



Sport RCT Case Study

Getting children more active: Hirwaun YMCA Climbing project

The Sport RCT Physical Activity Fund is a small pot of money that allows individuals or groups to access funding to provide doorstep opportunities for the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf to become more active in their local community. The fund aims to take away the financial burden of getting a new activity off the ground by helping alleviate financial risk with start-up costs such as equipment.

The fund supported a climbing project delivered by Hirwaun YMCA which targeted children and young people aged 5-15. Using the funding, Hirwaun YMCA was able to develop and introduce an indoor climbing wall at their centre, enabling young people in the area to access a unique and engaging physical activity on their doorstep. Three introductory climbing sessions were organised for young people who attend the YMCA's play and youth provision. Alongside these sessions, training was provided for YMCA staff to ensure they could facilitate climbing sessions safely and confidently in the future. This approach ensures that the project is sustainable and that young people will be active long term.

The project aimed to provide positive recreational activities for children and young people who may have limited opportunities to participate in sport or physical activity. Through

climbing the YMCA aimed to improve physical health, fitness, and overall wellbeing while helping participants build confidence, resilience, and self-esteem through achievable challenges. The sessions were designed to be inclusive and accessible to all genders and abilities, including beginners and children who were not currently engaged in regular physical activity.

They chose climbing after consulting with the young people attending the centre. During play and youth sessions, rock climbing was identified as an exciting option that could be delivered locally, giving participants the opportunity to challenge themselves, overcome fears, and celebrate personal achievements. The activity encouraged teamwork, communication, and peer support as children worked together to solve challenges and motivate each other. Long term the project aims to help children develop stronger self-belief, improved resilience, and healthier lifestyle habits.

"I loved it, especially working as a team and helping one another" Participant

"I didnt think I would be able to do the full wall but I did and want to keep doing it."

Participant

3
sessions

100%
feel healthier

100%
intend to continue taking part

16
participants

100%
feel more confident

100%
are now more active, more often

100%
feel happier

100%
made new friends

RHONDDA CYNON TAF