



MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

GUIDE FOR ORGANISATIONS



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Why is Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) important?

MEL is an important part of any programme. Monitoring young people's attendance and progress helps you - and Active Essex Foundation - to understand what is working and what might need to be changed. It creates valuable evidence about the value of sport for youth crime prevention that convinces funders to support this sector.



What do I need to do?

You need to share data with us but how much detail you share is up to you. We have redesigned our evaluation so that it is easier for you to contribute to, freeing up your time to spend on the other important work that you do.

We have two mandatory MEL elements and the rest are optional (see pages 1-3).



If you need any help, support or guidance with MEL, please email the AEF Research Team on admin@activeessexfoundation.org to answer any questions you may have.





MEL element	Description	When to collect	Consent requirements	Support available
<p>Provider Survey</p> <p>ESSENTIAL</p>	<p>You will need to share basic data with us so that we can monitor attendance and demographics.</p> <p>This helps us to understand who our funding is reaching.</p> <p>You will need to keep a record of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many young people attended • How many of these young people were new to your organisation • Demographic information <p>Please find the Provider Survey here.</p> <p>For more information, please see page 5.</p> <p>A full list of questions can be found on our website here.</p>	<p>Once per quarter (every three months)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>At the end of your delivery if your programme is 12 weeks or shorter.</p>	<p>Consent not required</p> <p>UNLESS you are sharing photos as an optional part of your submission</p>	<p>If you need help with the survey, please email: admin@activeessexfoundation.org</p> <p>If you would like a spreadsheet template to monitor attendance and engagement that helps you to capture the data you need to enter into the provider survey, please email: admin@activeessexfoundation.org</p> <p>If you choose to use this spreadsheet, training and support will be provided.</p> <p>The benefit of using this spreadsheet is that it gives you a record of your programme and its impact that you can share with other funders and use in funding applications.</p> <p>The spreadsheet can also help you to ensure that your project is meeting the requirements for an effective sport intervention, in line with Streetgames' Theory of Change here.</p>



MEL element	Description	When to collect	Consent requirements	Support available
<p>Pen Portraits</p> <p>ESSENTIAL</p>	<p>Use this Pen Portrait template here.</p> <p>Alternatively, fill out the online version here to tell us about the difference your work has made to the lives of the young people you work with.</p> <p>Please write a few sentences in each box to bring the young person's story to life.</p> <p>For more information, please see page 6.</p>	<p>Two pen portraits per quarter (every three months)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>At the end of your delivery if your programme is 12 weeks or shorter.</p>	<p>CONSENT REQUIRED</p> <p>Please ask the young person's permission before sharing the pen portrait if they are over 16, or ask their parent/carer if they are under 16.</p> <p>All pen portraits will be anonymised before they are included in reports or shared in any way.</p> <p>The young person is welcome to choose the false name we will use if they would prefer.</p>	<p>If you need help or support with the pen portrait template, or have any questions, please email the AEF Research Team on: admin@activeessexfoundation.org</p>



MEL element	Description	When to collect	Consent requirements	Support available
<p>Start and End surveys</p> <p>OPTIONAL</p>	<p>We have created start and end surveys to capture changes in young people’s wellbeing, activity levels, and behaviour.</p> <p>These surveys generate powerful insight and can be used to calculate the social value of your work.</p> <p>Click here to see the start survey.</p> <p>Click here to see the end survey.</p> <p>For more information, please see page 7.</p>	<p>At the start and end of your programme</p> <p>OR</p> <p>At the start of your engagement with the young person and again at monthly intervals, if you are working with a young person over a longer period of time.</p>	<p>CONSENT REQUIRED</p> <p>The survey gathers consent from the young person.</p> <p>Please also gain consent from their parent/carer if they are under 16.</p> <p>The information gathered in the survey is not individually identifiable.</p>	<p>If you are interested in using these surveys, please email: admin@activeessexfoundation.org</p> <p>The AEF Evaluation Team will work with you and your young people to complete the surveys, and will provide you with a summary of the results.</p>
<p>Deep Dives</p> <p>OPTIONAL</p>	<p>The AEF Evaluation Team will select several projects each year to explore in more depth.</p> <p>For more information, please see page 8.</p>	<p>This will be determined on a case-by-case basis and handled by the Research Team</p>	<p>This will be determined on a case-by-case basis and handled by the Research Team</p>	<p>If you are interested in working with the AEF evaluation team on a Deep Dive, please email: admin@activeessexfoundation.org</p>

Getting Consent

Getting consent for data collection means giving people the power to choose how their data is used. Consent is an important part of data collection because it ensures that people are aware of what data is being collected, why, and how it will be used.



It is important that you get consent before capturing any data and sharing it with partners, including the Active Essex Foundation.

Getting consent is your responsibility.

There are a few things to consider when getting consent for data collection:

- Consent must be genuine and ongoing, and people should be able to refuse or withdraw it without any negative consequences.
- Consent should cover the types of data being collected, how it will be used, and the purpose of the processing.
- Consent requests should be clear and easy to understand, and separate from other terms and conditions.
- Consent must be given explicitly.
- Parents/carers must also give consent if the child in their care is under 16.



The easiest way to do this is by using a consent form, however you may also talk it through with recipients to ensure they understand.

If you would like support to create your own consent form, please email admin@activeessexfoundation.org

An example of a consent form can be seen below.



These activity sessions are supported by Active Essex Foundation who want to collect some information about the people that take part.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you do not have to take part if you don't want to. You can request to have your data deleted at any time by emailing aefsportsandyouthcrimeprevention@activeessex.org The information you provide is confidential and subject to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. More information on how your data will be used is available [HERE](#).

Clicking on the "I agree" button below indicates that:

- You have read the above information and you understand it
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are at least 16 years of age or are under 16 and have consent from a parent or guardian to take part

I agree (Required)



Quarterly Provider Survey

ESSENTIAL



Once per quarter (every three months), or at the end of your provision if it is shorter than twelve weeks, you need to complete the provider survey.

Before your provision starts

- Take a look at the Provider Survey questions before your funded programme starts to ensure that you are collecting the data you will need to share with us. You can find them [here](#).
- If you have any questions or need support to gather the data, or would like a spreadsheet template to help you gather the information you need to provide, please reach out to the Research Team for support on: admin@activesessexfoundation.org

During your provision

- Keep a record of all the data you need to collect for the Provider Survey
- We recommend that you do this after every session instead of leaving it to the end of your provision
- You need to collect information about your programme, any associated volunteering, how many people attended, what cohort they belong to, what changes you saw in them, their demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity, etc.), and information about referrals
- A full list of the questions is on our website [here](#).

After your provision or every 12 weeks

- Complete the Provider Survey [here](#).
- Email the Research Team if you have any issues, or if you would like a copy of your submission on: admin@activesessexfoundation.org

Why use a spreadsheet template?

AEF's spreadsheet template has been designed to help you to capture all the data you need to start monitoring and evaluating your own programme. It gives you ownership of and agency over your data.

Using this template is optional unless you are receiving referrals.

Email the AEF team for a spreadsheet tailored to your organisation.

Pen Portraits

ESSENTIAL

The Pen Portraits you share help us to tell stories like George's with those who need to hear them.



Use AEF's template to gather all the information we need



Download and use the AEF Pen Portrait template [here](#).



Make sure you have consent

Before you share the Pen Portraits, you need to make sure you have the young person's consent and their parent/carer's, if appropriate. **See page 4 for more information.**



Share 2 x Pen Portraits per quarter

- Upload your completed Pen Portrait [here](#).
- Alternatively, please complete this survey [here](#). Please note, if you choose the survey option, you will not be able to save your progress.



George's Story

BEFORE BOXSMART

"It all started because I couldn't sit still at school"

George had a loving but difficult home life and regularly came into contact with police. He carried a knife and sometimes stole from local shops. He struggled at school because his (then undiagnosed) ADHD and autism made focusing challenging. His pastoral manager told his family to look into BoxSmart as an outlet for his energy.

THE IMPACT OF BOXSMART

"BoxSmart was somewhere I got accepted"

George felt like everyone had given up on him and remembers teachers telling him that he "would end up dead or in prison". When he walked into the boxing gym for the first time, he felt at home.

When he was angry, coaches tried to talk to him and understand without judgement rather than "just shouting", like people at home and school. Coaches recognised George's talent for boxing and nurtured it during the 12 week course.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

"I want to do what people done for me."

George has become a role model himself and finds mentoring younger boys very rewarding.

In the future, he hopes to finish college and keep boxing. He wants to reach black belt, compete, and become a coach to help others benefit from programmes like BoxSmart.



It's my passion, I enjoy it. It's got a good mental side, too. I've never been fitter in my life. It's given me confidence.

My mum loves it as well - she doesn't have to worry about me anymore.



Start and End Surveys

OPTIONAL



These optional surveys help you to evidence and quantify the benefits of your work for young people's physical activity levels, wellbeing, and community connectedness indicators.



If you are interested in measuring the change your work has brought about using Start and end surveys, send our Research Team an email: admin@activeessexfoundation.org



The Research Team will provide you with survey links and Unique Reference Number codes for the children and young people to use

If required, the Research Team can visit your provision to support children and young people to complete the surveys.



Once the young people have completed the Start and End Surveys, the Research Team will provide you with summaries of the results that you can use in funding applications and reports

In 2023-24, AEF used Start and End surveys across funded provisions. The survey includes ONS4 questions (which measure wellbeing) and allow us to compare results to national Active Lives data.

We found that mean scores at the end of programmes were higher than at the start of programmes AND higher than the national mean scores across all three categories.



We are also able to use life satisfaction score change to crudely estimate the social value of the intervention at £20,800 per young person per year for those who completed both Start and End surveys.

This is powerful insight that can be really convincing to funding bodies and system partners.

Deep Dives

OPTIONAL



If you are interested in participating in a Deep Dive, email the AEF Research Team: admin@activeessexfoundation.org

The AEF Evaluation Team will select several projects each year to explore in more depth.

If your project is selected, they will work with you and the young people you work with to gather additional data. This may require some session time, but the team will work with you to ensure this is manageable.



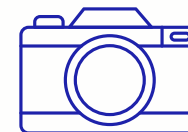
A Deep Dive may involve:



Surveys asking about criminality, such as the Self-Report Early Delinquency Instrument (SRED)



Interviews with staff and the children and young people attending your provision



Participatory methods like photovoice



Peer research that centres those with lived experience

Creative MEL

OPTIONAL



If you are interested in using creative methods alongside the required MEL elements, email AEF's Research Team to discuss your ideas on: admin@activeessexfoundation.org

You can use creative methods to capture information about your project, its impacts, and the experiences of those who take part.

You can include the outputs in funding bids - they are really engaging ways to convince funders and system partners of the value of the work that you do.

▶ You might like to try:




A graffiti wall



Spoken word poetry



Music making or songwriting



Ripple Effects mapping

