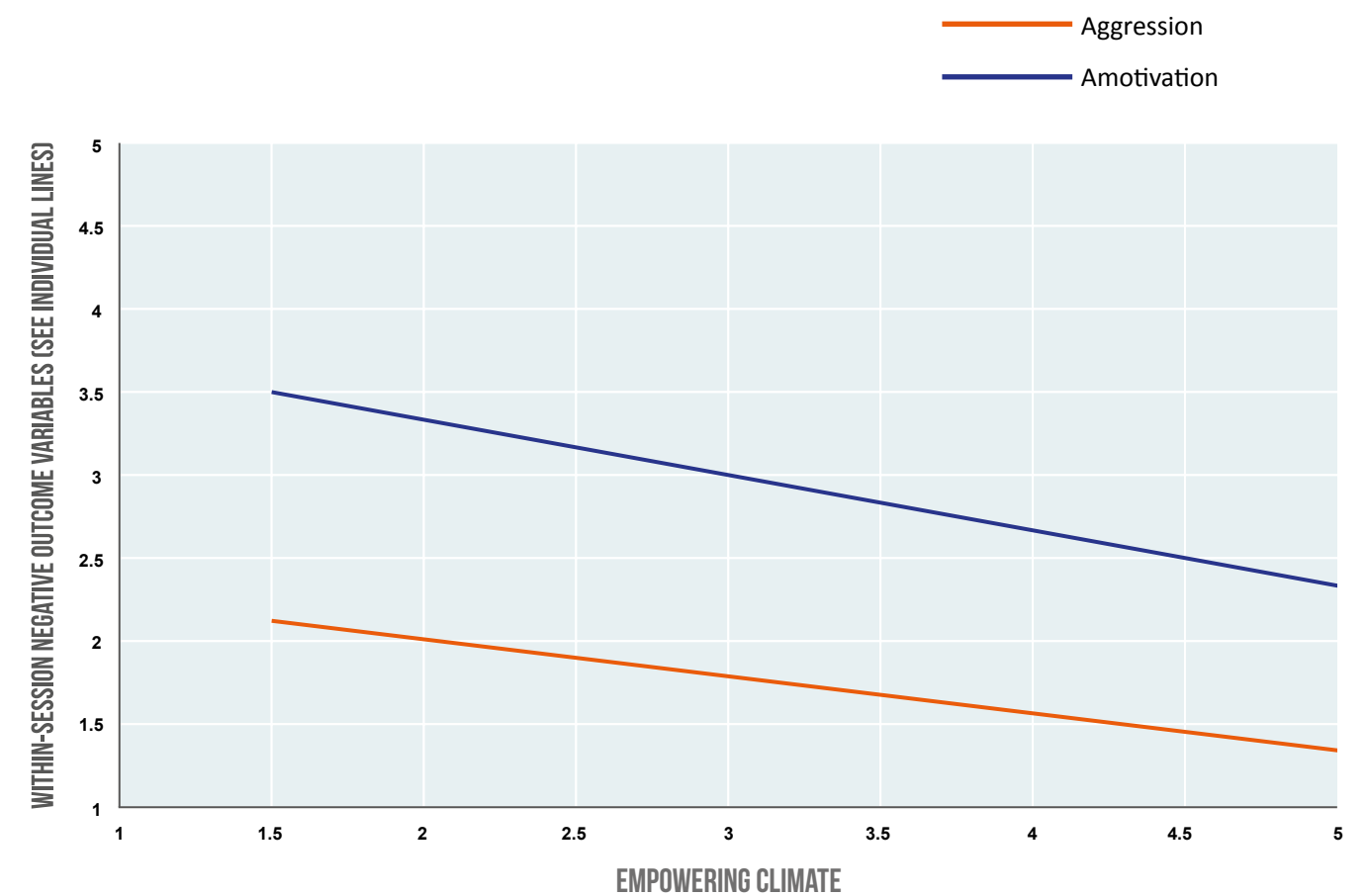
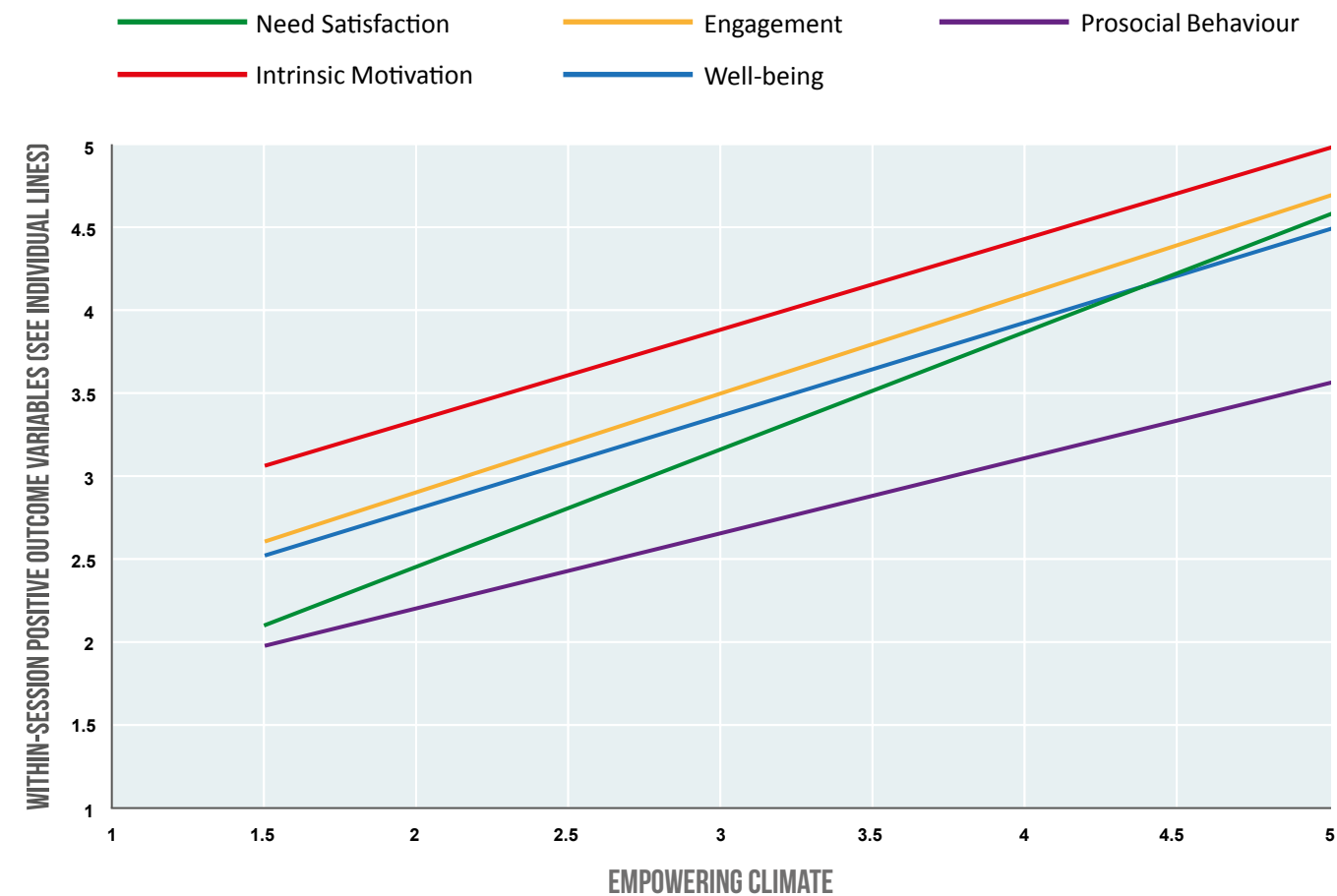
Prosocial behaviour (helping, encouraging, positive feedback towards others)



In addition, in a more empowering climate, the young people:

Demonstrate lower levels of physical and verbal aggression

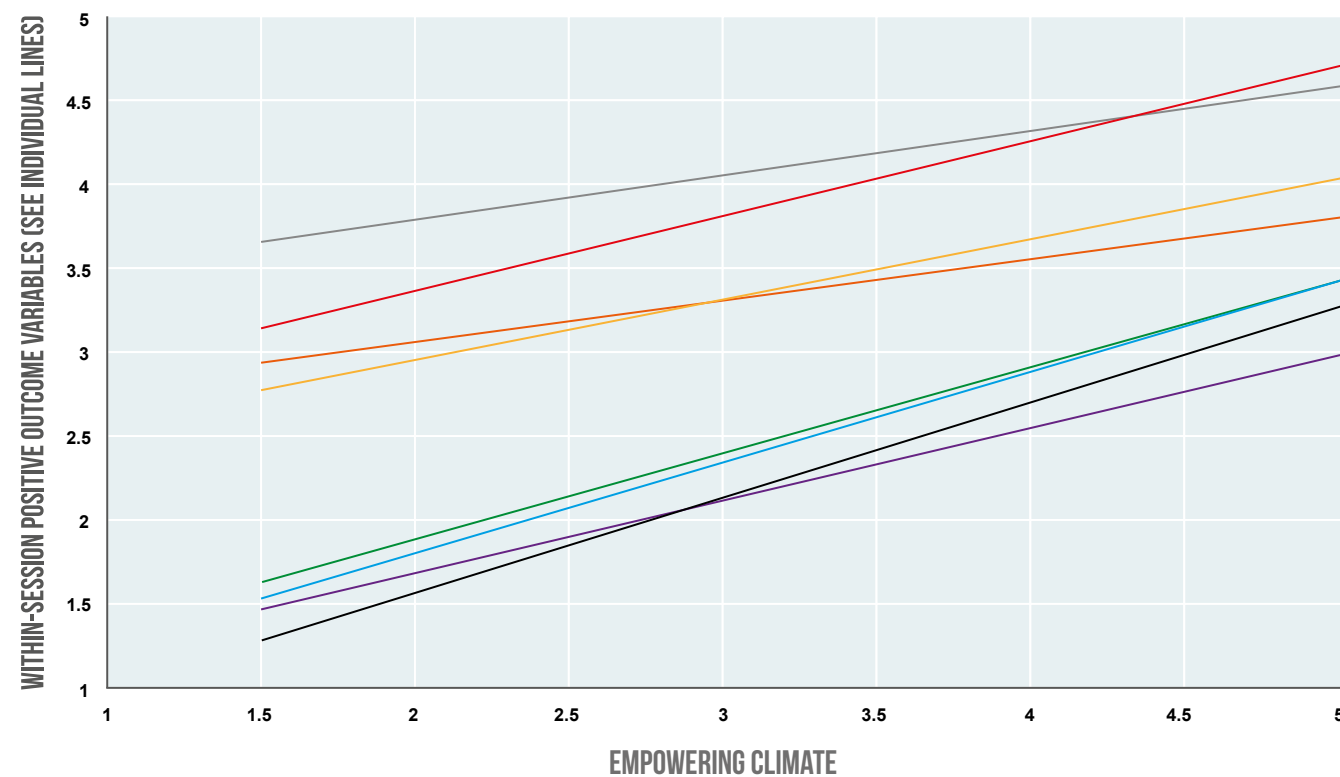
Are less likely to experience amotivation (no motivation)





Having a more empowering coach is also positively associated with young people experiencing the following attributes and skills in their lives in general (showing impact beyond the Doorstep Sport session):

Self-esteem	Leadership and responsibility skills
Sense of identity	Resilience
Links with family & local community	Emotional control
College/employment opportunities	Prosocial behaviour (helping others in a variety of life situations)



Data was also collected from over 60 young people before and after their coaches attended the workshop. This showed that compared to before the workshop, the young people:

- Perceived the climate in the sessions to be more empowering
- Reported being more engaged and intrinsically motivated in the session
- Demonstrated greater well-being
- Demonstrated lower levels of aggression



## NEXT STEPS

The “Empowering Coaching™ for Doorstep Sport” workshop will soon be available via the StreetGames Training Academy!

The workshop includes a morning interactive classroom session which covers the principles of the Empowering Coaching™ approach, followed by an afternoon practical session in which coaches are supported to put the strategies into practice in typical StreetGames session.

The workshop offers coaches the opportunity to:

- Learn about the foundations of the Empowering Coaching approach, and why being an empowering coach is important
- Understand the benefits of Empowering Coaching for themselves and the young people they coach
- See how they can become a more empowering coach i.e., how to create the most adaptive environment in every session to maximise the potential of every young person
- See how they can embed the Empowering Coaching strategies into the work they are already doing
- Reflect on their current practice, and how they can be even better at, creating an empowering climate in their own sessions

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about Empowering Coaching™ including a more detailed report about the work can be found here:

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/sport-exercise/research/showcase/street-games.aspx>

<http://www.streetgames.org/resources/research-insight-reports>



[f Empowering Coaching™](#)

[@EmpCoaching](#)

[www.empoweringcoaching.co.uk](http://www.empoweringcoaching.co.uk)





StreetGamesSportsCharity



@StreetGames



StreetGamesVideos



StreetGamesUK



[www.streetgames.org](http://www.streetgames.org)

Supported by

