



Sport and Youth Crime Prevention Sport and Life Skills Project

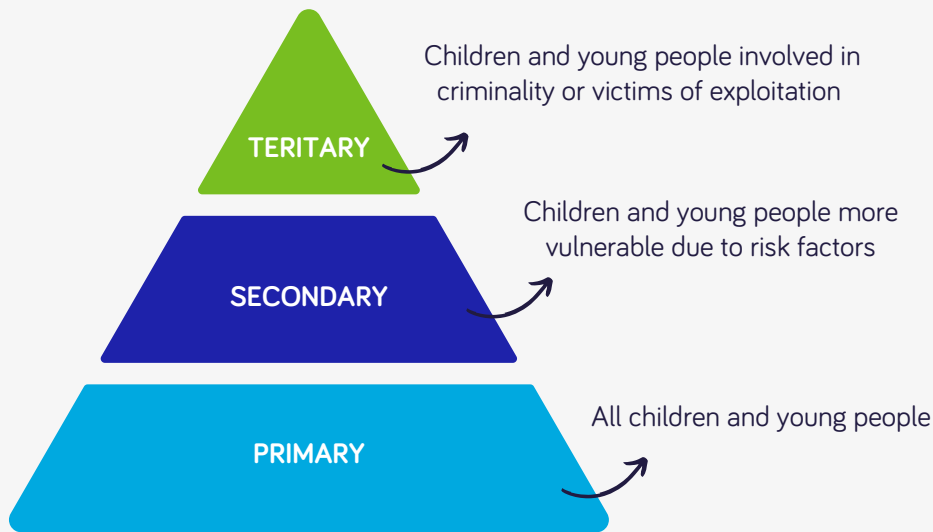
2023-2024 Impact Report



WHAT IS THE ACTIVE ESSEX FOUNDATION?

The Active Essex Foundation (AEF) supports communities across Essex, Southend and Thurrock to thrive through the power of sport. AEF uses sport and physical activity to reduce young people's vulnerability to exploitation and criminality, and to support those experiencing low levels of emotional wellbeing.

The Foundation's work primarily targets children and young people in the secondary and tertiary categories, reaching those who need support most. This pyramid diagram explains what each category means.



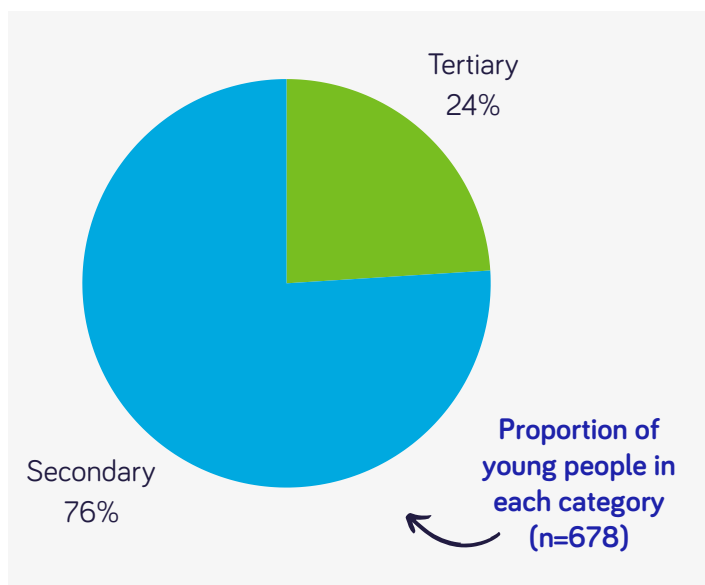
About the Sport and Life Skills project

The referral-based Sport and Life Skills project is part of AEF's Sport and Youth Crime Prevention Programme. The project is a collaboration between AEF and locally trusted organisations (LTOs) delivering 'Sport Plus' and 'Plus Sport' interventions in communities across Greater Essex. These targeted interventions combine physical activity opportunities with life skills, mentoring, and more.

What are 'Sport Plus' and 'Plus Sport' interventions?

Coalter (2007) defines 'Sport Plus' interventions as those that are best suited to children and young people in the Secondary category. These interventions focus on purposefully-designed sports activities first, plus other activities to support young people, including mentoring, advice, workshops, training and qualifications.

'Plus Sport' interventions are best-suited to children and young people in the Tertiary category. These interventions are primarily focused on providing support for the young person and use sport as a hook (a reward or engagement tool).



Why sport?

Sport Plus and Plus Sport interventions have the potential to contribute positively to the lives of young people who are vulnerable to crime and/or exploitation, or who are already known to the youth justice system.

Sport interventions are also attractive to young people. Working with the Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services (ECVYS), the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU) consulted 1,434 young people aged 10-25 from across Essex. 50.4% wanted more sport opportunities available, especially opportunities to take part in non-competitive sports (VVU Listening Project, 2023-2024, p. 6).

In addition to facilitating Sport Plus and Plus Sport interventions, the Sports and Life Skills project aims to build working partnerships between youth services, criminal justice teams, and community-based sports providers across Essex, Southend and Thurrock. The Foundation works with Essex Youth Justice Service (YJS) and its Turnaround programme, Probation, Police, and Essex County Council's Involvement Service teams, which include MACE (Missing & Child Exploitation), RIC (Risk in the Community) and CiCC (Children in Care Council). By connecting these agencies to community sports providers, known as Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs), the Active Essex Foundation has created new pathways through the system.

Through these Sports and Life Skills referral pathways, young people are offered sport or physical activity opportunities based on their location and their interests. Each delivery organisation is vetted by the Foundation and receives support and training to deliver activities that blend sport with mentoring, life skills, volunteering and training (known as 'Sports Plus').

The working partnerships between the system and LTOs fill a gap identified in The Centre for Social Justice's 2023 Game Changer report, which notes that there is a 'lack of referral pathways into diversionary sport' (p. 87).



Project Case Study

Reach Every Generation (REG) is an LTO based in Chelmsford. REG ran a tertiary intervention for young men involved with or at risk of becoming involved with gangs and knife crime.

Staff delivered physical activity including circuit training, music production workshops, and facilitated discussions about healthy living and relationships, choices and consequences, and violence against women and girls.

Schools and parents reported positive changes in the young men's behaviours and attitudes after the intervention.

Children and young people across Essex, Southend and Thurrock accessed a range of traditional sport and alternative physical activity opportunities through the project:



The data in this report is taken from the Monitoring & Evaluation submissions of 13 LTOs who were part of the Sport and Life Skills project in 2023-2024. Data from 3 LTOs was unavailable, so the true impact of the project this year is likely to be higher. Names of the children and young people whose stories feature in this report have been changed.

754

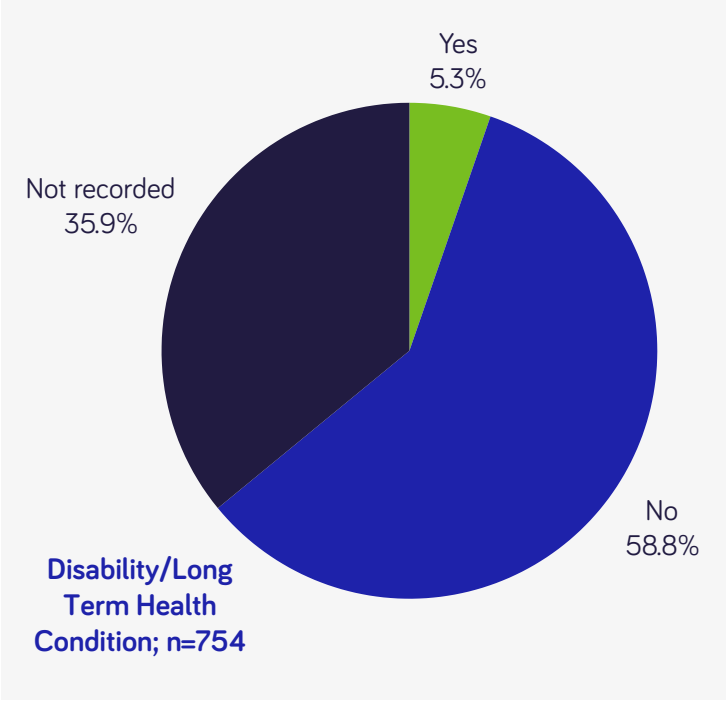
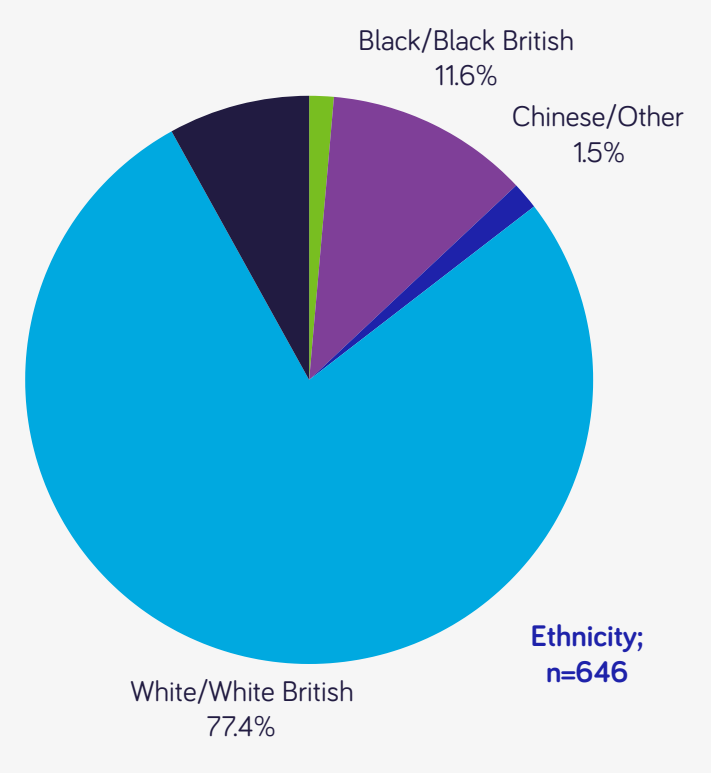
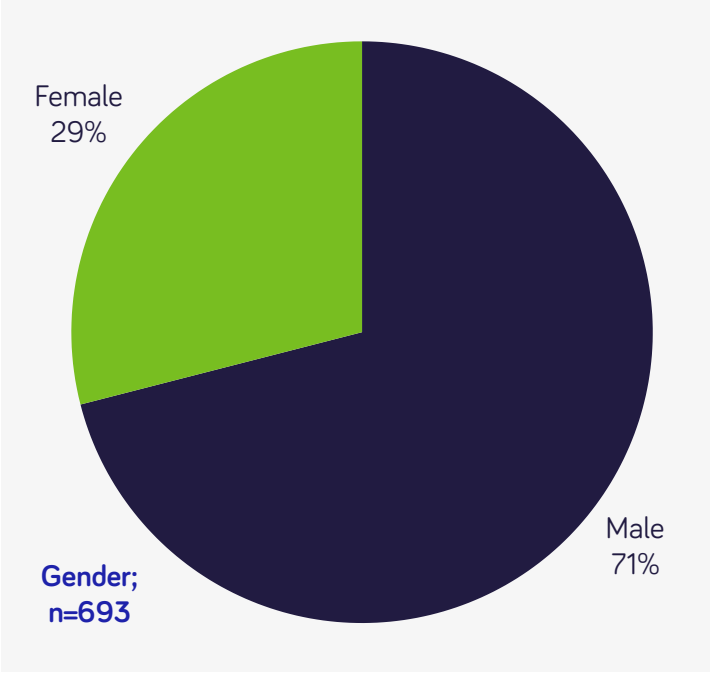
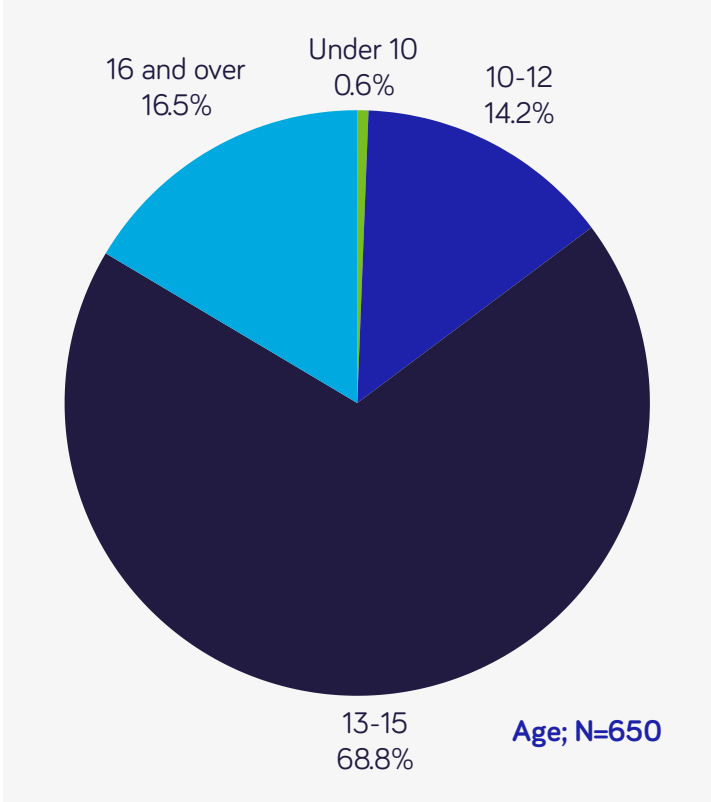


unique young people were registered for Sports and Life Skills programmes

114%



increase compared to 2022-2023



37% had emotional and behavioural issues

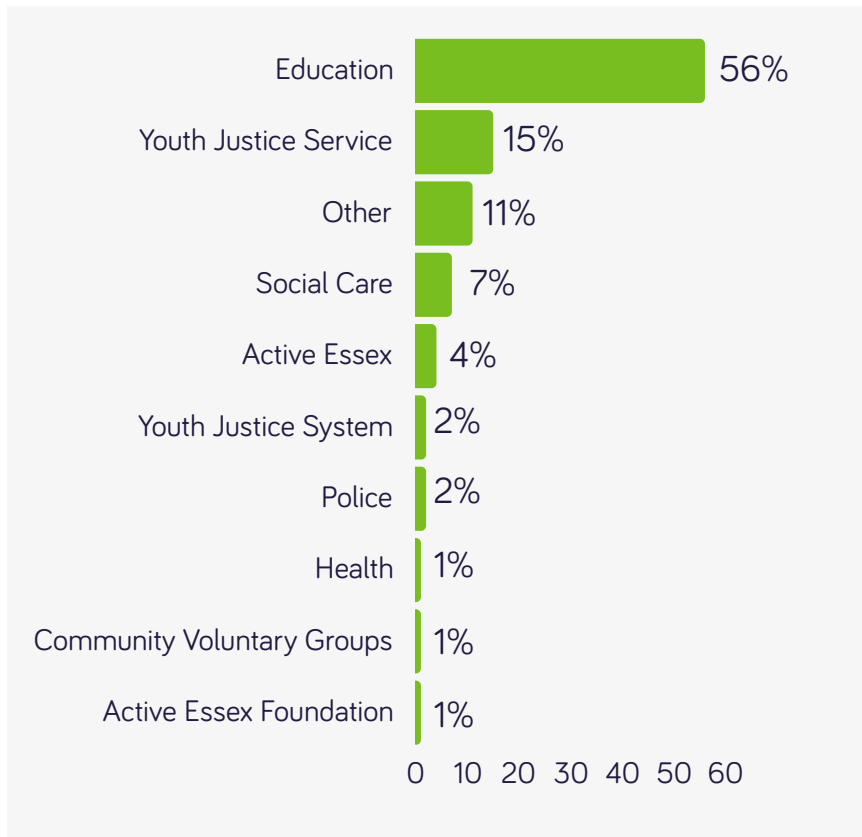
4% had learning difficulties

2% had medical or health conditions

1% had sensory or physical needs

Referrals

Referrals are an important tool for recruiting at risk or vulnerable young people to intervention programmes (Minkes et al., 2005). The LTOs that Active Essex Foundation works with use referrals to make sure that the right young people engage with secondary and tertiary interventions as part of the Sport and Life Skills project.



Agencies

LTOs received referrals from formal referral agencies (Education, Social Care, Police, Health, Youth Justice Service and Youth Justice System) and other sources (Active Essex, Active Essex Foundation, Community Voluntary Groups, Parents/Carers, and self-referrals)



Key Insight

More than half of referrals into the Sport and Life Skills programme came from Education.

Evidence from across AEF's work suggests that 72% of children and young people (n=44) report "getting on better at school or college" as a result of their engagement in Sport Plus or Plus Sport provisions.

Reasons for referral included:

- Offending or known to the Police - Actual bodily harm (ABH); Anti-social behaviour (ASB), possession of weapons, robbery/shoplifting
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - abuse, domestic violence, neglect, parental mental health issues
- At risk of exploitation, gang involvement and county lines
- Substance misuse
- Family/home environment problems - sibling conflict, homelessness, carer/in care
- Behaviour in school - disengaged, disruptive, suspended, at risk of exclusion
- Struggling with emotional regulation
- Low confidence/self-esteem
- To provide a positive role model/peer group
- To learn life skills e.g. communication, focus and discipline



Key Insight

33% of children and young people were referred for multiple reasons, indicating a wide range of vulnerabilities (up from 24% in 2022-2023). This suggests that the programme is continuing to reach the right children and young people.

Growing the Sport and Life Skills Project

2023-2024 has been a period of exceptional growth for Active Essex Foundation's Sport and Life Skills project.

We worked with more LTOs and reached more children and young people in 2023-2024 than in 2022-2023. As a result, more children and young people have accessed physical activity, mentoring, volunteering and training opportunities through the programme.

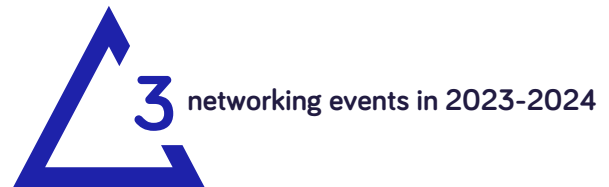
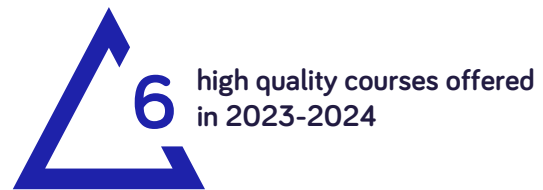


But we're staying consistent where it counts.

This year, we have continued to support new LTOs through our rigorous onboarding process. This process involves checking governance documents, insurance, safeguarding policies and DBS checks, and helps us to identify training needs. AEF staff also visit organisations to discuss the provision, observe sessions, and understand what support we are able to offer.

Carefully onboarding our LTOs means that we are confident in the quality of their work. This helps us to build trust between LTOs across Essex, Southend and Thurrock, and our system partners in local government and youth justice.

We continue to identify skills gaps across our LTO network and upskill LTO staff members with a comprehensive suite of training opportunities that is responsive to their needs.



AEF responded to LTO feedback for more local networking opportunities, holding events in Southend and Thurrock.

Most importantly, the positive impact of the programmes we fund and facilitate on the children and young people who attend them has remained consistent or increased. These impacts are outlined throughout this report.

Attendance and Engagement

717



from 102 sessions in 2022-2023 (October-April)

sessions held by LTOs in 2023-2024

Of the 754 young people registered, 73% attended at least 1 session. 54% attended between 1-8 sessions. 8% attended 20 or more sessions.



LTOs use an Engagement Ladder developed by the Active Essex Foundation in partnership with StreetGames to record children and young people's engagement in each session.

The average engagement ladder score increased by 0.72, changing from 'Curiosity' to 'Involvement'

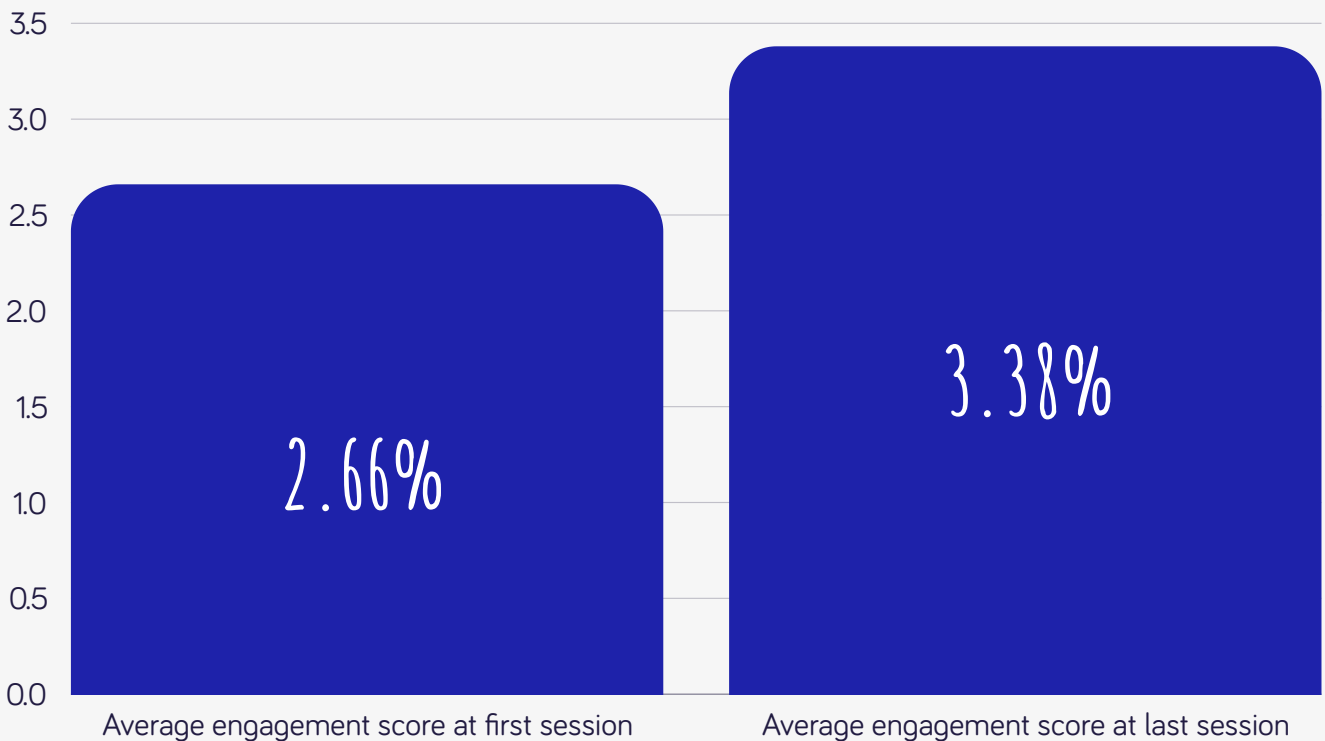


63%

of children and young people increased their engagement score by at least one level



from 42% in 2022-2023



70%

of young people achieved a score of 4 (Achievement) or 5 (Autonomy) during their involvement with an LTO



from 56% in 2022-2023

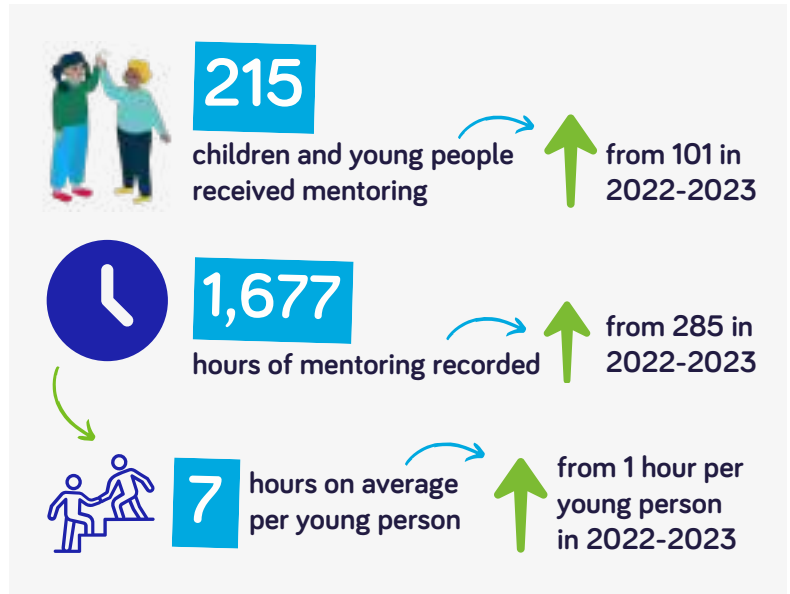
Mentoring and Volunteering

11 of the 13 core Sport and Life Skills LTOs provided mentoring to children and young people as part of their Sport and Life Skills programme - up from 4 LTOs in 2022-2023. Children and young people were offered 1:1 mentoring, group mentoring, or both.

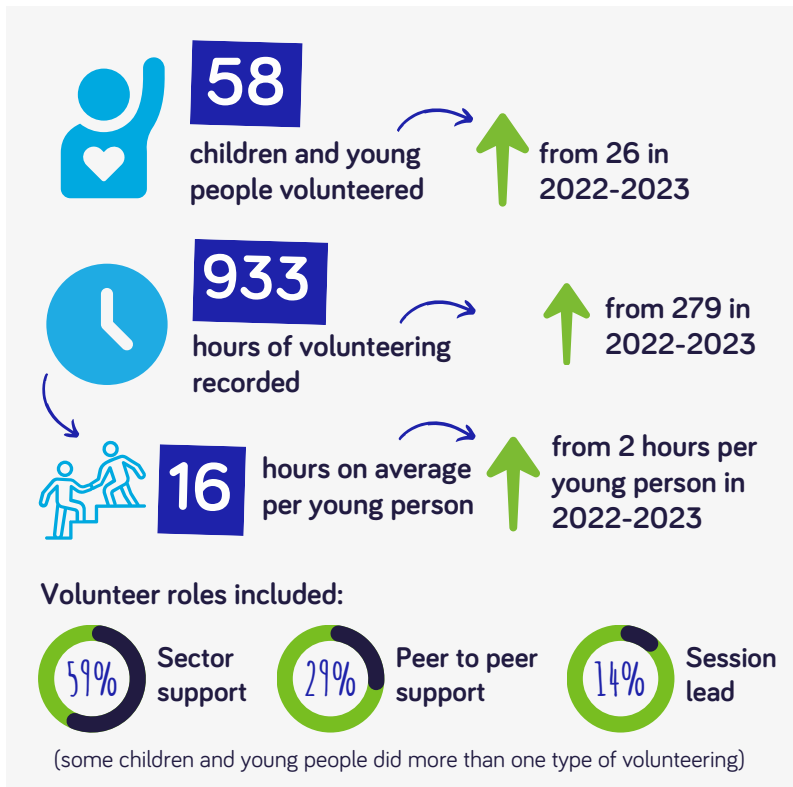
It's those one-on-one conversations that they have with young people ... they talk to them about their problems.

So it's a mentoring programme as well that's in place. It's not just about the sport.

- SYSTEM PARTNER ON THE VALUE OF MENTORING



6 of the 13 LTOs who provided data for this report offered volunteering opportunities for the children and young people they engaged with as part of their Sport and Life Skills provision.



Sam's Volunteering Story

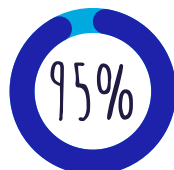
Sam was a semi-professional footballer until a failed drugs test led to him being let go by his team. He began getting into trouble with the police, was arrested, and moved to Essex to fulfil his probation.

The Youth Justice Service used one of AEF's referral pathways to connect Sam to ATF, a local community Sport Plus provider. Sam struggled with anger and low mood at first but joined in with football sessions and received mentoring.

Sam now volunteers for the organisation every week as a football coach.

Key Insight

In 2023-2024, LTOs offered young people a wider range of opportunities, including leadership roles. Through Sport and Life Skills programmes, young people have gained valuable experience that is likely to have benefitted their self-esteem, confidence and employability.



95% of volunteering was Session Support in 2022-2023

It makes me feel better, being able to teach them and help them. ATF helped me keep my head straight so I can put the kids' heads straight too, basically. I don't want the kids to end up like me or worse than me. It's as simple as that. I do the coaching just out of love, really - love for the game and love for the kids.

- SAM

Training, Qualifications and Work Experience

7 of the 13 LTOs who submitted data recorded having helped children and young people to access training opportunities, qualifications, and work experience.



210



from 31 in
2022-2023

children and young people undertook a form of training, qualification or work experience as part of their Sport and Life Skills programme.

More than



of the training, qualifications or work experience was related to sport or physical activity

The impact of work experience



1Up really supported the young person I referred. He worked well with the mentor and it was good for him to have a positive male role model.

1Up also went out of their way to support him with work experience, which he took really seriously. Completing the work experience helped him to raise his aspirations and see a better future for himself.

-REFERRER FEEDBACK (YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE)

Project Case Study



Changing Lives run a range of activities for the children and young people they work with in Colchester.

While their premises has a large gym and physical activity space, staff cater to different interests. They offer sport, mentoring and music production activities regularly and alternative activities when needed. For example, one staff member - a Level 3 Personal Trainer, sports coach and mentor - also has experience in the beauty sector and used this to offer 1:1 support to a young person who aspires to be a gel and acrylic nail technician.

In 2023-2024, Changing Lives supported two young people through a nail technician course. In future, Changing Lives plan to diversify their offer to include more options for young people who are less keen on sport and physical activity, such as art sessions and other creative activities.



This young person has visited other places and they only offered sports, which she found boring. She came away from the nail sessions wanting to learn more.

-CHANGING LIVES STAFF MEMBER



Key Insight



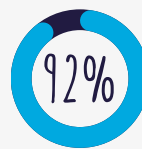
of training, qualifications or work experience was related to sport or physical activity in 2022-2023

This change suggests that LTOs are responding to young people's aspirations, which are often wider than sport and physical activity.



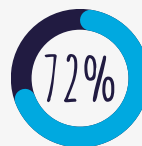
Other training on offer to young people through LTOs included self defence, music production, nail tech, and suicide awareness.

Attitude to learning



from 80% in
2022-2023

of young people were observed to be engaged or highly motivated learners at their latest session



from 26% in
2022-2023



of young people who attended more than one session improved their attitude to learning

Growing our team to support LTOs and serve our communities better

To support the Sport and Life Skills project, AEF piloted embedded roles, engaging the services of specialist youth intervention providers to work alongside LTOs and the teams of system partners in 2023-2024. The Sports Enabler, Sports Connector and Sports Navigator worked closely with referring agencies and LTOs to support some of the most vulnerable young people across Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

The Enabler, Connector and Navigator injected much-needed capacity into the system, forging new connections between system partners and LTOs and strengthening connections that already existed.

Each worked in different ways to serve different cohorts of young people:



Sports Enabler

Worked closely with Essex County Council's Involvement Service to serve children and young people across the county who were vulnerable to exploitation. The Enabler matched referred young people to an LTO provision that suited their interests.



Sports Connector

Worked closely with Youth Justice Service teams across Southend, Essex and Thurrock to support referrals to the programme. The Connector attended meetings, liaised with YJS workers, parents/carers and young people, and identified suitable LTOs for each referred young person.



Sports Navigator

Worked with the Tertiary cohort, supporting young people up to the age of 25 who had been arrested for an offence but not yet charged. The Navigator worked closely with young people, LTOs and various agencies including Essex Police.

“The AEF team identifies organisations such as ourselves in the area and they will literally send a young person to us maybe one hour a week for six weeks in order to do some activities. I've been in regular communication with the AEF team and they've been very helpful. It's been giving us new young people to work with. Some of them we were already familiar with before, but what it has allowed us to do is to work with them on a one-to-one basis and develop a relationship.

-LTO TESTIMONIAL

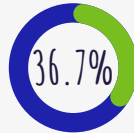
A Realist-Informed Ripple Effects Mapping (RREM) evaluation of the Foundation's work – for which a team from Hartpury University consulted partners working across the system – identified the creation of the embedded roles as one of the "most impactful" elements of the Foundation's work to date.





253

children and young people were referred to the Enabler, Connector or Navigator in the pilot period (1 April 2023-31 March 2024).



of the children and young people referred through the three AEF/System Referral Pathways were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) when they were first referred.

The children and young people reached through the three AEF/System Referral Pathways were typically more vulnerable and at higher risk of criminality and exploitation than the wider Sport and Life Skills cohort. Like the wider cohort, the AEF/System Referral Pathways cohort often had multiple reasons for referral, additional needs, and/or SEND support requirements. Young people who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) were particularly overrepresented in this cohort (at all ages, but especially in the post-secondary 16-17 age group).



[Those who are NEET are] a cohort of young people who are experiencing reduced opportunities and are at increased risk of challenges in adulthood, including lasting impacts on future employment outcomes and earnings, and on physical and mental health.

-GREATER ESSEX TRENDS REPORT, ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Being out of education or work, or regularly missing school, are risk factors related to involvement in violence and/or crime (Youth Endowment Fund, 2023; Department for Education and Ministry of Justice, 2023). Therefore, it is important to support children and young people who are NEET or only attending school intermittently back in to education, employment or training settings.

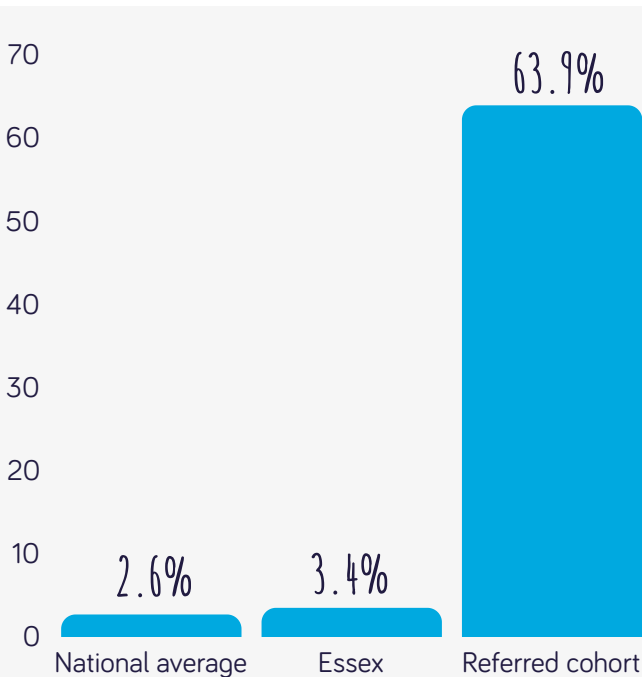
The Sport and Life Skills programme, which offers physical activity alongside training and employability opportunities, was able to reach many young people who were NEET.



Early evidence suggests that the Sport and Life Skills programme has contributed to positive changes in Education, Training and Employment (ETE) status.

8

children and young people referred to the Enabler returned to school, started training, entered employment, or began actively job-seeking in the 3 months following their referral.



16-17 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). National and Essex averages taken from Essex County Council (2024)

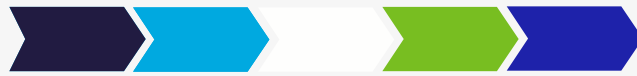
In their pilot year, the Enabler, Connector and Navigator made

184

connections between children and young people and

42

LTOs.



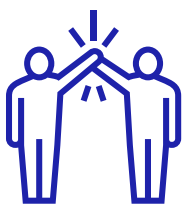
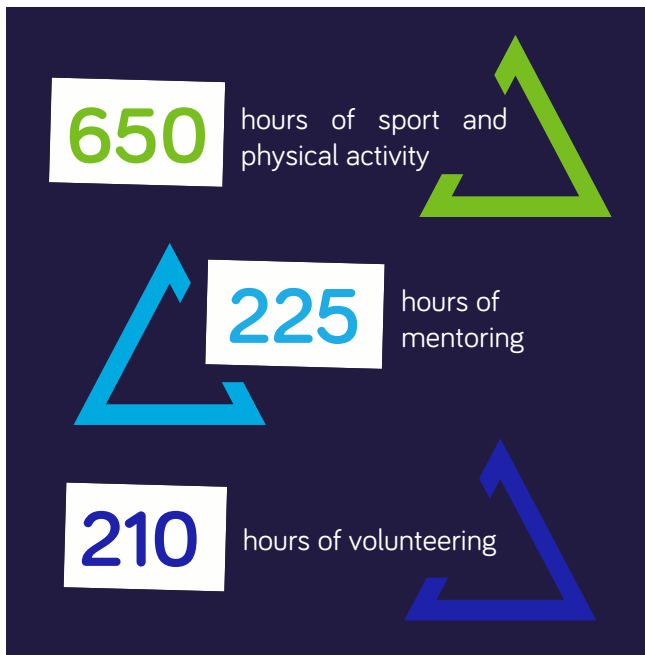
Many of these organisations were already delivering Sport and Life Skills programmes, or working with AEF on other projects. Some were discovered by the Enabler, Connector and Navigator in response to the wants and needs of the children and young people they were working with.

Gathering Monitoring and Evaluation data proved particularly challenging, and the true impact of the referral pathways is likely to be higher. However, we know that the children and young people referred through the AEF/System Referral Pathways completed at least:



We have learned a lot from piloting the three embedded roles and creating referral pathways that connect LTOs to the system:

- To meet high demand, the Enabler, Connector and Navigator signposted some children and young people to sport and physical activity opportunities, but offering tailored and more intense support maximised positive impacts.
- Referrals were most successful when children and young people had a strong interest in sport and physical activity, and when they had supportive parent(s)/carer(s). Those who were less interested in sport and those with challenging family situations required more support to engage successfully.



We are working with colleagues within the Youth Justice System to understand the contribution that the Sport and Life Skills programme has made to reducing reoffending.

There is a 6-12 month lag in reoffending data, but we hope to be able to report on this soon. Anecdotal evidence from LTOs and partners suggests that engaging with a Sport Plus or Plus Sport has positively benefited the children and young people referred in many ways - some of these stories are included in this report as Case Studies and Partner Testimonials.

Case Studies

The power of mentors

Tyler's Story

Mentoring is an important part of many Sport Plus or Plus Sport interventions. Typically, this is formal mentoring which happens as part of a session. The Enabler, Connector and Navigator often had the opportunity to informally mentor the young people they worked with while driving them to or from a session. Building this relationship was frequently key to successfully supporting the young person and getting them to engage in physical activity.

The Enabler has made a great connection with Tyler. I really don't think he would be in this positive position had it not been for the Enabler. He now has such a positive mindset and feels he has opportunities available to him that he never thought possible before.

- INVOLVEMENT SERVICE STAFF MEMBER

The Enabler looked at several potential options for Tyler, investigating 1:1 support and a free trial at a martial arts gym. Tyler, who was at high risk of exploitation, did not initially engage with the support he was offered. Many statutory agencies had also previously failed to engage Tyler.

A few months after his first referral was closed unsuccessfully, Tyler was re-referred. The Enabler reached out to Tyler again and this time he was ready for support.

Together, the Enabler and Tyler decided that direct work was best-suited to Tyler's needs. They began going to the gym together and building a strong relationship through their shared passion for being active - and video games.

Tyler has sustained his engagement in the programme and the Enabler mentors Tyler during their gym sessions. Adults around Tyler have reported positive changes in his behaviours and his aspirations.

A route to employment

He feels part of something, which is great - Michael is more involved in the community

-CHANGING LIVES STAFF MEMBER



Michael's Story

Michael was referred through ReRoute, an Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU) project that works with young people who have been arrested for carrying a knife and who are awaiting their court date. Michael's case worker referred him to the Navigator because, while Michael had engaged well with ReRoute, he needed additional support.

The Navigator worked with Michael over a long period of time, supporting him to engage with a martial arts provision at BKK Fighters before connecting him to Changing Lives to help him to pursue his new dream: a career in the fitness industry.

Michael completed over 100 hours of voluntary work with Changing Lives and undertook a range of training courses. After his paid Coach Core apprenticeship at Changing Lives, Michael was taken on as an employee.

Michael reported feeling healthier, more motivated to take part in activities, able to communicate better with other young people and adults, and more reliable compared to before his referral.



Case Studies

A whole family approach

As we learned from the pilot year, referrals often work well when the referred child or young person has support from their parent(s)/carer(s)/family. In some cases, it was possible to involve the people around the referred young person in the sport or physical activity they were offered. This approach helped the referred young people to engage with the support on offer to them, and helped the families to have fun and bond through physical activity.

Jesse's story

Jesse was referred to the Connector by the Youth Justice Service as part of the early intervention Turnaround scheme as he had been acting aggressively towards his mum. Jesse is autistic and has ADHD, which can make it difficult for him to try new things. The Connector and Jesse's mum worked together to find the right local activity and chose One2One Basketball. The Connector met the basketball coach in advance to discuss Jesse's needs and attended the first session with Jesse, Jesse's mum, and his younger brother.

The whole family enjoyed the block of 12 sessions Jesse was offered by AEF and Jesse engaged well throughout.

Jesse has definitely developed over the sessions. His confidence has grown massively and his general ability to focus is much better.

- BASKETBALL COACH

The sessions give Jesse something positive to look forward to and burn off excess energy, helping with the ADHD.

- JESSE'S MUM

After speaking to Jesse's mum, their relationship has improved since the basketball sessions started.

- YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE TURNAROUND TEAM MEMBER



Ria, Jade and Hope's story

Sisters Ria and Jade were referred to the Enabler after going missing from home. The Enabler tried to engage the sisters in a few different activities but they declined support and were later arrested following an incident in the community. Several months later, their younger sister Hope was referred. The Enabler arranged sessions at the Essex Fit Lab for Hope, which the three sisters occasionally attended together.

Like Tyler's story, Ria, Jade and Hope's story shows the importance of persistence. Sometimes a young person is not ready for a sport intervention, but it may work for them at a later date if their situation or openness to support changes.



Testimonials from our partners

The following testimonials from our partners at various agencies we work with outline the benefits of the embedded roles for children and young people and as vital capacity for the system.

Intensive Supervision and Support Team, Youth Justice Service

Intensive Supervision and Support (ISS) is a community-based programme offered as an alternative to a custodial sentence or as part of a bail package. ISS practitioners have worked with Active Essex Foundation through the Sport and Life Skills project to connect young people on the ISS programme to community sport and physical activity opportunities.

“Working with the AEF project has proven very beneficial when tailoring appointments to the young person’s needs. When a young person is being supported by ISS they have a daily timetable and when a young person meets with a provider through the AEF project it is good for them to participate in a positive activity and brings in another positive role model into their lives. When the young person is involved in the activity they can also talk to the provider about any issues they are having in an informal environment. It is important for the young people to have a variety of appointments and the AEF project has supported us within our role, especially when supporting with the personal development element of ISS.

- INTENSIVE SUPERVISION AND SURVEILLANCE PRACTITIONER, YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

Essex Police

Essex Police referred a number of children and young people to the Navigator as part of the partnership working between AEF and the Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU).

“The work and support the Navigator carried out was invaluable. As a team, we referred a number of our cohorts to the Navigator, one in particular for me was a young male who she supported with a sporting activity. He attended and engaged well with the club and has yet to come to light to Police regarding reoffending/criminality. I feel the role worked brilliantly with those under 18, particularly in the Thurrock area where there is little or no support or opportunities for this type of support and intervention. The support Active Essex Foundation gave the team and those we work with was remarkable.

- DETECTIVE SERGEANT, ESSEX POLICE

Involvement Service, Essex County Council

The Involvement Service and the Enabler worked closely to identify sport and physical activity opportunities for vulnerable young people, many of whom were frequently going missing.

“The Enabler has played a pivotal role in developing relationships with sports provisions and coaches who have become a valuable resource for young people that we never had before. In the climate of stretched public resources, using the sport sector in this way makes a huge difference in reducing harm in the community.

- SENIOR INVOLVEMENT SERVICE TEAM MEMBER, ECC



Building a strong network of LTOs

One of AEF's core aims is to grow and support a large network of trusted local organisations who use sport effectively to divert young people away from criminality and exploitation and system partners.

We hope to contribute to making Essex, Southend and Thurrock's sport for development sector stronger, more sustainable, and better connected. We hope that this will lead to greater collaboration internally and externally (for example, with system partners).

Our networking events have been popular with LTO staff members and system partners. In 2023-2024, in response to feedback from attendees, we held just one centrally (in Chelmsford). We held one networking event in Southend and a third in Thurrock to reach LTOs who would otherwise have struggled to attend.

Case Study: Connecting our partners

Individuals representing LTOs and system partners (including police officers, probation service staff, and Youth Justice Service practitioners) attended the AEF networking event in Southend.

The event - which was co-hosted by Southend-based LTO IndiRock - included opportunities for partners to talk about the work they do in their communities and to network with colleagues old and new over lunch and bouldering activities.

Attendees provided positive feedback after the event, confirming that they had made new contacts, identified opportunities for future collaborations, found LTOs to take referrals, and discovered new facilities in the area.

“There are so many people that attend the networking events that are in very similar strand of work. At these events you can meet an LTO that is just down the road from you. For us - that's an absolute win.

-LTO STAFF MEMBER

Case study: Building new partnerships

The Thurrock networking event brought together Youth Justice agencies, local partners, community groups and local sports providers. Together, they discussed the needs of the area and its young people, and how these needs could be met.

6 of these LTOs successfully applied to AEF and DP World's Thurrock Small Grant funding to start new provisions for young people. They regularly meet to collaborate, discuss successes, and share what they are learning.



Upskilling our network of LTOs

AEF offers a range of training to LTOs and signposts them to additional training opportunities available through Active Essex and ActivAte, the Essex Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. Training opportunities are also open to other AEF partners. In 2023-24, the training on offer to LTOs included courses delivered by StreetGames, Active Essex Foundation staff, and England Boxing.

Courses offered in 2023-2024:

 <p>Impact of Sport</p>	 <p>Bid Writing</p>	 <p>Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)/ Trauma informed practice</p>
 <p>Managing young people's challenging behaviours</p>	 <p>Mentoring young people in the community</p>	 <p>Boxing Activator workshop</p>

 425 attendances at training courses in 2023-2024	<p>The course developed my skills.</p>  <p>95.7% Agreed or Strongly Agreed</p>	<p>I learnt something new that I will put into practice</p>  <p>91.5% Agreed or Strongly Agreed</p>
---	--	--



“ I will be educating my team about what I have learnt.
-FEEDBACK FROM IMPACT OF SPORT TRAINING

“ The session felt very relaxed, respectful and inclusive.
-FEEDBACK FROM BID WRITING TRAINING

“ I felt like I could walk out and teach.
-FEEDBACK FROM BOXING ACTIVATOR TRAINING

“ Without doubt the best course I have done for trauma-focused work.
-FEEDBACK FROM ACEs AND TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE TRAINING



Conclusion

The future of the Sport and Life Skills project

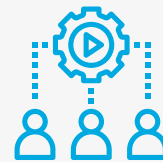
Building on the successes of the Sport and Life Skills project so far, AEF plans to continue to work with LTOs across Essex, Southend and Thurrock to offer Sport Plus and Plus Sport opportunities to children and young people in the secondary and tertiary categories.

After a year of extraordinary growth, supporting LTOs to reach more vulnerable children and young people than ever before, we will be consolidating our work in 2024-2025. Our curated package of training will build on LTOs' strengths and address skills gaps, while our networking events will continue to provide opportunities for LTO staff and partners across the system to come together, connect, and share best practice in sport for development.

Our embedded roles

We have retained the services of the specialist youth intervention providers after their successful pilot year. They will continue to support the work of AEF, LTOs, and system partners - and to serve at-risk children and young people - in 2024-2025.

The Enabler, Connector and Navigator will take a place-based approach in their second year, working closely with multi-partner agencies in their locality to join up systems and community sports providers.



Our ask

There is a growing need for the impactful work that LTOs across Essex, Southend and Thurrock are doing to support some of the county's most vulnerable young people through sport.

To sustain this work - and to extend it - we need significant commitment from partners across the system, and long-term funding models.



Acknowledgements

Thanks to all the LTO staff members who shared their Monitoring and Evaluation data with us. Your hard work helps us to build the evidence base about the impact that sport for development is having across Greater Essex.

Special thanks to staff at:

1Up Collective, ATF (Achieve Thrive Flourish), Be the First Boxing, BKK Fighters, Blackshots Gym, Buckhurst Hill Football Club, Canvey Island Youth Project (Yellow Door), Changing Lives Community Services, Deanswood Equestrian Centre, Dennis and Dyer Boxing Academy, Essex Fit Lab, Evolve Youth, Fusion Netball, the Girls Inspired project team, Harlow Tekkers Football Club, Harwich Horse Rangers Association, Hip Hop Pop, Honeys Boxing, Hutton Football Club, Impulse Leisure, IndiRock, Inspire2Gether, Kazen Kai, Matchpoint Table Tennis Club, Mistley Kids Club, Noo Yu, One2One Basketball, Project Mind Empower (Project:ME), Reach Every Generation, Seconds Out Gym, Southend Athletics Club, Team Kinetix, The Reach Group, Thurrock Rugby Football Club, UTurn4Support, Youth Unity.

And to:

Carly Attridge, Tom Barnes, Louise Hunt, Jamie Impey, Suzanne Page, and David Streetley.

Sources

- Caron Walpole (2024), 'Year Two Evaluation Report for The Active Essex Foundation Programme: Essex Youth Crime and Sport - Positive Outcomes for Young People'
- Fred Coalter (2007), 'A Wider Social Role for Sport: Who's Keeping the Score?' (London: Routledge)
- John Minkes, Richard Hammersley and Peter Raynor (2005), 'Partnership in Working with Young Offenders with Substance Misuse Problems' (The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice, 44.3), pp. 254-265
- Louis Ryan, Christoph Szedlak, Elizabeth Smith and Kevin Harris (2024), 'A Realist Ripple Effects Mapping evaluation of Youth Justice'
- Essex VVU and ECVYS (2024), 'The Essex VVU Listening Project 2023-2024' <<https://ecvys.org.uk/ecvys-youth-voices/>>
- The Centre for Social Justice (2023), 'Game Changer: A plan to transform young lives through sport' <<https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/game-changer>>
- Youth Endowment Fund (2023), 'Children, violence and vulnerability Report' <<https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/reports/children-violence-and-vulnerability-2023/>>
- Department for Education and Ministry of Justice (2023), 'Transparency data: Education, children's social care and offending' <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-childrens-social-care-and-offending>>
- Essex County Council (2024), 'Greater Essex Trends' <<https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/e5lox/greater-essex-trends-2024>>

