

Drug Interventions Sports Programme and Crime Reduction

November 2006

Introduction

This study looks at the arrests of 22 service users who were engaged on an 8-week football programme in the NE DIP Sports Initiative. The clients were from the Middlesbrough and Stockton DIP and were coached by Teesside University students in February 2006. The arrests for each client have been looked at in the 18 months prior to commencing the programme, and then in the period following the first coaching session up to the present date¹. Days in custody have been factored out and a rate of arrest has been calculated for each client and for the group as a whole².

Offending behaviour of individuals / Indications of impact for the group as a whole

- There was an overall reduction of 26.52% in the rates of arrest among the group who were engaged on the sports programme in Teesside.
- 64% (n=14) of the group had decreased their offending and accounted for a total reduction of 60.59%.
- 36% (n=8) had increased their offending, collectively accounting for a 67.24% increase in offending.

Gender

- 95% (n=21) of clients on the sports coaching programme were male and 5% (n=1) female.
- The female client reduced her offending by 100%. The male sample had reduced their offending as a group by 27%.
- 62% (n=13) of the male sample had reduced their offending rates, accounting for a 61% decrease. 38% (n=8) had increased their offending, and as a group by 67%.

Age

The mean age of the sample was 26yrs, the modal was 28yrs. The age range of individuals was 18 – 44yrs though the majority fell within the youngest age category 18 – 22yrs. The group broke down into four age ranges: 18 – 22yrs (36%), 23 – 27yrs (27%), 28 – 32yrs (23%) and 32+yrs (14%).

18 – 22years

- The youngest group had the greatest of overall reduction in offending, accounting for a total decrease of 39%.
- 25% (n=2) of this group had increased their offending, accounting for a 39% increase.
- 75% (n=6) had decreased their offending, as a group by 64%.

23 – 27years

- This group had a total reduction of 19% in their rates of offending.
- 33% (n=2) had increased their offending, as a group by 353%.
- 67% (n=4) had decreased, and accounted for a total reduction of 51%.

28 – 32years

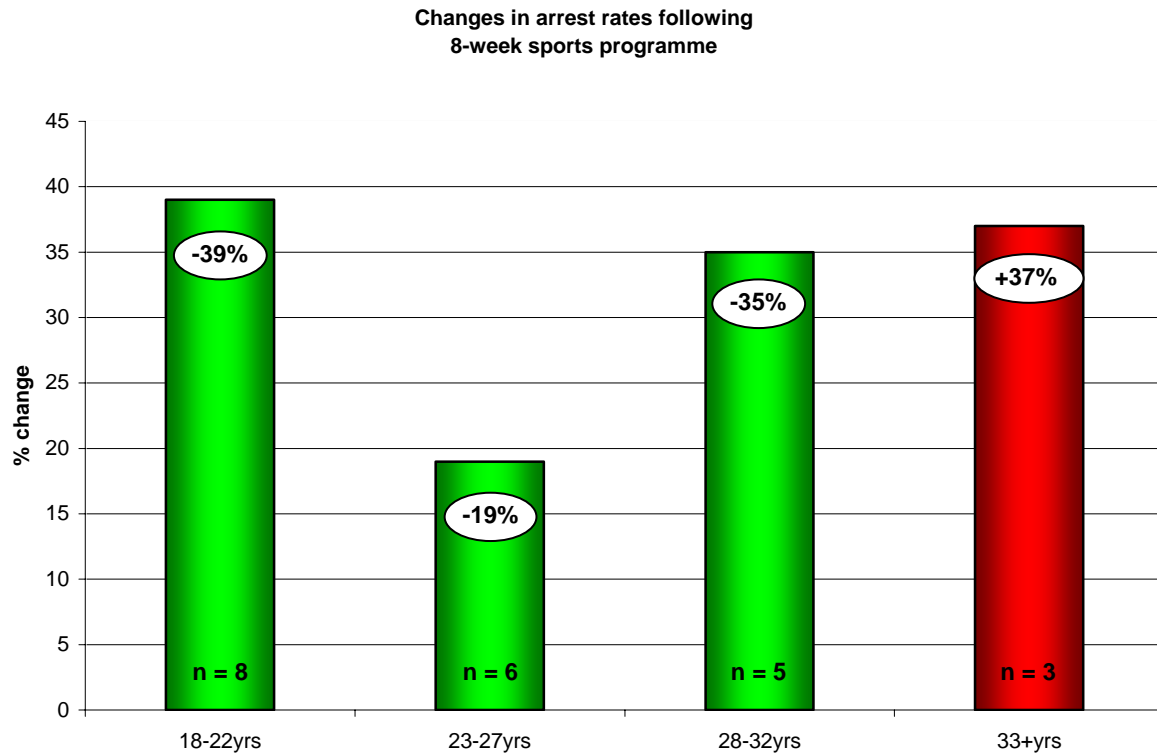
- Those aged 38 – 42yrs had the second most significant reduction in offending, accounting for a total decrease of 35%.
- 40% (n=2) had increased their offending rates and as a group by 69%.
- 60% (n=3) had reduced in their offending and had an overall decrease of 100%.

¹ 11 months to date.

² Health warning: actual numbers should be considered alongside percentage changes due to small sample size.

33+ years

- The eldest group accounted for an overall increase of 37%.
- 67% (n=2) increased by a total of 141%.
- 33% (n=1) decreased by 20%.



Attendance

50% (n=11) of those on the Teesside programme went to every training session over the 8-weeks, and 50% attended some sessions and the tournament at the end of it. There were a range of reasons for non-attendance.

Every session

- The clients who attended every session had a collective decrease of 43% following the coaching course.
- 27% (n=3) of this group had increased their offending following the coaching course, accounting for a total increase of 66%.
- 73% (n=8) of the group had reduced their rate of arrest. Collectively they accounted for a decrease of 63%.

Some sessions

- The group who attended some of the sessions over the 8-week programme and the tournament at the end had a total reduction of 17%.
- Of this group, 45% (n=5) had increased their rate of offending by 63%.
- 55% (n=6) had decreased their offending rates, as a group accounting for a 63% reduction.

FA Coaching Qualifiers

82% (n=9) of the individuals who completed the 8-week course went on to achieve an FA Level 1 coaching qualification. 8 were male, and 1 was female. This group accounted for a total decrease of 53%.

- 78% (n=7) of this group decreased their rates of offending, by a total of 69%.
- 22% (n=2) had increased their offending, accounting for an increase of 69%.

Discussion

As the sample in this study is so small it would be unreliable to draw too many conclusions. However there were some interesting findings that pose questions for future research and investigation.

Age

Those who fell within the youngest age band accounted for the greatest reductions in crime (-40%), whilst those in the eldest group had the only increase (+37%). Although the second eldest age group also had a significant decrease of 35%, looking in more detail at each age category shows the younger the group the higher the proportion of individuals who reduced their offending.

Gender

In this study only one client was female, and while this individual had 100% reduction in her offending, and went on to achieve a level 1 coaching qualification, conclusions about sport and gender cannot be made. Child care facilities in one programme area highlighted the increased number of women who were able to attend as a result. The initiative would like to see more women included and a closer examination of the impact of sport on their levels of offending. The male sample reduced their offending by nearly 30%.

Attendance

It is clear that those who attended regularly on the programme reduced their offending most significantly (43% against 17%). This difference could be attributed to a number of factors - the reductions in crime could be due to a more advanced stage of rehabilitation, while the regular attendance may have been made possible by a better support structure surrounding some individuals. Although the 'post programme' arrest data included only those which were committed within that time frame, it is possible that some clients who did not attend regularly were recalled to prison for a previous offence and this too may have affected retention over the 8-weeks. It is likely however that those who attended every session will have experienced more fully the benefits the initiative sets out to achieve - predominantly an improved service for drug misusing offenders – and the reductions in crime reflect this assumption. Regular attendance will have allowed a greater degree of benefits to be achieved such as participation and teamwork, improved fitness and health awareness, the completion of a course, and sustained engagement in the community.