

1 **Positive Youth Development and Physical Activity/Sport Interventions: Mechanisms Leading to**  
2 **Sustained Impact**

3  
4 **Abstract**

5 Sport/physical activity interventions are sometimes viewed as a panacea for youth-related social  
6 problems, and this may explain their proliferation. Yet, there is little robust evidence to support some  
7 of the claims made for the efficacy of such programmes, particularly those relating to sustained benefits  
8 for young people. The purpose of this paper is to report findings from longitudinal research on two  
9 youth sport/physical activity interventions in the UK in order identify key features in their design that  
10 were found to be central to sustained positive impact. The physical activity programmes sought to  
11 address youth disaffection and disengagement and they were evaluated by one research team using a  
12 common evaluation strategy. Both programme sponsors were committed to learning from the  
13 evaluation findings and to wider dissemination. The programmes are explained, data on sustainability  
14 of impact are reported from each project and the findings considered together to identify common  
15 themes. Data suggest that six key features should be embedded in the design of physical  
16 activity/positive youth development programmes and that, *in combination and through complex*  
17 *interaction*, they can maximise the potential for sustained positive impact on youth participants.

18  
19 **Keywords: positive youth development; youth disaffection; physical activity programmes;**  
20 **programme evaluation; sustained impact.**

21 **Positive Youth Development and Physical Activity/Sport Interventions: Mechanisms leading to**  
22 **Sustained Impact**

23  
24 **Introduction**

25 There has been significant concern in contemporary society about ‘problematic’ behaviour  
26 among young people, and growing levels of youth disaffection and disengagement (DSS, 1999; SEU,  
27 2000; Steer, 2000; Newburn & Shiner, 2005). Certainly, within the UK, youth disaffection is a frequent  
28 topic of discussion in public discourse, often fuelled by media representations of disruptive,  
29 disrespectful and dangerous young people. This has led to both political debate and the formation of  
30 government policy (Sandford, Duncombe & Armour, 2008). In particular, worries about young  
31 people’s involvement in anti-social or criminal behaviour, their disengagement from education/training  
32 and their perceived lack of civic engagement and responsibility have heightened concerns regarding the  
33 potential impact on social order (DfES, 2003a,b; Davies, 2005; Newburn & Shiner, 2005; France,  
34 2007). Such concerns, however, are not confined to the UK. Indeed, debates concerning youth  
35 disaffection, disengagement and perceived anti-social behaviour abound in a number of fields and  
36 disciplines across the Western world (Smink, 2000; Sandford, Armour & Warmington, 2006).  
37 Moreover, as Newburn & Shiner (2005) point out, panic concerning ‘problematic’ youth is not new but  
38 has prevailed throughout history. The intensity of current concerns, however, has led to calls for  
39 ‘action’ to address the issue.

40 Engagement in sport and other forms of physical activity has traditionally been credited with  
41 having a particularly valuable role in tackling youth disaffection and disengagement (France et al.,  
42 2007). This seems to be rooted in the belief that sport encourages moral and social responsibility, pro-  
43 social behaviours and respect for others (Eley and Kirk, 2002; Russell, 2004). Such beliefs are  
44 heightened in the case of ‘Outward Bound’ activities where it is often argued that the challenge  
45 inherent in such activities offers unique learning opportunities (Neill & Dias, 2001). The two  
46 programmes reported in this paper used a mixture of sport, outward bound and other physical activities

47 to engage young people. The aspirations for young people governing both programmes were, however,  
48 almost identical, including a strong focus on generating positive outcomes for young people that could  
49 be sustained over time.

50 Ruiz (2004) among others has pointed to the difficulty of linking participation in sport and  
51 physical activity to the wide ranging impacts that are often claimed by intervention programmes and,  
52 along with others, has argued for more - and more robust - research evidence (Bailey, 2005; Holt &  
53 Jones, 2008). The two programmes evaluated in this paper were somewhat unique in that both sponsors  
54 funded independent longitudinal evaluation projects and expressed a strong interest in learning from  
55 the data and sharing findings more widely. Nonetheless, as is reported in detail in section (iii), the  
56 broad aims of the programmes and the flexibility offered to participants made the evaluation  
57 particularly challenging.

58 This paper has the dual purpose of identifying the themes from the data that contributed to the  
59 reported sustained impact on participants, and analysing the complex ways in which these themes  
60 interacted in these two programmes. Thus, the paper can contribute to the knowledge base on the ways  
61 in which such programmes can be designed to maximise the potential for sustained impact. The paper  
62 is organised into five main sections: (i) An overview of the underpinning theory related to using sport  
63 and physical activity programmes as a form of positive youth development; (ii) a description of the two  
64 programmes evaluated; (iii) the methodological framework for the evaluation; (iv) findings on  
65 sustainable impact reported from each programme; and (v) discussion on the complex ways in which  
66 the six key programme design features interacted in order to facilitate sustained positive impact on  
67 youth participants.

68

### 69 **Theoretical Underpinnings: Physical Activity/Sport for Positive Youth Development**

70 Within the UK, moral panic has resulted in a raft of policies, programmes and government measures  
71 intended to tackle the problem of youth disaffection and facilitate young people's re-engagement and  
72 positive development (see Sandford, Duncombe & Armour 2008 for a detailed discussion).

73 Interestingly, many of these policies and programmes (e.g. PESSCL, Positive Futures, NOPE<sup>s</sup>)  
74 involve the use of sport and physical activity interventions as tools to be used to enhance personal  
75 development. This would appear to be rooted in the long standing belief that engagement in sport, in  
76 particular, can instil character, develop positive attributes, enhance moral development and secure  
77 wide-ranging benefits for disengaged young people (Martinek & Hellison, 1997; Miller, Bredemeier &  
78 Shields, 1997; Burt, 1998; Theodoulides & Armour, 2001; Eley & Kirk, 2002; Holt, 2008). Moreover,  
79 given its potential to reach large and diverse groups of young people, school physical education has  
80 also come to be viewed as an important context in which disaffected pupils can be re-engaged (Bailey,  
81 2005; France et al., 2007). Indeed, a recent UK government report reinforced the perceived  
82 significance of physical education and school sport (PESS) for tackling youth disaffection, suggesting  
83 that it can help to, among other things, improve behaviour, attendance and educational attainment  
84 (DCMS, 2007).

85 Outside of government generated programmes, the ‘social problems industry’, driven by the belief  
86 that physical activities can address social concerns (Pitter & Andrews, 1997) has resulted in numerous  
87 independent or corporate-sponsored initiatives (such as those outlined in this paper) designed to re-  
88 engage disaffected youth through participation in structured physical activities. Many of these  
89 programmes make use of outdoor or adventurous physical activities, reflecting a belief in their positive  
90 youth development potential. Indeed, there is a significant body of literature available on the use of  
91 outdoor/adventurous activities as a means of promoting youth personal development (Nichols, 1997;  
92 Garst, Schneider & Baker, 2001; Newton, Sandberg & Watson, 2001). Moreover, claims regarding the  
93 educational value of Outward Bound programs have been the focus of a number of evaluation studies.  
94 Hattie et al., (1997), for example, concluded that there was sufficient evidence to suggest that Outward  
95 Bound programmes were able to have a positive impact on individuals (for example, in relation to  
96 increased confidence, leadership and communication skills) and that there was some potential for these  
97 impacts to be sustained over time.

98        Around the world there are further examples of sport, physical activity and physical education  
99 programmes being used to facilitate positive development and re-engage young people in education and  
100 society more broadly. Examples from the US include Siedentop's (1994) Sport Education, Hellison's  
101 (1995) Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility, and Ennis' (1999) Sport for Peace. Bailey (2008)  
102 has argued that findings from the evaluations of programs such as these are "cautiously optimistic"  
103 (p.89). Research has indicated the propensity for such programmes to facilitate, among other things, an  
104 increased sense of belonging, a respect for both self and others, a more positive attitude to physical  
105 activity/physical education and a shared responsibility for learning (Ennis et al., 1999; Hellison &  
106 Walsh, 2002; MacPhail, Kirk & Kinchin, 2004). In addition, some studies have pointed to the potential  
107 of physical activity/physical education to contribute, more specifically, to young people's socio-moral  
108 development. For example, in their review of the 'Fair Play for Kids' program, Gibbons, Ebbeck &  
109 Weiss (1995) noted that participation could be seen to effect positive change on the moral development  
110 of pupils.

111        While such findings are encouraging, it has also been argued that more research is required to  
112 explore the long-term impact of program participation on young people and the mechanisms by which  
113 changes occur (Holt & Jones, 2008). These kinds of youth re-engagement programmes represent a  
114 changing viewpoint regarding adolescent development that, as Holt (2008) notes, has occurred over the  
115 last decade or so and has come to be labelled 'positive youth development' (PYD). PYD is defined as a  
116 constructive approach to young people's development through the period of adolescence, focusing on  
117 the talents, strengths and potential of each individual. As Lerner et al., (2005) have noted, this is a  
118 strength-based and broad conception of youth development, which is in contrast to the more traditional  
119 deficit-reduction approaches. Damon (2004) concurs:

120        *This new approach envisions young people as resources rather than as problems for society.*  
121        *The positive youth development perspective emphasizes the manifest potentialities rather than*  
122        *the supposed incapacities of young people – including young people from the most*  
123        *disadvantaged backgrounds and those with the most troubled histories (p.15).*

124 The programmes reported in this paper took a very broad approach to positive impact and the term  
125 ‘positive youth development’ seems to capture not only that scope but also the key focus on young  
126 people’s potential to both engage and develop.

127 There is strong support in the literature for the potential of sport/physical activity to facilitate  
128 positive youth development, but historically there has been a lack of robust, empirical data to support  
129 claims to effectiveness (see, for example, Morris et al., 2003). More recently, however, there is an  
130 emerging body of evaluation research that is providing evidence of both immediate positive impact  
131 and, in some cases, sustained impact (e.g. Crabbe, 2006b; Sandford, Armour & Duncombe, 2008).  
132 Moreover, knowledge is accumulating concerning the ways in which future initiatives should be  
133 designed in order to maximise the potential benefits for young people and facilitate the sustainability of  
134 positive impact (e.g. Sandford, Duncombe & Armour, 2008). In particular, it is now widely agreed that  
135 a key element in effecting positive behavioural change is developing programmes and interventions  
136 that have an explicit focus on personal development by promoting positive relationships between  
137 participants (Ennis et al., 1999; Crabbe, 2006a; Hellison, Martinek & Walsh, 2008; Holt & Sehn, 2008;  
138 Petitpas, Cornelius & Van Raalte, 2008).

139 Despite the emerging evidence, questions remain about the precise mechanisms by which positive  
140 youth development can be facilitated through sport/physical activity programmes. Researchers agree  
141 that further systematic, longitudinal evaluation research is needed in order to shed light on these  
142 mechanisms and processes (e.g. Long & Sanderson, 2001; Sandford, Armour & Warmington, 2006). In  
143 providing research evidence from the evaluation of two UK-based programmes intended to promote  
144 positive youth development through physical activities, and drawing out common themes, it is hoped  
145 that this paper can go some way toward addressing these questions. In the next section, key design  
146 features of the two programmes are summarised and this provides important contextual information for  
147 the development of the evaluation research strategy.

## 148 149 **Key Features of the Programmes Evaluated**

150 The data considered in this paper are from the evaluation of two corporate-sponsored initiatives that  
151 aimed to use physical activity to re-engage disaffected or disengaged young people in education. The  
152 programmes were the HSBC/Outward Bound (HSBC/OB) project and the Sky Sports Living For Sport  
153 (SSLfS) programme.

154 *The HSBC/OB project* ran for five years between September 2003 and August 2008. Based on  
155 a partnership between HSBC in the Community<sup>ii</sup>, the Outward Bound Trust<sup>iii</sup>, and five schools local to  
156 HSBC's UK head office in the Docklands areas of London; it comprised fully-funded, partially  
157 residential outdoor/adventurous activity experiences for pupils deemed by their teachers to be  
158 disaffected, disadvantaged or disengaged. In each of the five years of the programme, a cohort of 30  
159 young people from year 9 in each school (ages 13-14 years) were selected to undertake a year-long  
160 programme of structured outdoor activities (150 pupils in total each year). These activity sessions were  
161 designed (by the Outward Bound Trust) to provide individual and group challenges and to develop  
162 skills such as team building, communication, and responsibility. Moreover, the sessions were intended  
163 to scale progressively, providing more challenging experiences for a smaller number of pupils as they  
164 moved through the programme year and affording increased opportunities for these individuals to take  
165 responsibility for themselves and others. In addition, a central element of the programme was that each  
166 year, a number of HSBC staff volunteered to be involved as mentors, and were trained (by youth  
167 workers from one of the programme schools) to work with schools and pupils both within the  
168 programme sessions and in follow-up activities within the schools.

169 Each programme year began with an introductory activity day for all pupils during which  
170 participants were given the opportunity to meet each other and engage in some basic team-building and  
171 sports activities. This was then followed by three residential activity sessions: a week-long event at one  
172 of Outward Bound's UK centres; a four-day event at an activity centre close to London; and, for 10  
173 pupils perceived to have 'gained the most' from the program, a three-week intensive course at Outward  
174 Bound's Ullswater centre in the Lake District. Pupils engaged in activities such as rock climbing, gorge

175 walking, high ropes courses, caving, sailing, hiking and rafting. The year concluded with an activity  
176 day for all pupils and a celebration/award event held at HSBC's head office in London.

177 **The Sky Sports Living For Sport (SSLfS) programme** is an ongoing national initiative  
178 (commenced September 2003) within the UK that encourages schools to design and run school-led  
179 projects within a broad framework developed by the programme sponsors (Sky Sports<sup>iv</sup>) and organisers  
180 (the Youth Sport Trust<sup>v</sup>). The core aim of the programme is to identify pupils who are having problems  
181 with one or more aspect of their school life (e.g. with behaviour, attendance, confidence, being  
182 bullied/bullies) and to facilitate their re-engagement in education through participation in physical  
183 activities. The initiative is intended to be flexible, and teachers organising SSLfS projects within their  
184 schools can select any activity, or combination of activities for their pupil group. Indeed, teachers are  
185 encouraged to work with pupils in the selection of activities, and in setting individual and group goals.  
186 The list of activities that has been undertaken within SSLfS programmes is extensive, including  
187 traditional sports and games (e.g. football, basketball, badminton, swimming and hockey) as well as  
188 recreational activities less common to the PE curriculum (e.g. yoga, ultimate frisbee, street dance, free-  
189 running and skateboarding) and outdoor/adventurous activities (e.g. rock-climbing, orienteering,  
190 canoeing, sailing and rope courses). SSLfS programmes can last from one term to one academic year  
191 and group sizes vary from school to school, although groups of 8-16 pupils are most common. Each  
192 SSLfS programme culminates in a sport event (often a tournament or competition organised by the  
193 project pupils), and completion of the 'course' is marked by some form of celebration event (e.g. an  
194 awards evening, an out of school visit or a group meal).

195 Despite their obvious differences, the two programmes shared key design features that governed  
196 the choice of feasible research methods, and led the evaluation team to adopt almost identical  
197 evaluation strategies within a common evaluation framework. Anderson (2004) notes the proliferation  
198 of foundation and charitable organisations that seek to develop community based social programs to  
199 meet their missions, commenting that 'These initiatives often have ambitious goals, and so planning  
200 specific on-the-ground strategies to meet those goals is difficult' (p. 2). Similarly, Shiner et al., (2004)



201 argue that youth social engagement/re-engagement programmes are notoriously difficult to evaluate  
202 because sponsors have not thought through why or how an intervention would work, and with whom  
203 under what conditions. Indeed, Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman (2005) argue that before even attempting an  
204 evaluation of programme impact, researchers should check whether the program objectives are  
205 ‘sufficiently well articulated’ (p. 23) to make it possible to evaluate impact. The two programmes  
206 reported in this paper offer an illustration of these methodological issues and challenges.

### 207 **Evaluation Framework**

208 Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman (2005) recognise the ‘continually changing decision-making milieu of social  
209 programs’ (p. 22) as a key challenge for evaluators. They argue that researcher flexibility is a key  
210 requirement because ‘Social programs are not research laboratories... evaluators must expect to be  
211 buffeted about by forces and events beyond their control’ (p.23). As was noted above, one of the most  
212 attractive features of both programmes was the flexibility they offered schools and teachers in selecting  
213 pupils and tailoring programme activities to meet their needs. In other words, professional judgement  
214 was the key factor determining which pupils should be involved in the programmes. This flexibility,  
215 however, also constituted the major challenge facing the evaluation team, and it resulted in the design  
216 of a multi-layered evaluation strategy using qualitative research methods built largely around individual  
217 pupil profiling. Between 2003 and 2007 (years 1 to 4 of each programme), over 10,000 young people  
218 participated in either the HSBC/OB project or SSLfS programme. Impact data have been collected on  
219 over 50% of all SSLfS pupils engaged in the programme nationally (n ~ 4700) and 90% of HSBC/OB  
220 pupils from the five participating schools (n ~ 540). In the next sections, details on the design, methods  
221 and participants are explained and are also summarised in tables for clarity (Tables 1 and 2).

### 222 ***Evaluation Design and Rationale***

223 House (2005) points out that although there has been a growing faith in large scale evaluations  
224 using only experimental methods, these have rarely delivered what they promise. Instead, he suggests  
225 evaluation studies should be ‘methodologically ecumenical’ and that they often need to adopt a  
226 different concept of causation:

227           *Social causation is more complex than regularity theory suggests. Even with the same*  
228           *program, there are different teachers at different sites who produce different results. We might*  
229           *try to control for the teachers, but there are so many variables that might influence the*  
230           *outcomes, the researchers cannot control for all of them.*

231 This certainly seems to reflect the problems faced in these two evaluation projects. House also argues  
232 that programme theory can be a useful approach to the evaluation of social programmes, and that there  
233 is a need for theories that are applicable to individual programmes, rather than seeking grand social  
234 theories. In similar vein, Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman (2005) point out that ‘conducting social research at  
235 a high scientific standard generally requires resources that exceed what is available for evaluation  
236 projects’ (p.24) and that was certainly a problem in these evaluation projects. Rossi et al. also argue  
237 that such issues do not mean researchers can ‘blithely dismiss scientific concerns in evaluation’ (p. 25)  
238 and it was the need to do credible, defensible research that led to the eventual evaluation design in this  
239 case. Thus, the three dimensional evaluation of the HSBC/OB and SSLfS programmes centred on  
240 individual pupil profiling, school-level case studies and the creation of programme Logic Models.  
241 There are many respects in which this design strategy can be criticised, and it was certainly labour  
242 intensive. On the other hand, as other evaluators have found, compromises are often required in the  
243 evaluation of complex social programmes.

244           *Pupil profiling: the purpose of the pupil profiles was to capture information on teachers’*  
245           *professional judgements in order to create a baseline profile on each pupil, and to record progress from*  
246           *that profile. Thus, teachers were asked to record reasons for pupil selection and to support their reasons*  
247           *with ‘hard’ school data (e.g. absenteeism statistics; behaviour reports) where they were applicable and*  
248           *available. Teachers were then prompted to report on pupil progress from the baseline immediately after*  
249           *the programme (positive, negative or no change from baseline) to determine ‘distance travelled’*  
250           *(Crabbe, 2005b). In the case of the HSBC/OB project, updates were also requested half way through*  
251           *the project year. They were further prompted at 12, 24 and 36 months after programme completion to*

252 determine whether any changes recorded immediately after engagement in the programme were  
253 maintained.

254 *Case studies:* in addition, collective case studies (Stake, 2005) were conducted in each  
255 evaluation project at the school level to supplement the data from pupil profiles (Yin, 1984). The main  
256 research activities in these case studies were observation of programme activities, interviews with key  
257 adults and youth participants, focus group discussions, open-ended surveys, semi-structured reflective  
258 journals, and structured feedback sheets (e.g. Oliver & Lalik, 2001; Clark & Moss, 2001; Harper,  
259 2002).

260 *Logic Models:* models were developed for each programme to identify the ways in which the  
261 programme sponsors sought to achieve their aims through the programme activities. (Kellogg  
262 Foundation, 2001). ‘Logic models’ can clarify and make explicit foundational features of a programme,  
263 and can provide a useful communication framework for evaluators and sponsors, especially where aims  
264 are rather nebulous and the paths to outcomes unclear:

265 *The program logic model is defined as a picture of how your organization does its work –*  
266 *the theory and assumptions underlying the program. A program logic model links*  
267 *outcomes (both short- and long-term) with program activities/processes and the*  
268 *theoretical assumptions/principles of the program (p.iii).*

269 An example of an early Logic Model for the HSBC programme is provided in Appendix A.

270 Finally, mindful of the need to assure the quality of the qualitative research design the  
271 evaluators adopted a framework developed by the National Centre for Social Research (Spencer et al.,  
272 2003) that focuses on the outputs of qualitative inquiry and helps consumers of the research to make  
273 judgements about its quality. In evaluation reports to the sponsors, therefore, checklists were provided  
274 drawing upon the appraisal questions and quality indicators in the framework, including indicators on  
275 research design, ethics, data analysis and reporting findings.

## 276 ***Data Collection***

277 This paper draws upon data from interviews, focus groups, journals and individual pupil profiles  
278 generated by teachers, mentors and pupil participants. Reference is made in the discussion to the use of  
279 Logic Models. The data collection process was similar in each programme, although the lower pupil  
280 numbers on the HSBC/OB programme, and the sustained relationship with five schools, facilitated  
281 greater depth. The higher number of schools and pupils involved in the SSLfS project resulted in some  
282 adaptation to data collection in order to manage the volume of data. In each section below, a table  
283 summarising the research undertaken is followed by a more detailed explanation of data collection  
284 procedures/features and an indication of where further information on each individual programme can  
285 be found.

286  
287 **HSBC/OB:**

288 **[INSERT TABLE 1]**

- 289 • At the beginning of the programme, individual pupil baseline profiles were generated for each  
290 pupil using teachers' professional judgements via open-ended surveys. 400 full profiles were  
291 collected over 4 years. Teachers were asked to give their reasons for pupil selection and any  
292 illustrative examples or data to support their selection;
- 293 • Update profiles were collected at intervals after the first main programme activity (6, 12, 24  
294 and 36 months) again using an open-ended survey. Teachers were asked to comment on each  
295 pupil's current status as well as indicate the direction of any perceived change from the  
296 baseline level (i.e. positive, no change or negative);
- 297 • The five partner schools were also evaluated as case studies in each year. In each case, data  
298 were collected through observations of project activities, interviews with lead teachers and,  
299 where possible, senior management staff and focus groups with participating pupils. The  
300 evaluators were also invited to programme steering meetings, which facilitated regular contact  
301 with the teachers and sponsors;

- Data from pupils on project involvement and any perceived benefits were also generated via pupil journals, open-ended surveys and focus group discussions.

For further information on this programme and its evaluation see Armour & Sandford (2004, 2008), Sandford, Armour & Duncombe (2008) and Sandford, Duncombe & Armour (2008).

**SSLfS:**

**[INSERT TABLE 2]**

- In year one of the programme, individual pupil baseline profiles were generated for each pupil using teachers' professional judgements via open-ended surveys. Teachers were asked to give reasons for pupil selection and provide any available supporting school data (e.g. attendance or behaviour records). In subsequent years, data from the year one responses were used to create a list of potential reasons for selection, making data collection and analysis easier. Teachers were offered space to include additional reasons or comments. Where no supporting data for selection were available, teachers were asked to use a 5 point professional judgement rating scale to identify a pupil's starting point. This was a compromise measure to account for the fact that most reasons for selection could not be supported by 'hard' data (i.e. the pupil was 'withdrawn'; struggled to make friends; lacked confidence etc).
- Update profiles were collected at the end of the project. Where no 'hard' data had been provided at the outset, teachers were still able to update their professional judgement rating scale.
- Up to 20 school-level case studies were undertaken in each project year. New case study schools were selected each year to ensure geographical spread, range of school types and project activities, and to focus on emerging issues. In year four, 18 sustainability case studies were also undertaken. In each case, data were collected through the observation of project activities, interviews with key teaching staff, and interviews or focus groups with participating pupils.

Running head: PYD, physical activity interventions and sustained impact

- A sustainability of impact survey was undertaken in years 2, 3 and 4 of the project, and was disseminated to all schools who had participated in previous years. For pupils who were recorded as showing positive impact immediately after the project, teachers were asked to comment whether or not, based on their knowledge of the pupils, they had maintained this improvement since project completion (i.e. periods ranging from 12, 24 and 36 months). Teachers were also asked to comment on the reasons for any sustained improvements.

Further information on this programme and its evaluation can be found in Armour et al., (2007), Sandford, Armour & Duncombe (2008) and Sandford, Duncombe & Armour (2008).

### *Data Analysis*

As was noted earlier, the Logic Models were used to ensure clarity and a shared understanding between the programme sponsors and the evaluators about the ways in which the programme activities were designed to meet the programme aims. The data from pupil profiles were analysed using descriptive statistics (i.e. the frequency of a particular response or the percentage of the total data set that this represented). The different project structures resulted in some differences in analysis. In HSBC, individual pupil profile data were summarised to show the number and percentage of pupils who had improved from, maintained, or dropped below their baseline profiles at 6, 12, 24 and 36 months following the commencement of project activities. It was these latter updates that provided the sustainability data.

In the SSLfS project, the data from pupil profiles were analysed according to the area of improvement identified by teachers (behaviour, attendance and self-esteem). Data were collated and a mean was calculated for the baseline period and compared with that for the project period. This method of analysis was used for teachers' data in the case of both professional judgements, in the form of rating scales, and where specific school statistics were available, for example attendance rates or number of behaviour referrals. Interestingly, the findings were almost identical whether either measure was used. Data from the sustainability of impact survey were collated to indicate the number of pupils who

354 showed an improvement immediately after project completion, and who were perceived by teachers to  
355 have maintained this improvement in subsequent years.

356 Data from the school case study visits for each programme (which took the form of fieldnotes,  
357 interview transcripts and written feedback responses) required a more detailed qualitative analysis.  
358 These data were collated and then analysed thematically, using an approach similar to the constructivist  
359 grounded theory outlined by Charmaz (2000). Unlike more traditional, structured versions of grounded  
360 theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), this approach facilitated active coding and  
361 offered the opportunity to focus on participants' thoughts and feelings, and to identify differences.  
362 Thus, themes were constructed, in part, around responses on core project aims or issues of interest  
363 generated through discussions with project participants (teachers, pupils, sponsors etc.). There was also  
364 the opportunity for new themes to be identified and explored. A worked example of the data analysis  
365 processes can be seen in Appendix B.

### 366 *Limitations in Evaluation Design*

367 As was noted earlier, the authors acknowledge a number of limitations to the evaluation design.  
368 Similar to the experiences of other evaluators, it was found that both programmes had been designed  
369 and were underway before the evaluators were commissioned (which explains the need to generate  
370 Logic Models to clarify designs and aims). In addition, the programme aims were very broad, seeking  
371 high and lasting impacts on large numbers of young people; the research budget was low in the context  
372 of the extensive scope of the aims; there was no standardisation in the selection procedures for the  
373 youth participants; teachers/staff had considerable flexibility at each stage of the programmes (which  
374 was a key attraction for participating schools); there was no possibility to establish a meaningful  
375 control group; and there were high sponsor expectations for meaningful data within tight reporting  
376 deadlines (DfEE, 2000; Burton, 2006). Indeed, it is worth noting that, as they worked with schools over  
377 time, the sponsors came to understand school needs better. This resulted in a conundrum: the  
378 programmes were made more flexible and responsive to meet the needs of teachers and schools which,  
379 in turn, made it increasingly difficult for the evaluators to provide robust evidence of impact.





405           Although there were challenges in collecting sustainability data from schools, and the findings  
406 should be read with caution, they are also interesting. For example, in year 2 of the SSLfS project  
407 (2004-2005) teachers provided sustainability data for 67 pupils who had shown an initial improvement  
408 from their baseline profiles. Of these, 94% were perceived to have maintained those improvements for  
409 12 months. Similarly, in year 3 of the evaluation (2005-2006), 43 schools provided sustainability data  
410 on 312 pupils, with approximately 90% maintaining positive improvements for 12 months. In year 4,  
411 44 schools provided data on pupils who had demonstrated improvements and, similar to the findings  
412 from the previous year, approximately 90% of these maintained those improvements for 12 and 24  
413 months (see table 3). One school also provided data on 7 pupils who had completed the programme 36  
414 months previously and it is interesting to note that the lead teacher believed that all of these pupils had  
415 sustained their improvements for 3 years.

416           The sustainability data from the HSBC/OB project also indicate that many, although not all,  
417 pupils maintained positive improvements for up to 36 months after programme involvement. Indeed,  
418 when the data are combined for all three years, it can be seen that almost 70% of pupils retained their  
419 positive improvements from the teacher-reported baseline at the point of leaving school (at 36 months).  
420 This is illustrated in table 4, which shows the combined data for pupils involved in Years 1, 2 and 3 of  
421 the HSBC/OB project.

422 [Insert Table 3]

423 [Insert Table 4]

424 The data presented in tables 3 and 4 indicate that, where the SSLfS programme had an initial impact on  
425 the young people who participated, this impact was likely to be sustained for 12, 24 (and potentially  
426 36) months. Likewise, in the HSBC/OB programme, positive improvements were being maintained by,  
427 on average, well over 50% of pupils up to 24 and 36 months after the programme activities had ended.  
428 These findings, then, appear to support the notion that sport/physical activity programmes can have a  
429 positive long-term impact upon participants. However, while the pupil profiles provide an indication of  
430 impact, the case study data provide important information on the mechanisms most likely to lead to

431 sustained impact. As might be expected, these data reveal a complex set of processes leading to the  
432 findings.

433 ***Sustained Impact: The case studies***

434 In case studies, teachers/school staff were interviewed to find out what may have helped the  
435 young people to maintain positive improvements. A number of similar factors were identified in both  
436 programmes and they highlight the significance of social processes around physical activity  
437 interventions; indeed, the social aspect of programme involvement was reported as being pivotal. Thus,  
438 whereas sport and physical activity were used as a vehicle for both projects, they themselves were not  
439 perceived (by teachers) to be as significant in terms of impact on pupils as the opportunities that were  
440 provided for social interaction and building positive relationships. Six common themes on the  
441 conditions required for sustainable impact resulted from the data analysis process. These six themes are  
442 reported individually in the next section, supported by illustrative data from both programmes. As was  
443 noted in the introduction, the purpose of the paper is twofold: to identify the themes and to illustrate the  
444 complex ways in which they interacted to contribute to sustained impact. The latter purpose is  
445 undertaken in the discussion.

446 i. Matching pupils' specific needs with programme objectives

447 Within both programmes, a common response from teachers was that it was important to select the  
448 'right' pupils to participate. Within the SSLfS programme, for example, some teachers suggested that  
449 the activities simply did not work if the 'wrong' pupils were chosen or if too many of the pupils had  
450 dominant personalities or were very disruptive. Conversely, it was often stated that programmes had  
451 been successful when they were designed to be appropriate to the needs of a particular group of pupils:

452 *They need to be students that can work together. And they need to be students ideally with*  
453 *similar issues or certainly with similar aspirations, because otherwise, you tackle activities*  
454 *that some of them don't want to engage in (Lead teacher, SSLfS).*

455 Similarly, within the HSBC/OB programme, teachers commented that they considered a number of  
456 factors in their selection of pupils, including not only their potential to gain from the experience but

Running head: PYD, physical activity interventions and sustained impact

457 also their capacity to engage with the process. In this case, the nature of the activities was largely  
458 dictated by the structure of the programme, so teachers noted that they had to bear this in mind when  
459 identifying their pupil group:

460 *I know there are some pupils who would benefit from some kind of programme, but this is*  
461 *not the right one for them (Teacher, HSBC/OB).*

462 The first point to note, therefore, is that participant selection was a complex process that relied on  
463 teachers' professional judgments about both the programme *and* the needs of individual pupils.

464 Like many other professional judgments, the decision-making process seemed to be based on a set  
465 of factors rooted in experience and expertise.

466 ii. Locating project activities outside of the 'normal' school context

467 Whilst SSLfS projects varied considerably, with schools being free to select any sport/physical activity  
468 they deemed appropriate, the programmes that incorporated off-site or 'new' activities were  
469 particularly valued:

470 *I think it was the off-site nature (that) was very important...the opportunity to do a different*  
471 *activity (not) part of the bread and butter of the PE curriculum... it makes the programme*  
472 *more attractive... and ensures that they turn up week after week (Lead teacher, SSLfS).*

473 Likewise, the off-site and residential nature of the HSBC/OB programme was identified as a significant  
474 feature in terms of engaging and motivating pupils, particularly as the disadvantaged background of  
475 many of the selected pupils meant that they had rarely, if ever, been away from home:

476 *They (the pupils) rarely travel out of Tower Hamlets (an area of London), very, very*  
477 *rarely. So, you know, going to Wales is a big thing for them... I mean, some of them have*  
478 *never seen the sea before (Teacher, HSBC/OB).*

479 In both cases, the suggestion from teachers was that taking pupils out of the school context helped them  
480 in a number of ways; e.g. by increasing the perceived importance of the programme, engaging their  
481 interest, raising the scale of the challenge or by distancing them from aspects of the school environment  
482 that were contributing to their personal difficulties.

483 iii. Working closely with pupils to choose activities, set targets and review progress

484 The importance of giving young people a sense of belonging and ownership in programmes aimed at  
485 promoting positive youth development, and, in particular, of involving them in key decisions relating to  
486 their participation is widely reported. These sentiments were echoed by teachers from both HSBC/OB  
487 and SSLfS. For example, a number of SSLfS activities incorporated time for planning, reviewing and  
488 setting targets with pupils. There were examples where teachers would set targets, which the pupils had  
489 to achieve in order to be allowed to participate in activities the next week. Furthermore, teachers felt  
490 that giving ownership of the programme to young people was important:

491 *The pupils loved planning and taking part in activities of their choice (Lead teacher,*  
492 *SSLfS).*

493 Within the framework of the HSBC/OB programme, pupils were not able to be involved in planning  
494 the main activities, but in the residential Outward Bound sessions there was a strong focus on pupils  
495 taking responsibility for themselves and their group (e.g. in terms of arriving for activities on time and  
496 with the appropriate equipment). Moreover, at the end of each day, pupils were asked to reflect on their  
497 achievements and consider their goals for the following day by recording them in a personal journal.

498 Teachers commented that they felt this had been valuable for the pupils:

499 *I loved the way that they summarised what they'd done every evening, they had a focus for*  
500 *the day, and their mentors were reinforcing that as well as instructors (Teacher,*  
501 *HSBC/OB).*

502 In each case, involving pupils in the planning and review of programme activities was perceived to add  
503 a great deal to the experience and to contribute to the degree of positive impact.

504 iv. Establishing positive relationships between programme leaders, mentors and pupils

505 The importance of the role of an adult 'mentor' has been stressed in numerous contexts. This was also  
506 identified strongly by the different groups of participants involved in both programmes. For example,  
507 both teachers and mentors commented that working closely with pupils had helped to establish good  
508 relationships and contribute to the pupils' development:

509 *One of my students said, 'Mrs Smith has changed my life'. This was completely out of the*  
510 *blue... I am not in this job to receive pats on the back, but I was very touched by this*  
511 *spontaneous remark from a student with Aspergers (Teacher, SSLfS).*

512  
513 *They appear to get so much from it from interaction with their peers, but more significantly*  
514 *with other adults (e.g. mentors)... it enables them to see the human side of adults, and*  
515 *enables them to engage with the adults on an 'adult' level, rather than just as authority*  
516 *figures (Mentor, HSBC/OB).*

517 In addition, pupils indicated that they had enjoyed working with teachers and mentors, and had  
518 appreciated being able to get to know them as people rather than just as the aforementioned 'authority  
519 figures'. For example:

520 *I think the mentors were absolutely terrific, they helped us do many things, and not only*  
521 *that, they became our friends (Pupil, HSBC/OB).*

522 Whilst the role of the teacher or mentor was clearly important, however, data from the research projects  
523 also identified that strong relationships between participating pupils is also a factor that may lead to  
524 sustained improvements:

525 *They used to talk in the mini bus about things they had done, and have a little sing song on*  
526 *the way home, and just things that they normally wouldn't experience because they*  
527 *wouldn't be part of a team in our school (Lead teacher, SSLfS).*

528 In addition, it was also noted that, whilst support from adults during the project was important,  
529 continued support was essential in helping young people to maintain improvements:

530 *I think it is down to maintaining the contact, maintaining the links, by not disappearing. At*  
531 *the end of the project, we didn't disappear, we were still there so the relations that we built*  
532 *up could carry on (Lead teacher, SSLfS).*

534 *It's actually an issue, what is our role of 'mentor' going forward? I think there is more to*  
535 *it than just being there as another aide to make sure that the activities happen... you've got*  
536 *to keep contact with the young people (Mentor, HSBC/OB).*

537  
538 *One thing... is this longevity thing, and that is very important, in fact if you didn't continue*  
539 *it's worse than if you didn't start in the first place because you get to the point where there*  
540 *is an alliance and there is a relationship and if that suddenly disappears from both sides*  
541 *there is going to be a potential vacuum after this (mentor, HSBC/OB).*

542 The key point to be noted from this finding, therefore, is the multiple levels on which the  
543 development of positive relationships is desirable. This has clear implications for programme  
544 design (and cost).

545 v. Giving pupils the opportunity to work with (and for) others

546 A large proportion of pupils were selected to participate in both the HSBC/OB and SSLfS programmes  
547 because of poor social skills, poor communication skills or perceptions of low confidence. It is,  
548 perhaps, unsurprising, therefore, to find that many teachers stressed the importance of providing  
549 opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. The physical activity setting offered good  
550 opportunities for this aspect:

551 *They are brilliant now. It's just because everything we've done has been based on*  
552 *teamwork. Because there's only 8 of them, they've had to co-operate, they've had to work*  
553 *together and they are doing it really well (Lead teacher, SSLfS).*

554  
555 *(Abdul) is probably the greatest success story from our school. He was previously shy,*  
556 *underachieving and on the receiving end of some bullying. Now he's confident, achieving*  
557 *above expectations and developing some very good social skills (Teacher, HSBC/OB).*

559 *It's been good for them to meet people they wouldn't normally mix with I think. You could*  
560 *see them eyeing each other up on the first activity day, but I think some of them are really*  
561 *good friends now and they've learnt from each other, you know being from different*  
562 *backgrounds and things (Mentor, HSBC/OB).*

563  
564 The pupils also acknowledged this and appreciated the chance to work with each other, and with groups  
565 of other young people with whom they did not normally interact:

566 *...the fact that I've never worked with special needs children, it was a first for me and I*  
567 *could do it (Pupil, SSLfS).*

568 Moreover, teachers within the HSBC/OB programme also noted that working with pupils from other  
569 schools was important in helping young people meet others from different cultures and backgrounds:

570 *It has been really good to work with the other schools, particularly as this is a boys' school*  
571 *with a predominantly Bangladeshi population. They have learnt a lot from being in mixed*  
572 *groups, especially with the girls. It was so far removed from their day to day experience in*  
573 *school (Teacher, HSBC/OB).*

574 These comments highlight, once again, the significance of social interaction within these youth  
575 development programmes, and reinforce findings from within the sport/physical activity literature that  
576 highlight this as an essential factor in bringing about positive and sustained impact.

577 vi. Structured pathways to enable sustained involvement in programme activities or complementary  
578 activities

579 One of the key points raised by teachers in both programmes was the need to give thought to what  
580 would happen to the young people once the activities had ended. This reflects concerns that have been  
581 raised in the literature over the short-lived nature of initiatives targeting disaffected or disadvantaged  
582 youth. In both programmes, teachers commented that, in order to maintain positive impact, it was  
583 important to establish alternative 'pathways' for pupils once programme activities had ended. For  
584 example:

585 *This is the other thing with the project. I mean where do you go after that? You know, you*  
586 *do your ten weeks... their behaviour was better from the beginning but there is nothing*  
587 *after that actually for them to be (involved in)... There's no incentive (Lead teacher,*  
588 *SSLfS).*

589  
590 *It is becoming clear that those students with regular follow-up input are continuing to*  
591 *achieve the most (Teacher, HSBC/OB).*

592  
593 *We've found it useful to promote DofE [national personal challenge award] to our HSBC*  
594 *pupils, it's just a way of allowing them to keep going with some of the activities. I think a*  
595 *lot of this year's group (Year 3) are thinking of doing it next year (Teacher, HSBC/OB).*

596  
597 Findings from the HSBC/OB project also indicate that the young people who progressed to the later  
598 stages of the programme (i.e. were selected for weekend residential and three-week residential events)  
599 were more likely to maintain an improvement from baseline than those who did not. Moreover,  
600 teachers noted that pupils who sustained their positive development after completing their activity year  
601 were those who went on to engage in alternative programmes, initiatives or activities e.g. the Duke of  
602 Edinburgh Award Scheme, Young Enterprise and business mentoring schemes<sup>vi</sup>. It was noted that these  
603 activities allowed pupils to transfer the skills learnt through their programme involvement (e.g.  
604 teamwork, communication and leadership skills) to alternative situations, and to develop them further,  
605 and that this allowed for their continued development. In the next section, these six themes are  
606 considered both in combination and in the context of the wider literature.

## 608 **Discussion**

609 Recognising both the strengths and the limitations of the evaluation research design, it can be argued  
610 that the findings reported above can make a contribution to the existing research. Individually, the six



611 mechanisms identified as leading to successful programmes in these two evaluations echo some of the  
612 findings from previous research (see Hellison, 1995; Ennis 1999; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Sandford  
613 et al., 2006). However, developing an understanding of how they worked in combination, and taking  
614 into account the detail and duration of data collection, it is possible to see ways in which these findings  
615 provide important insights into the sheer scale of pre-planning that is required in sport/physical activity  
616 programmes to maximise the potential benefits for disengaged/disaffected young people.

617         It should come as no surprise to find that allowing teachers to match pupils' specific needs with  
618 the programme objectives was an important factor in programme success. This is endorsed within the  
619 existing sport/physical activity literature (DfES, 2004; Sandford, Armour & Warmington, 2006). In  
620 these programmes, teachers were given the freedom to appraise the activity on offer and to select pupils  
621 they felt would 'benefit'. Thus, teachers were able to take into account the proposed activity, any key  
622 local contextual factors, and a range of pupil needs. The teachers were also involved in the programme  
623 activities with the pupils, and this was clearly a key factor in their success. Coote, Allen & Woodhead  
624 (2004) have argued that evaluators should make greater efforts to learn from the knowledge and  
625 experience of practitioners, and that methods should be found to achieve this. Certainly, in this  
626 evaluation there appeared to be few other options available.

627         Yet, the first theme is clearly and intricately linked to the second: locating project activities  
628 outside of the 'normal' school context. Donnelly and Coakley (2002) argued that programmes aimed at  
629 promoting social inclusion must provide 'safe spaces' for participants, and Peacock (2006) noted that  
630 evaluations of out-of-classroom learning confirm such an approach can promote positive attitudes,  
631 arouse interest and improve behaviour. It has also been noted, however, that positive learning outcomes  
632 outside of the classroom are not a 'given' and that there is a need for teachers/educators to 'consistently  
633 aid students to understand how what they experience in the outdoor classroom connects to, extends,  
634 and reinforces their in-school work' (Dillon, Morris, Rickinson & Scott, 2005, p.5). In these two  
635 programmes, lead teachers were involved with the pupils throughout the programme activities, thus

636 they were able to ensure the learning environment was appropriate, and could make links to the in-  
637 school context.

638         The third theme - working closely with pupils to choose activities, set targets and review  
639 progress – is widely endorsed in the PYD literature. For example, Donnelly & Coakley (2002) and  
640 Riley & Rustique-Forrester (2002) have argued for the importance of giving young people a sense of  
641 belonging and ownership in such programmes and, in particular, of involving them in key decisions  
642 relating to their participation. In many ways the SSLfS programme was a model in this respect, given  
643 that each year, participating groups were able to select activities and, as long as they were feasible, they  
644 could be undertaken by young people. The funding provided by sponsors in this programme was not  
645 extensive, but it did facilitate unusual and off-site activities making the participant group feel ‘special’.  
646 This is also one of the reasons why, over time, the selection criteria for this programme broadened  
647 beyond pupils who had disruptive behaviour issues to include pupils who had other forms of perceived  
648 need, based on disadvantage or more passive forms of disaffection.

649         The fourth theme, establishing positive relationships between leaders, mentors and pupils, was a  
650 key feature of both programmes although it operated in slightly different ways in each. The importance  
651 of the role of an adult ‘mentor’ has been stressed in numerous contexts within the physical education,  
652 informal education and mentoring literature (e.g. Martinek & Hellison, 1997; Richardson & Wolfe,  
653 2001; Reid, 2002) and it has been suggested that having someone to turn to who is more than ‘just’ a  
654 teacher is important for some young people (Bennetts, 2003; Vulliamy & Webb, 2003). In the  
655 HSBC/OB programme, one of the key features was the training of adult mentors from within HSBC  
656 staff to work with young people on programme activities. Although this was not always a  
657 straightforward process, some of the mentors became fully involved and acted as mentors for several  
658 years. In these cases, the feedback from pupils suggests this was one highlight of the whole  
659 programme. This mirrors findings from the physical education and mentoring literature that identifies  
660 the importance of building sustained relationships between adult leaders and young people (e.g.  
661 Golden, Lines & Sims, 2002). In the SSLfS programme, however, lead teachers (usually physical

662 education teachers) were most closely involved with pupils over time. The programme activities  
663 offered teachers the opportunity to work with a small group of pupils in a sustained way in an unusual  
664 learning context and this, too, offered important opportunities to develop positive adult/young people  
665 relationships.

666 In addition to developing positive relationships with adults, these programmes offered young  
667 people the opportunity to work with and for other young people (theme five). Martinek and Hellison  
668 (1997) have argued that ‘the nature of physical activity – active, interactive, highly emotional –  
669 certainly provides the possibility of exploring and practising values, teamwork, goal-setting, peer-  
670 teaching, conflict resolution, and so on’ (p.44). In addition, Crabbe (2006a); Petitpas et al., 2008 and  
671 Coalter (2000) have all highlighted the importance of wider personal and social development goals in  
672 sport/physical activity programmes. In both programmes, social interaction was a key feature,  
673 including offering young people the opportunity to work with younger pupils (SSLfS) and to interact  
674 with pupils from different schools (at the OB centre and post-activity celebration events in HSBC/OB).  
675 However, this feature on its own would have been less successful in these programmes had other  
676 features not been in place; for example, appropriate selection of pupils, an unusual but ‘safe’ context  
677 for activities and positive relationships with the key adults.

678 The sixth feature that contributed to the reported success of these programmes was the  
679 availability of structured pathways to enable young people to have sustained involvement in further  
680 project or complementary activities. Concerns have been raised in the existing youth disaffection  
681 literature about the short-lived nature of initiatives targeting disaffected or disadvantaged youth (e.g.  
682 France, 2007; Morris et al., 2003; Long & Sanderson, 2001). There have also been calls for multi-  
683 agency approaches to tackling disaffection and promoting positive youth development, and for better  
684 collaborations between key institutions, organisations and agencies (Steer, 2000; DfES, 2003c). What  
685 can be learnt from these two programmes, however, is that for such strategies to be effective, schools  
686 and teachers must be fully engaged in programme activities which, in turn, must be embedded in  
687 schools in an appropriate way. This ensures that where young people develop potential interests as a

688 result of programme participation, an adult based at - or connected to - the school is available to  
689 recognise that interest and nourish it by highlighting further opportunities. It should be remembered  
690 that any positive impact seen immediately after relatively short interventions is likely to be tentative,  
691 particularly where a young person has to contend with considerable personal problems or issues.

692 The final point to be made is that in the initial programme Logic Models (see Appendix A for  
693 an example), the challenges inherent in linking the activities to the programme aims became apparent.  
694 Sharing these models with the sponsors and in, the case of HSBC/OB, the lead teachers, led to  
695 productive discussions about the ambitious nature of the aims, and provided an opportunity for teachers  
696 to express their concerns that the aims were unrealistic. This, in turn, led to a more productive dialogue  
697 between the HSBC/OB sponsors and the lead teachers. The sponsors reiterated that the programme was  
698 essentially a philanthropic activity that sought to give young people a chance in life, aid their personal  
699 and social development and encourage them to engage in education. Moreover, the teachers were  
700 perceived as being actively engaged in the project as partners from whom the sponsors could learn. In  
701 many ways, this was an ideal approach from which other sponsors and funders could learn.

## 703 Conclusion

704 As was noted at the beginning of this paper, there is a strong belief in the potential for physical  
705 activity/sport participation to bring about positive benefits for young people. Certainly, within the UK,  
706 a raft of recent policies/strategies<sup>vii</sup> can be seen as evidence of a prevailing faith in the ability of  
707 physical activity, sport and, indeed, physical education, to contribute positively to young people's  
708 positive personal development and facilitate social inclusion (DCSF, 2005; DCMS, 2007; Sandford,  
709 Duncombe & Armour, 2008). Moreover, the awarding of the 2012 Olympic Games to London has  
710 added weight to such beliefs and is at the heart of expectations that a broad youth legacy (physical,  
711 social and economic) can be achieved through structured physical activity/sport interventions (DfES,  
712 2005; Sandford, Armour & Duncombe, 2010).

713           Despite strong convictions regarding the potential of physical activity/sport participation to reap  
714 benefits for young people, there has, however, been a relative lack of detailed information regarding the  
715 mechanisms by which physical activity/sport interventions lead to positive outcomes (Coalter, 2000;  
716 Bailey, 2005; Sandford et al., 2006). The data reported in this paper offer some interesting insights into  
717 these mechanisms but, more importantly, into the complex ways in which they interact to maximise the  
718 potential of sport/physical activity interventions.

719           The limitations of the data reported here have been acknowledged. Flexibility, responsiveness  
720 and the privileging of the professional judgement of teachers were key attractions for schools and these  
721 features contributed to the undoubted successes of these two programmes. At the same time, these key  
722 features presented the researchers with some formidable challenges. Nonetheless, through a cautious  
723 and realistic evaluation design, the researchers have been able to capture data on large numbers of  
724 pupils over a four year period. The pupils engaged in different programmes that had very similar aims,  
725 and so it was feasible to employ a common evaluation strategy centred on developing Logic models as  
726 a communication tool, and drawing data from individual pupil profiling and school-level case studies.  
727 Within its very real limitations, therefore, the data can offer helpful insights into the ways in which six  
728 interlinked mechanisms can lead to sustained positive impact from sport/physical activity interventions.

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i The PESSCL (Physical Education School Sport Club Links) strategy was launched by the UK government in 2002 and saw significant funding (£459 million) invested in physical education and school sport. The NOPES (New Opportunities for PE and Sport) initiative also saw significant investment (£751 million) in PE and sport, supported by lottery funding. Positive Futures is a national social inclusion project in the UK that uses various activities, including sport, to engage with socially marginalised young people.

ii HSBC in the Community is a sub-group of the global bank HSBC's corporate social responsibility arm, and has responsibility for promoting positive relationships with the local community.

iii The Outward Bound Trust is a global educational charity that has a long history (over 65 years) of using outdoor experiences and challenges to facilitate young people's development.

iv Sky Sports is the dominant subscription television sports brand in the United Kingdom and Ireland and is the current sponsor of the 'Living For Sport' programme.

v The Youth Sport Trust was established in 1994 and is an independent charity that has a focus on supporting, encouraging and developing young people through PE and sport.

vi The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an achievement award for young people, in which they undertake a number of activities intended to promote personal and social development. There are three levels of award (bronze, silver and gold) and each includes physical, social, and community elements. Young Enterprise is a national education charity founded in

1963 to forge links between schools and industry, and business mentoring schemes are similar educational initiatives designed to equip pupils with a better understanding of career opportunities and develop their employability skills through regular meetings with volunteer mentors from local businesses.

vii Recent policies/strategies include PESSCL and NOPES (see endnote i), as well as PESSYP (the Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People, a successor to PESSCL), Every Child Matters and Youth Matters (for further information see [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters)).

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729

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**Tables**

No. of Participants		Data Collection	Raw Data Produced	Data Analysis
Year 1	146 pupils 8 teachers 18 mentors	<i>Teachers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual pupil profiles</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul> <i>Pupils:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual journals</li> <li>Focus groups</li> <li>Structured feedback sheets (ratings scales, open-ended responses)</li> </ul> <i>Mentors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual journals</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul> <i>Additional data collection:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus groups</li> <li>Observation of activities</li> <li>Interviews with project sponsor / deliverer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview/focus group transcripts</li> <li>Journal entries</li> <li>Profile comments</li> <li>Researcher field notes</li> </ul>	<i>Quantitative Data:</i> Summative statistics of quantitative data (e.g. ratings scales, profile information relating to direction of impact for pupils).  <i>Qualitative Data:</i> Thematic analysis of qualitative data (e.g. pupil profile comments, interview transcripts, journal entries, field notes, open-ended question responses).
Year 2	149 pupils 8 teachers 15 mentors			
Year 3	145 pupils 7 teachers 15 mentors			
Year 4	146 pupils 6 teachers 10 mentors			

887 **Table 1: Evaluation Summary for the HSBC/OB Project**

No. of Participants		Data Collection	Raw Data Produced	Data Analysis
Year 1 (03-04)	<i>Total:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32 schools</li> <li>394 pupils</li> </ul> <i>Case Studies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20 schools</li> <li>241 pupils</li> </ul>	<i>Teachers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual pupil profiles (including rating scale responses and open-ended questions)</li> <li>Sustainability of impact surveys</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul> <i>Pupils:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus groups</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul> <i>Additional data collection:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation of activities</li> <li>Collation of relevant school data (e.g. behaviour logs, attendance records).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview/focus group transcripts</li> <li>Profile comments</li> <li>Rating scale data</li> <li>Researcher field notes</li> </ul>	<i>Quantitative Data:</i> Summative statistics of quantitative data (e.g. ratings scales, school statistics, behaviour logs, attendance records).  <i>Qualitative Data:</i> Thematic analysis of qualitative data (e.g. profile comments, interview transcripts, field notes)
Year 2 (04-05)	<i>Total:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>212 schools</li> <li>2318 pupils</li> </ul> <i>Case Studies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22 case studies</li> <li>245 pupils</li> </ul>			
Year 3 (05-06)	<i>Total:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>281 schools</li> <li>3523 pupils</li> </ul> <i>Case Studies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 schools</li> <li>95 pupils</li> </ul>			
Year 4 (06-07)	<i>Total:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>293 schools</li> <li>4477 pupils</li> </ul> <i>Case Studies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 schools</li> <li>118 pupils</li> </ul> <i>Sustainability Case Studies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18 schools</li> <li>22 teachers</li> <li>17 pupils</li> </ul>			

888 **Table 2: Evaluation Summary for the SSLfS Programme**

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<b>Year 4 Findings</b>			
	No. of pupils showing improvements at end of the project.	No. of pupils perceived to maintain improvements for ~ 12 months	% of pupils perceived to maintain improvements for ~ 12 months
<b>12 months</b>	497	433	87.1%
<b>24 months</b>	110	100	90.9%
<b>36 months</b>	7	7	100%

893 **Table 3: SSLfS: pupils showing sustained improvements (Year 4 Findings)**

894 Teachers' perceptions of the number of pupils who, after showing an initial improvement at the end of engagement in the  
895 project (i.e. improvement in the issue for which they were selected, sustained that improvement over 12, 24 and 36 months.  
896 NB these are different cohorts of pupils, and more schools were involved in the project each year.

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<b>All Schools</b>	<b>Positive Improvement from Baseline (% of pupils)</b>			
	<b>6 months</b>	<b>12 months</b>	<b>24 months</b>	<b>36 months</b>
<b>Yr 1</b>	68.4	71.4	65.4	56.25
<b>Yr 2</b>	58.0	57.8	60.5	41.5
<b>Yr 3</b>	47.7	61.0	45.5	83.0
<b>(All Years)</b>	58.0	63.4	57.1	69.6

898 **Table 4: HSBC/OB: Pupils showing sustained improvements (Years 1, 2 and 3)**

899 Table showing the number of pupils showing a positive change from baseline (as perceived by teachers) in Years 1, 2 and 3  
900 of the HSBC/Outward Bound project. The total number of pupils showing a positive change from baseline is also shown.  
901 The figures represent the number of pupils as a percentage of the total number for whom data were received.

YOUR PLANNED WORK (i.e. what you are planning to do)		YOUR INTENDED RESULTS (i.e. what you are expecting to happen)				
RESOURCES/INPUT i.e. elements/factors influencing your ability to do work (positive or negative)		ACTIVITIES i.e. what you then do with your resources		OUTPUTS i.e. the <i>direct product</i> of your activities	OUTCOMES i.e. the changes to participants' behaviour (as a result of the programme)	IMPACT i.e. the fundamental changes in organisations, systems, communities etc. as a result of the programme
Finances Inter-personal networks	HSBC funding HSBC-OB relations HSBC-school relations	Activities:  Book facilities Arrange evaluation Arrange steering group meetings Select schools Select young people  Launch/Closure days OB courses Weekend course event Classic course event  Follow-up activities	Led by:  OB HSBC HSBC  HSBC School staff  OB OB OB OB  Mentors and school staff [NB. No clear indication of who takes the lead here]	Programmes developed	Young people are re-engaged	Young people as role models in the community
People	HSBC link Out. Bound Link Instructors (Inst) School staff (Staff) Mentors (Ment)			Programmes/events run: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch day</li> <li>• Weekend course</li> <li>• Classic course</li> </ul> Follow-up activities	Decreased disaffected behaviour  Increased community involvement  Young people as role models within schools  [different people in the partnership may have different ideas here]	Increased academic achievement  Mentor relations with schools  HSBC community relations  OB corporate relation
Facilities Equipment	Outward Bound Centres Schools HSBC HQ			Also changes for: HSBC, OB, Teachers, Mentors etc.		



904 **Appendix B**  
 905 **Illustrative Example of the Data Analysis Process: Case Study Data**  
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Process	Raw Data	Initial Review of Data	Coding / Memo Writing	Identifying Points of Commonality	Generation of Themes
Explanation	Collate all raw data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview data (transcripts)</li> <li>• Journal entries</li> <li>• Profile data</li> <li>• Researcher fieldnotes</li> </ul>	Scan through the data and highlight points of immediate interest (considering perceived relevance to the research questions or project aims/objectives).	Review the highlighted data and begin to identify categories or codes by picking out key words/phrases. Alongside, make notes (memos) to explain the identification of codes.	Review the codes (and associated memos) and begin to make links between them. Also identify links between the data and literature, and different cohorts of data.	Group the codes / categories into clusters (themes) according to points of commonality.
Illustration [from HSBC/OB project]	Alan (teacher) commented that a lot of his pupils seemed to do quite well initially as a result of taking part in the project, but he also said that those who continued to show improvements (e.g. in confidence and ability) were the ones who were motivated enough to get involved in other things like DofE and Young Enterprise.  [researcher fieldnotes]	...lot of pupils seemed to do quite well initially...  ... those who continued to show improvements... were motivated enough to get involved in other things	Continued Involvement Important e.g. “... <i>those who continued to show improvements... were motivated enough to get involved in other things</i> ” [Memo: highlights the perceived need for pupils to keep involved in similar activities if improvements aren’t to be temporary]	Suggests that pupils need further opportunities to use, apply and develop skills acquired through initial project involvement. Pupil focus group data (e.g. school E) also supports this. Links to literature on transferability of skills (e.g. Holt et al. 2008)	<i>Key Theme</i> Structured pathways to enable sustained involvement in project activities (or complementary activities) are important

907 **Illustrative Example of the Data Analysis Process: Pupil Profiles**  
 908

Explanation	Collate raw data (teacher feedback forms)	Identify data relating to numbers of pupils	Calculate the percentage of total pupils showing particular types of improvements (e.g. positive/negative)	Present Findings
Illustration [from SSLfS project - Sustainability of Impact Forms]	Teachers were asked to provide data for the number of pupils who showed initial improvements and for how many sustained these improvements over time.	Figures were extracted for pupils who had finished their projects 12, 24 and 36 months ago.	Total number of pupils showing an initial improvement was 110. Total number of pupils showing a sustained improvement was 100. Percentage of pupils sustaining improvements was therefore 90.9%.	“90.9% of pupil who were perceived by their teachers to have made an initial improvement were seen to sustain this improvement over a period of 36 months”

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