



# Sports programmes

# The Youth Endowment Fund

## **Our Vision**

A world where no child becomes involved in violence.

## **Our Mission**

To find what works and build a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

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We will  
**FUND GOOD WORK**

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graph LR; A[We will FUND GOOD WORK] --> B[We will FIND WHAT WORKS]; B --> C[We will WORK FOR CHANGE];
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We will  
**FIND WHAT WORKS**

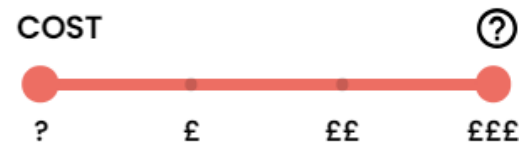
We will  
**WORK FOR CHANGE**

# YEF Toolkit

An overview of existing research on approaches to preventing serious youth violence.

<b>Sports programmes</b> Secondary or tertiary prevention programmes which engage children in organised sports or physical activity	COST ?	EVIDENCE QUALITY 🔍🔍🔍🔍🔍	ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME <b>HIGH</b>
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## What does the YEF Toolkit aim to do?



Summarise research making it accessible and actionable



Support professional decision making with 'best bets'



Create a foundation for change

# Sports programmes

Secondary or tertiary prevention programmes which engage children in organised sports or physical activity

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENT CRIME:

**HIGH** 

EVIDENCE QUALITY:



COST:

? 

PREVENTION TYPE

**Secondary**  
**Tertiary**

SETTING

**Community**  
**Custody**  
**School and college**

THEMES

**Positive activities**  
**Trusted adults**

# Is it effective?

- Sports programmes could have a high impact on crime and violence
  - Our estimate is based on one review of six studies (low confidence of low to moderate quality)
  - Desirable impacts on reducing aggression, promoting mental health and responding to other behavioural difficulties
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# How can you implement it well?

- **Developing strong, trusting relationships with participating children**  
Adults running sessions become role models; building strong relationships is important to drive impact; soft skills are key for staff.
  - **Choosing an accessible and safe location and time**  
Venues should be well equipped with the right facilities and, most importantly, safe for children (such as after school between 4-6pm)
  - **Plan to connect children with other activities**  
The programme could be used as a hook into wrap around or follow on services (such as therapy and mentoring)
  - **Be aware of the reasons young people may leave programmes and support continued engagement**  
Providing incentives (such as healthy meals, or coaching accreditation) can help children remained engaged and having relevant activities that have a wider offer can strengthen engagement.
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# Key take aways

- Sports can support in protecting children from serious youth violence.
  - However, there are **significant evidence gaps**, particularly in high-quality research from English/Welsh contexts.
  - **The Positive Activities funding round** aims to fill these gaps, funding activity interventions and evaluations from 2024.
  - **Encouraging (but very early) results** from initiatives like Rugby Football League's Educate Mentoring Programme, Empire Fighting Chance (boxing)- these programmes are feasible and well perceived- future evaluations will tell us if they are impactful!
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# Keep in touch

Sign up to YEF's newsletter for latest updates:

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