



Sport RCT Case Study

Getting children more active: Coleg y Cymoedd girls gym project

We collaborated with Coleg y Cymoedd (Aberdare campus) and CF44 gym to deliver a 12-week project designed to support inactive female learners aged 16–20 to begin their physical activity journey. The project aimed to break down barriers that often prevent young women from engaging with the gym environments, particularly the perception that gyms are male-dominated spaces. By creating a supportive and welcoming setting, the programme hoped to improve participants' confidence, increase their knowledge of gym equipment and training methods, and encourage them to continue participating beyond the project. In addition, the initiative aimed to educate learners about wider aspects of physical health and wellbeing, including topics such as sleep, nutrition, and healthy lifestyles.

Seven inactive female learners were chosen to take part, who had little to no previous experience in a gym environment. Before the programme began, we organised an informal "meet and greet" session at the college. This session provided an opportunity for staff to explain the aims of the project and answer any questions from interested students. Once the group was selected, participants

attended weekly one-hour sessions at CF44 Gym, located close to the college campus. Over the 12-week period, learners took part in a variety of gym-based activities delivered by experienced staff. Sessions were tailored to the group's needs and ability level and included High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT), Hyrox-style workouts, and introductory strength and conditioning sessions. The programme focused on building fundamental fitness skills while gradually increasing participants' confidence in using gym equipment and understanding different training styles. Participants not only improved their physical fitness, strength and overall health, they have also developed a positive relationship with exercise and built new friendships and social connections. Many of the participants reported feeling less intimidated and more motivated to continue exercising, so now that the 12-week project has finished, participants are much more likely to access the gym on their own.

The workouts were very fun to do and made us work hard.
Participant

