

## **New research builds blueprint for success to support teenage girls to play sport and develop as leaders**

- **Chance to Shine programme supports more active lifestyle and changes girls' attitudes towards sport**
- **Research shows statistically significant increases in key leadership skills**
- **Learnings laid out to support organisations to help girls get active and learn key skills for leadership**

New research, commissioned by Chance to Shine and NatWest, has laid out the blueprint to support teenage girls to take part in sport and to develop qualities that will support them throughout their futures. The independent research highlights the importance of building self-confidence amongst the girls, motivating them through supporting others as well as giving them greater control of the activities that they take part in.

The research, conducted by the Centre for Sport, Physical Education & Activity Research (*spear*) at Canterbury Christ Church University, assessed the Chance to Shine Secondary School Girls Programme which worked with 1,700 specifically trained 'Young Leaders', with a further 2,200 girls taking part in after-school clubs in over 100 state schools across the country.

Sport England data shows that of secondary school age pupils, girls are notably less likely to be 'active' (42%), compared to boys (49%). Building on years of experience delivering in Secondary Schools, Chance to Shine developed a bespoke programme to support teenage girls to play cricket and, specifically, to develop their leadership skills.

At the end of the programme there was a 'statistically significant' increase in the number of girls who said they were active every day (from 34% to 39.6%). This was also reflected in changing the girls' attitudes towards the sport, with just over three quarters (78%) saying that they 'wanted to play more cricket than before'.

Young Leaders were first trained to take on coaching responsibilities in sessions and then supported to put those skills into practice in after-school clubs and organising and leading primary school cricket festivals.

The research showed statistically significant growth in the following key leadership traits:

Confidence – 'I feel confident' 39% -> 45%

Resilience – 'If I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it' 50% -> 57%

Creativity – 'I come up with new ideas' 31% -> 39%

Adaptability – 'I try to change activities so that everyone can take part' 44% -> 56%

Traits which are as applicable on the cricket pitch as they are in the boardroom.

The programme was developed after the 'Sport for Success' report from the Women in Sport organisation showed that women in senior positions of employment credit playing

sport in their youth with developing skills to support a successful career. Their research showed that women who played sport regularly were more likely to be in senior management position; 45% of women who play sport are in management roles, whereas less than a third of women who don't play sport are managers. With just six female CEOs of FTSE 100 companies, the same as the number called Peter, it is more vital than ever to support girls to build the skills that could one day land them in one of the most powerful jobs in the country.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Chance to Shine has seen a significant decrease in fundraised income. Without much needed support, the charity may not be able to continue its work in secondary schools.

**Laura Cordingley**, Chief Executive at Chance to Shine, said "At Chance to Shine we have seen how the power of cricket can support young people to develop the skills that will benefit them throughout their life. The core leadership principles that you can learn, like dealing with setbacks, adapting to changing situations and problem-solving, will all stand girls in good stead through their professional lives.

"The key is to get girls interested in playing sport and this research shows that our programme has not only got more girls active but it has helped them to understand and see the benefits of playing sport."

**Charlotte Edwards**, who was England Captain for 15 years and is now Head Coach of the Southern Vipers having previously been the Director of Women's Cricket at Hampshire, said "From a young age I was passionate about playing sport and as I grew throughout my career, I took on more responsibility and learnt what it meant to be a leader. For me, it's about understanding your team's strengths and weaknesses, being able to deal with challenges and having the confidence to make decisions. I believe that's as applicable on the cricket pitch as it is walking into the boardroom.

"Chance to Shine are giving girls those life skills really early on and I think that it's vital that the programme continues and supports more girls to develop through playing the sport."

Chance to Shine's Charity Partner NatWest supported the independent research to allow the charity to gain greater insight and understanding of the programme and as part of their commitment to helping all children to access the sport.

**Julie Baker**, Head of Enterprise and Community Finance, NatWest, said: "Two key challenges for women considering taking a leadership role at an organisation or starting their own business can be low self-confidence and a lack of relatable role models to look up to. Therefore, I'm really encouraged to see participation in the Chance to Shine programme has contributed to the girls' increased feelings of confidence, resilience, creativity and adaptability – all essential skills not only in sport, but for later in life and especially in business and enterprise."

As part of the research, *spear* were able to produce the following key pointers for those wishing to engage girls with sport and use sport to develop their leadership attributes:

## Growing Participation

### 1. Positive Peer Pressure

- Encourage the girls to spread the message amongst their friends, encourage them to take responsibility for marketing and advertising the club.
  - Encouragement from peers carries more weight than from a teacher

### 2. Give Girls Control

- Encourage the girls to take ownership of the activities they do.
  - Girls value being given an option and are more likely to engage in a task or activity if it is something they have chosen to do.

### 3. Keep it Competitive

- Turn practices and drills into games.
  - Girls said they want to play more games and enjoy activities most when they are competitive and fun.

## Building Leaders

### 4. Confidence is Key

- Be enthusiastic and focus feedback on what they did well.
  - It is important to build their confidence at leading.

### 5. The Cause is Crucial

- Highlight the positive impact their leadership can have on younger pupils and their peers.
  - Girls said they valued being able to help and support others to develop skills and enjoy themselves.

### 6. Put it into practice

- Arrange events with local primary schools or younger year groups to use their new leadership skills.
  - Having a purpose for the training will support motivation.

Without financial support Chance to Shine's Secondary School Girls Programme may not take place next year. For more information about how you can help, please email [info@chancetoshine.org](mailto:info@chancetoshine.org).

## ENDS

### For more information and for interviews contact:

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### About Chance to Shine:

Chance to Shine is a national charity on a mission to spread the power of cricket throughout schools and communities. The charity takes cricket to new places and uses it to ignite new passions, teach vital skills, unite diverse groups, and educate young people from Cornwall to County Durham.

Since 2005, Chance to Shine has given over 5 million young people, just under half of whom are girls, the opportunity to play, learn and develop through cricket. Chance to Shine has worked in over 16,000 state schools and communities across the country, supporting children's physical, mental and social wellbeing. The Chance to Shine Street programme is engaging thousands of young people in inner city areas affected by youth crime with a lack of access to traditional cricket clubs.

Since the start of the COVID-19 national lockdown, the charity has focussed its efforts on supporting teachers and parents to keep children active through digital cricket sessions, made available every week during the school term, that link to the National PE Curriculum. The sessions are adapted so they can be run in the home, with limited space and equipment. These activities can be seen here: <https://www.chancetoshine.org/staying-active-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>.

For more information go to [www.chancetoshine.org](http://www.chancetoshine.org).