

The Impact of Sports Leaders UK Awards and Qualifications

Year 1 evaluation summary findings

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What difference do Sports Leaders UK awards and qualifications make to learners who take the courses, Centres that deliver them and the wider community? These questions are explored in this bulletin which summarises findings from the first year of an evaluation of the Asda Active Sports Leaders project, co-funded by the Spirit of 2012 and Asda. This project aims to capitalise on the enthusiasm from the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London to create long lasting behavioural change through developing young leaders who deliver physical activity opportunities in their communities. The evaluation has been informed by research undertaken by the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) during 2014/5 which included a series of surveys, interviews, discussion groups and case studies with learners, Centre Managers and Tutors.

What is the impact on young learners?

- Learners reported that their participation in Sports Leaders UK awards and qualifications led to positive personal outcomes across a range of areas including gains in confidence, communication skills, team work and interest in the community.
- 92% of teenage learners said they were more confident about speaking in front of a group and 96% felt they had developed **confidence** in leading a group:

"It gave me so much confidence. Sports Leaders gave me the confidence to talk to people again. It gave me some worth and abilities I didn't think I had"

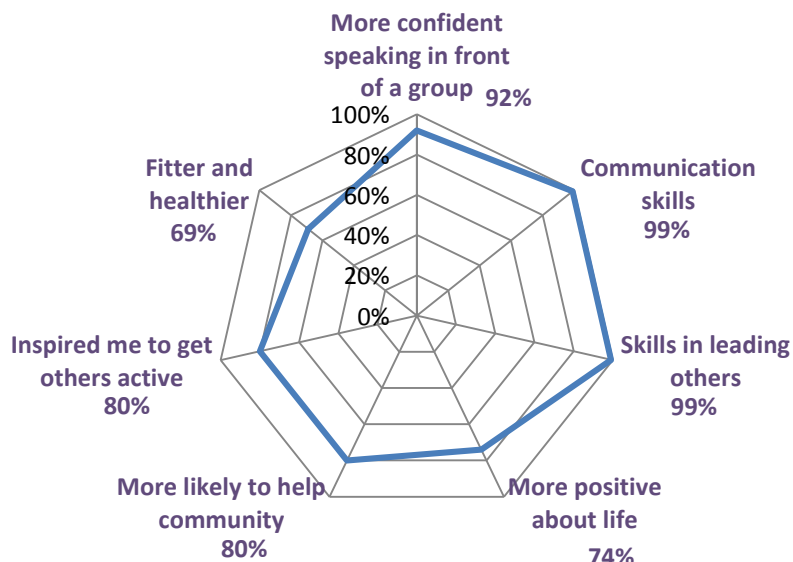
- Teenagers developed **skills** in multiple areas including communicating with others (99%), leading others (99%) and team work (97%). They were positive about the transferability of these skills; 78% of teenagers said that the skills they had gained from the Sports Leaders UK courses could be used in the workplace 'a lot' or to 'some' extent.



Figure: Impact of Sports Leaders UK courses on teenage learners

“The communication, leadership and all those skills has helped me become more confident and able to do different things....I became confident enough to speak to anyone”

“It has given me the confidence to pursue a career related to sport as I am currently studying an HND in coaching and developing sport. Sports Leaders has given me the ability to talk confidently to peers and children in coaching sessions”



- The Sports Leaders UK courses have helped encourage interest in the community; 80% of teenagers said that they were **more likely to help the community** as a result of their course and 80% felt **inspired** to get other people active.

“What I have found it has done is that I am getting more and more people involved in sport. Rather than increasing what I am doing, I am actually increasing what other people do because it has given us the tools to motivate other people”

What is the impact on Centres and the wider community?

Beyond the individual learners, the evaluation identified wider benefits of the Sports Leaders UK awards and qualifications to Centres delivering the awards and qualifications (such as schools, colleges and community organisations) and the wider community. These included:

- Helping centres to **expand and enhance the learning opportunities** they can offer;
- Helping to **raise the profile of centres**;
- Increasing centres' **community engagement** and links with the wider community; and
- Getting **more people active** in the community through activities and support provided by Sports Leader volunteers.



“In terms of building community capacity in a rural area, I think it’s brilliant our Sports Leaders help to deliver sessions for primary children which creates a cycle of leadership” (Tutor)

What are the challenges?

Tutors and Centre Managers reported on some of the challenges they faced in delivering Sports Leaders UK awards and qualifications. Most commonly they said that **less regulatory paperwork** and a **higher profile and awareness** of the awards and qualifications would improve the delivery of the courses.

To help engage more young people as Sports Leaders, Tutors and Centre Managers identified the need to boost the profile of courses and better demonstrate the benefits of the awards and qualifications to learners, parents and employers, together with reducing paperwork and costs.

What are the lessons?

The evaluation identified a number of factors that have enabled young people to be effectively involved as Sports Leaders. The enablers include:

- A flexible and practical programme to promote inclusivity and participation of different groups;
- Facilitators/mentors which help to motivate and role model;
- A focus on personal development, employability skills and leadership skills;
- Opportunities for team work and working with others;
- Opportunities for self-reflection;
- Opportunities for progression to promote further learning and experiences;
- Practical activities that encourage real life experiences of leadership;
- Meaningful and engaging volunteering opportunities; and
- Opportunities to explore new activities and sports with others.

About the evaluation

The three year evaluation assesses the impact and effectiveness of the Asda Active Sports Leaders project. The findings in this briefing are based on research undertaken by the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) between October 2014 and June 2015 and included a survey of 1067 learners, interviews with Sports Leaders and survey and interviews with Tutors and Centre Managers. For further information see www.ivr.org.uk