

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION OF THE MENTAL SKILLS TOOLKIT BEYOND HOMELESS SERVICES: CO- CREATING THE MATCHFIT APP

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Economic
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ABOUT THIS REPORT

This is a non-technical report to summarise the extension of the Mental Skills Toolkits into new domains. Specifically, we present the translation of My Strengths Training for Life™ to the matchFit digital app; and a knowledge exchange webinar to increase our community-based organisational network.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT

- CARES: Competence, Autonomy, Relatedness, Engagement and communication, Structure and group management
- CEO: Chief Executive Officer
- EET: In Education, Employment or Training
- ESRC: Economic and Social Research Council
- IAA: Impact Acceleration Account
- MST: Mental Skills Training
- MST4Life™: My Strengths Training for Life
- NEET: Not in Education, Employment or Training
- SPRINT: Sport Psychology Research In New Territories
- USP: Unique Selling Point

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the recent extension of the Mental Skills Toolkits into new areas. The project was a collaborative effort between researchers from the University of Birmingham, The Street Soccer Foundation and St Basils. The main aims were to translate content within My Strengths Training for Life™ (MST4Life™) into an app called matchFit, and subsequently evaluate its impact. Further, we aimed to extend our stakeholder network to include community organisations who use sport as a vehicle for social impact. A complete overview of the process of translating knowledge to action is provided in this report, before outlining the evaluation of impact and describing future areas for longer term development and evaluation.

Activities

The main production activities used to meet the project aims were scientific literature review, ongoing discussions with Street Soccer and St Basils, focus groups with key stakeholders including a youth homeless advisory group, football fans and coaches, and a knowledge exchange webinar with community-based organisations. These activities provided an excellent opportunity to co-design digital MST4Life™ content and

obtain useful feedback to directly inform further development of the matchFit app and increase our stakeholder network.

Evaluation & impact

The aims and objectives of the project were met and extended, whereby more routes to impact were identified and achieved than originally planned. For example, public engagement funding permitted further reach of MST4Life™ at local exhibitions. Feedback concerning matchFit and wider community-based organisation engagement has been very positive. Impact has already been evidenced through the creation of knowledge for researchers who develop digital tools for disadvantaged youth; and the international reach of the webinar.

Lessons learned & recommendations

Key learnings relate to the necessity of co-creation, app design and content considerations, impact of digital poverty on digital intervention rollout and safeguarding-based suggestions. Further novel Mental Skills Toolkit translation efforts, and collaborative development of matchFit 2.0 are ongoing.

INTRODUCTION

Youth homelessness has recently increased 40%, partly due to the covid-19 pandemic and economic downturn, with those numbers expected to rise even further¹. Homeless organisations are supporting a greater number of young people aged 16 to 24 years who experience homelessness or are at risk, but with reduced resources and at higher costs. Youth homelessness places an economic burden on public services, for example through long-term poor health and NEET status^{2 3}; with an average cost to the economy of over £2 billion.

Compounding these challenges further, wider systematic issues have meant that fewer preventative measures are currently in place and young people are presenting to these services with greater and more complex needs¹, such as difficulties engaging with employment, education, or training (EET), gaining independent living skills, coping with poor mental health, and dealing with isolation and loneliness. More than ever before, these organisations need effective, inexpensive, and easy to implement approaches to improve outcomes in young people who stand to benefit the most.

Mental skills, such as those used by elite athletes to improve performance, are strengths that we can all develop and improve. Adapted for use in a novel youth homelessness setting, My Strengths Training for Life™ (MST4Life™) facilitates effective coping strategies and has been proven to build resilience and improve mental well-being for over 600 young people since 2014.

The Mental Skills Training Toolkit trilogy was developed due to the success of MST4Life™. These are strengths-based resources consisting of: (1) a collection of mental skills training tools designed to improve the resilience of disadvantaged young people, (2) a guide for staff and practitioners to build confidence to deliver the toolkit content in a psychologically informed way, and (3) tips for planning and evaluating strengths-based development programmes.

The toolkits have been well-received by the sector, leading to an expanded network and possibilities to increase the reach of the toolkit. This project therefore provided the opportunity to (1) develop a partnership with The Street Soccer Foundation and increase the reach of our toolkits by translating its content into a new shareable format: the matchFit app, and (2) extend our stakeholder network to include organisations who use sport as a vehicle for social impact and addressing disadvantage through a hosting a knowledge exchange webinar.

MY STRENGTHS TRAINING FOR LIFE™

MST4LIFE™ USES SIMILAR TECHNIQUES TO THOSE USED BY SPORTS COACHES TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE SET GOALS AND UTILISE SUPPORT NETWORKS TO DEVELOP CONFIDENCE, TEAMWORK, PROBLEM-SOLVING, AND A RANGE OF OTHER MENTAL SKILLS.

OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

CONTEXT OF THE ORIGINAL MST4LIFE™ PROJECT AND TOOLKIT

In the initial IAA project, we translated evidence from the MST4Life™ programme into shareable toolkits (Figure 1), which supported implementation in Housing Services across the UK. The toolkits were co-developed with our partners: St Basils, Youth Voice, and Homeless Link.

Figure 1

The Mental Skills Training toolkit trilogy. Available to download at <https://www.sprintproject.org/toolkit>



The toolkits have been well-received by the sector and led to additional unplanned impact activities, such as a workshop at Homeless Link's national conference, presentations to non-academic beneficiaries, and writing an article for the Big Issue.

Other organisations told us how valuable the toolkits could be for supporting their work. We have expanded our stakeholder network and through delivering a toolkit workshop at the Homeless Link conference, we developed a partnership with The Street Soccer Foundation.

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH STREET SOCCER

The Street Soccer Foundation is a non-profit charity working in partnership with professional football clubs throughout England to use football as a catalyst to improve the lives of young people



experiencing homelessness. Its academy is the leading football-led project tackling youth homelessness in England, reaching over 1000 people experiencing homelessness.

For every £1 invested, Street Soccer has returned £15 of social value. This value has been achieved through development of skills and positive opportunities (e.g., increased confidence, interaction with positive role models) and a reduction in risk behaviours (e.g., anti-social behaviour, substance abuse and criminal activity). Instead, young people have gone on to secure employment and gain work-related skills⁴.

Through initial conversations with Street Soccer's CEO, we identified shared values relating to strengths-based approaches to supporting young people facing multiple disadvantages and recognising the importance of building relationships and skills in this process.

This project aimed to increase the reach of our toolkits by translating its content into a new shareable format: the matchFit app. In response to covid-19, this app was developed by Street Soccer and two leading UK charities (Crisis and Shelter) to provide evidence-based advice on mental and physical wellbeing. Because football sessions could not safely take place, Street Soccer were in urgent need of evidence-based resources to provide to players via matchFit, which was also made accessible to young people in Housing services across the UK. Our role was to use underpinning research and the toolkits to adapt the content into user-friendly app activities and evaluate its impact.

The matchFit logo, featuring the word 'matchFit' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font on a solid orange background.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Table 1

Aims and objectives of this research

AIMS & OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES TO MEET AIMS & OBJECTIVES
1. Co-develop digital content for the matchFit app by Street Soccer	<p>We tailored knowledge translation of the toolkit for Street Soccer by co-developing sections of matchFit to include key mental skills and grounding techniques for young people during and beyond covid-19. This included the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to find your reset button using grounding techniques • How to regulate your emotions 101 • How to set goals for success • If Then planning • Image success to beat stress • Keeping socially healthy during COVID • Pre-performance routines
2. Co-design an evaluation plan to determine impact of the matchFit app on well-being	<p>Focus group questions were determined by the researchers and literature, but also through ongoing conversations with the CEO of Street Soccer.</p> <p>Through focus groups with stakeholders (young people in youth homeless advisory group, fans, coaches) we determined barriers and enablers to app engagement and suggestions for the next version of the app.</p>
3. Bring together a stakeholder network for an online, half-day knowledge exchange webinar	<p>This webinar took place on 18th October 2022 with 37 attendees (72 registered) and was based around how community-based research can help organisations to support health and well-being of young people and the staff who support them using digital and non-digital methods. The webinar had 2 aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share our journey of developing content for and evaluation of matchFit • Increase the reach of the toolkit by discussing how community-based organisations can become more psychologically informed in their support delivery <p>Evaluation data indicates the webinar was well received, increased the reach and downloads of the toolkit, and served a foundation for relationship building with new community organisations.</p>

THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE PROJECT

This project was delivered in the height of the covid-19 pandemic which naturally brought unique and unanticipated challenges, meaning that some of the original aims had to be revised. However, we as researchers see this as a core part of community-based research – adapting to the challenges of “real-world” research and adjusting to support the needs of the community partner.

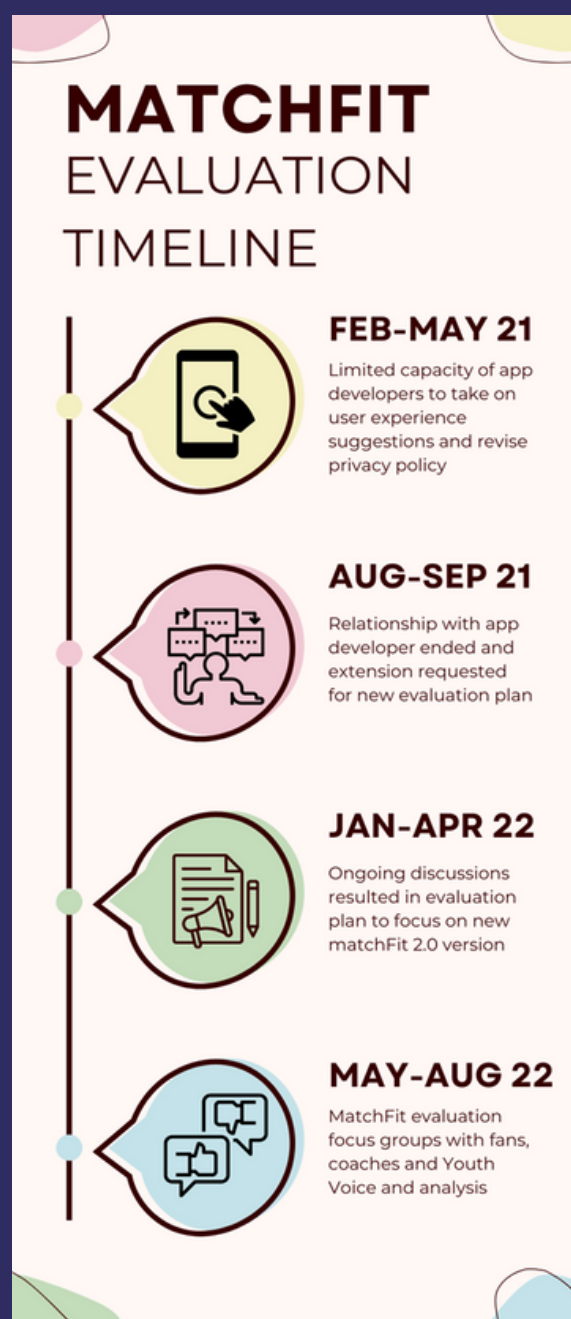
The Street Soccer Foundation faced unanticipated challenges, meaning attention was diverted to crisis support of the young people in their academies and staff who supported them. We worked closely with Street Soccer and kept in regular contact to determine the best course of action to achieve the intended aims and objectives. We gratefully received extensions from the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account team to allow the below objectives to be met.

Co-development of app content (aim 1) and the knowledge exchange webinar (aim 3) were delivered according to plan, with the latter taking place later in the project due to the extension. The main changes made were to matchFit evaluation (aim 2), which are summarised in Figure 2.

The app developers were unable to take on recommendations about user experience and make required changes to the privacy policy (e.g., using data for research purposes), amongst other challenges. As a result, Street Soccer decided to part ways with the app developer in August 2021. An extension was therefore requested to devise a new evaluation plan with Street Soccer, where the new focus was on suggestions for matchFit 2.0 whilst securing a new app developer relationship.

Another change was that due to pandemic related crisis support, the Street Soccer academy coaches didn't have the capacity to recruit young people for the focus groups, or take part themselves. With the approval of Street Soccer, focus groups were instead conducted with fans, coaches and Youth Voice (a national youth advocacy group for those with lived experience of homelessness).

Figure 2
matchFit evaluation plan changes.



CO-DEVELOPMENT OF MATCHFIT CONTENT (OBJECTIVE 1)

CONTENT

MatchFit launched to coincide with World Mental Health Day and World Homelessness Day on 10th October 2020. The aim of matchFit was to provide free resources on mental health and wellbeing, offering self-help and signposted guidance to users on 5 core themes (Table 2).

Table 2

Content created for matchFit

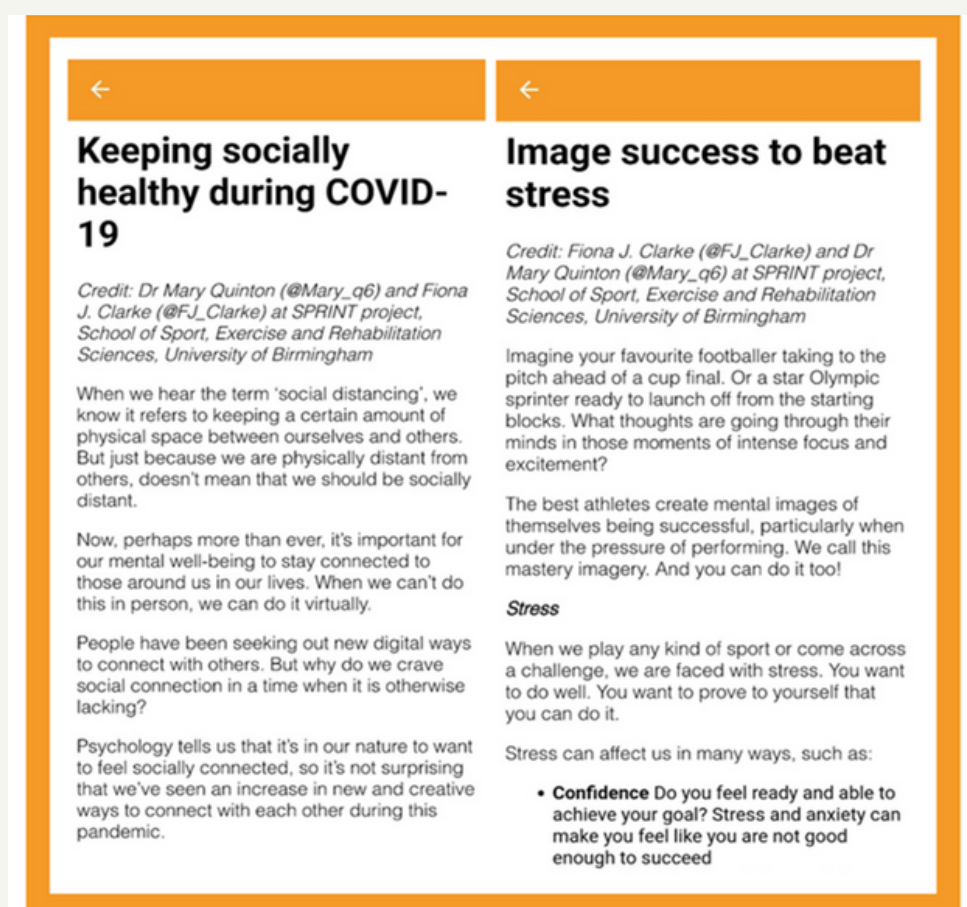
THEME	ARTICLE(S)	EXAMPLE QUOTE	LINKS TO RESOURCES
1. Mental wellbeing	How to find your reset button using grounding techniques	"In life, there is no such thing as impossible; it's always possible" (Venus Williams)	https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/understanding-my-feelings/
2. Behaviour	How to regulate our emotions 101 If Then planning Pre-performance routines	"I'm a very positive thinker and I think that is what helps me the most in difficult moments" (Roger Federer)	https://www.verywellmind.com/cognitive-reframing-for-stress-management-3144872
3. Motivation	How to set goals for success	"I Like To Use The Hard Times in The Past, To Motivate Me Today" (Dwayne Johnson)	https://www.sprintproject.org/interactive-goal-setting
4. Mindset	Image success to beat stress (Figure 3)	"I know what I can do so it doesn't bother me what other people think or their opinion on the situation." (Usain Bolt)	https://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/mental-health/grounding-exercises/
5. Resilience	Keeping socially healthy during COVID (Figure 3)	"I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." (Michael Jordan)	https://www.sprintproject.org/interactive-strengths-profiling

We tailored knowledge translation of the toolkit for Street Soccer by co-developing sections of the app to include key mental skills and grounding techniques for young people during and beyond covid-19.

Based on discussions with Street Soccer's CEO and ongoing interactions with our existing partner St Basils, we created the content summarised in Table 2 based on the challenges and support needs for vulnerable young people during the pandemic. Offered as a mixture of audio (empowerment songs), video (messages from current and former players), reading (articles) and quotes, the app provides 24/7 help and support for others.

Figure 3

Screenshot of example articles co-developed for matchFit.



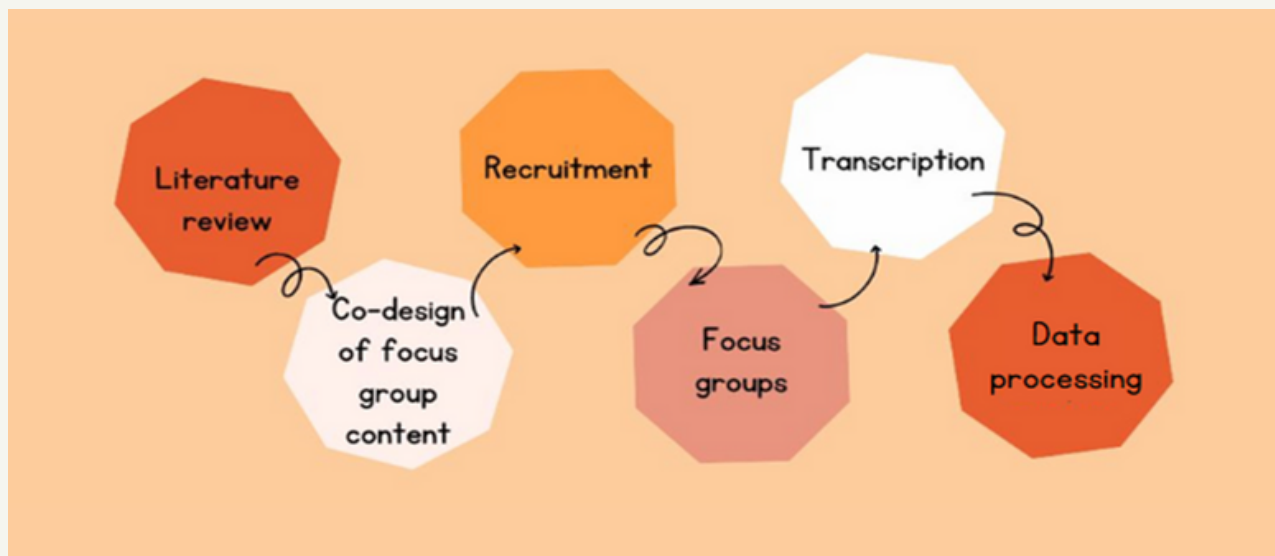
OUTPUTS

The outputs produced as a result of co-creating evidence-based content for matchFit included:

- Podcast interview for the Street Soccer United podcast (see Appendix 1)
- Blog for Street Soccer Foundation website as a special feature on Mental Health (see Appendix 2)
- Blog for the SPRINT project website to promote the launch of matchFit (see Appendix 3)

CO-DESIGN OF MATCHFIT EVALUATION PLAN (OBJECTIVE 2)

Our aim was to evaluate the user experience and impact of the matchFit app on young people's well-being by understanding the potential barriers or enablers for engagement with apps and also understanding what type of content young people would find most beneficial and want to engage with. An evaluation plan was co-designed by researchers at University of Birmingham together with ongoing discussions with Street Soccer's CEO.



LITERATURE REVIEWS AND CO-DESIGN OF FOCUS GROUP CONTENT

The process began by researching the literature on knowledge translation for apps and websites to inform questions to ask in the focus groups, such as questions around accessibility, trust, and user engagement. The drafted focus group guide was sent to Street Soccer's CEO for (1) checking suggested questions were relevant and (2) identifying any questions missing to align with Street Soccer's aims for evaluation.

RECRUITMENT AND DELIVERY OF FOCUS GROUPS

Three focus groups were conducted in June 2022 with football fans, football coaches (n=2 males), and Youth Voice members (n = 4; aged 22 to 25; 2 females, 2 males) via zoom to

provide insights on what they would look for when considering apps for supporting wellbeing. Participants were recruited via a variety of methods, such as Twitter, emails, and making use of connections available to us. Ethical procedures were followed, and consent obtained prior to the commencement of the focus group sessions. Each focus group lasted between 1-2 hours, and participants were provided with a Love2Shop voucher for their time.

DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

Focus groups were transcribed word for word, maintaining anonymity of participants through the use of pseudonyms. The analysis process is detailed in Figure 4 and a screenshot from the Trello board is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 4

Focus group data processing and analysis steps.

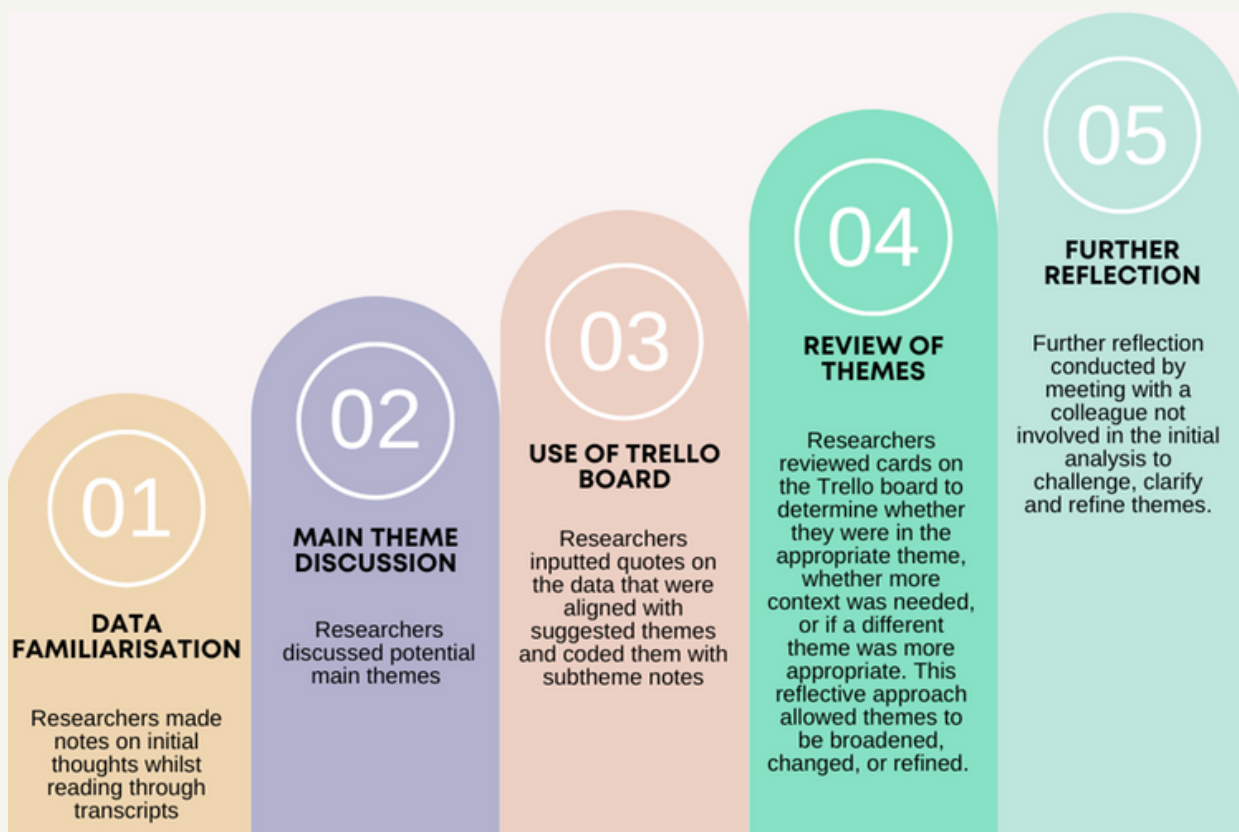


Figure 5

Screenshot of the private online Trello board.



EVALUATION AND IMPACT: FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Three broader themes developed from our evaluation: design, content, and potential impact on wellbeing. There were four sub-themes within design (audience & purpose, user experience, appearance/style, and retention), three for content (new, existing, and dynamic), and four for impact (potential negative impact, football USP, could improve health and well-being, and embedded culture) (Figure 6).

The key over-arching messages from our evaluation are detailed on the next page.

1) Young people expect apps to look good as well as the content be there.

2) Building awareness through bite sized content that helps young people to apply the skills they are learning. This content can be dynamic, and we should be helping young people to apply the content by helping them use the right tools at the right time and be successful and not overwhelmed.

3) Signposting to further resources and support and balancing notifications were important safeguarding concerns.

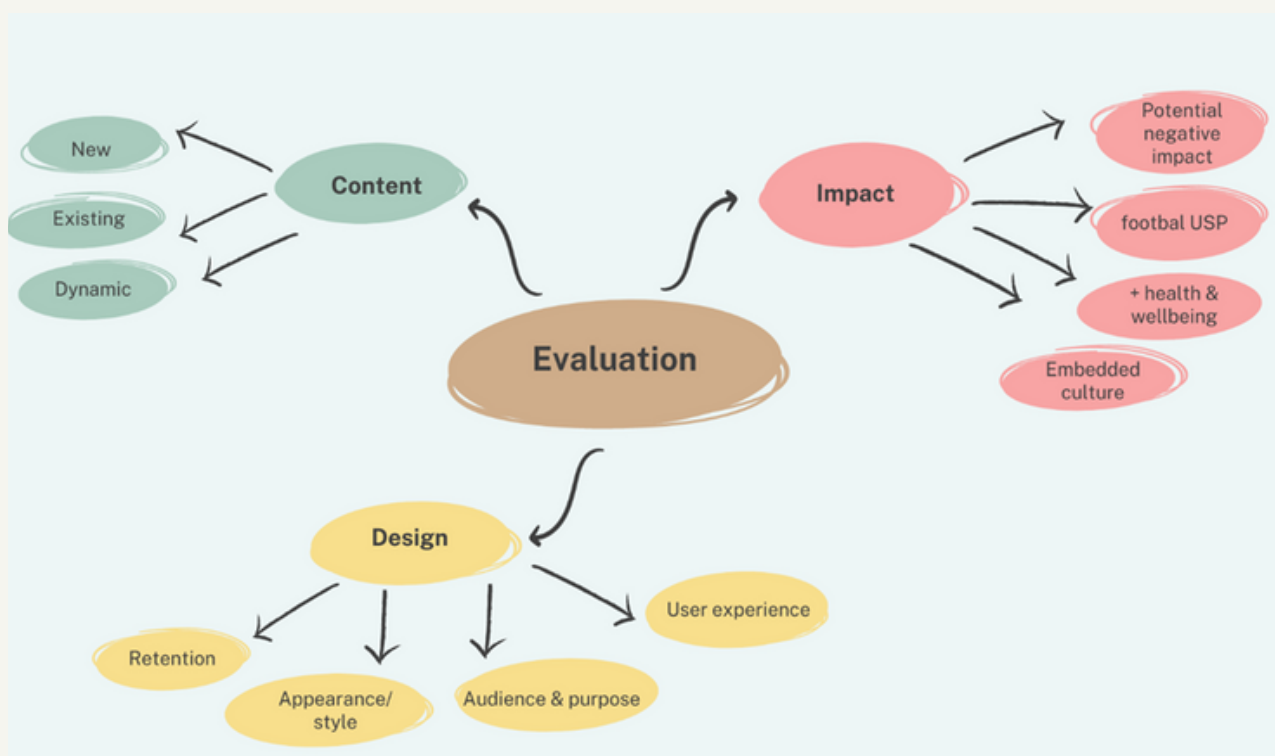
4) Co-production. Involving the target

audience in the creation of app content and design can allow for meaningful and engaging content. Apps are iterative and so bringing in users in the process is important, particularly when there's a clear target audience and focus (i.e., football).

The next three pages provide a visual breakdown of the themes, example quotes, and key messages from the focus groups. For future evaluations, it will be important to also analyse app statistics to see how people use an app to gain a more complete picture of user experience, rather than just focus group feedback alone.

Figure 6

Evaluation focus group thematic map.



DESIGN: HOW & WHY PEOPLE INTERACT WITH THE APP

Audience & purpose

Who the app is designed for & why these people use it:

The target audience should be clear through the design of the app



"I think if you can make more illustrative much better, especially for kids and teenagers they don't read. Like as we are used to read, they want everything simplify at least my experience here, working with kids." (Coach)

"It's easy to use it's not too much being thrown at you all at once. You can sort of limit how much information you're taken in ... it is quick easy to use, you can get done what you need to get done and the information's there if you need to find it which a lot of young people want they don't want to have to go to other places to get the same sort of information that's related". (Youth Voice)



User experience

The practical aspects of navigating the app:

An app should be easy to navigate & user friendly

Appearance/style

How the app is visually presented & how this influences user engagement with the app:

An app should be consistent & attention to detail is important



"One of the one of the main things in design is consistency." (Youth Voice)



"If you could gamify the exercises, that would be that'd be brilliant." (Coach)

"You'd be able to see your improvement as well, if you have been like sticking to a good habit and that you'd be able to see that your mood gets better and better over the graph and over the time keeps me more motivated and that." (Youth Voice)

Retention

How design influences engagement in the app:

Retention would be more likely if there was new content, progression, gamification, & push notifications*

**caveat with notifications is they can reduce retention if not used properly*

Key messages

Appearance of an app is just as important as content

- **Easy to use & consistent**
- **Gamification & progression**
- **Clear & simple tips in an easy to navigate app**



CONTENT: WHAT IS IN THE APP

New

Suggestions for new content:

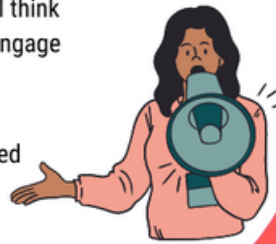
Creating a community within the app was an important consideration



"If you had a bit on it, where players could ask questions into a forum like hey I've got this problem, have you guys dealt with it or something I think a lot of it would have to be a safe space so as anonymous as possible so that players can be honest about kind of their emotional state and it's kind of a fall back and you don't want if a parent looked at it, for example, I feel like I'd equate that kind of with looking into a diary as kind of something that you're supposed to engage with personally, but if all your information or the kind of details of what you're looking at kind of you don't really have control over who has access to them, I think it wouldn't create a safe space for a lot of players." (Coach)

"I think what I really like about it is the fact that they can self-monitor and kind of input I think it's really important to kind of engage with it yourself and kind of have a general overview. Am I am leaning more to one side, more to the other side that kind of ability to kind of live track your own state, I think that's quite useful because it's not something that most people will engage with on the kind of a daily life kind of thing." (Coach)

"Somehow you managed to get it in the code that when they scored low, it would be able to pop up will come up and say with the Samaritans and mind, or whoever it may be that may get more benefit for the consumer, I guess." (Fan)



Existing

Comments on existing content & suggestions for amendments:

The mood tracker was an acceptable feature. Music & signposting were suggestions for improvement

Dynamic

Suggestions for greater interactivity within the app:

Use of visuals is important as well as introducing content in bite sized amounts. Developing & changing content can promote app interactivity.

"The other thing I think is especially for young players, the videos. So if you go on instagram and you type in the kind of for professional development football you see tons and tons of videos, which are all about like do this exercise to strengthen this part do this to improve your touch do this to improve your shooting. Umm, I think mental health or mental resilience needs to be in that similar category so a lot of short snappy videos that you can consume fairly easily as a young player. Which is like oh if you're lacking confidence do this if you're if you're nervous on the pitch try this exercise, like you know mental exercise." (Coach)



Key messages

Content should be useful & presented in dynamic & exciting ways

- Content enjoyable & helpful
- Want autonomy, flexibility & personalisation
- Want guidance on how & when to apply the content



IMPACT: POTENTIAL BENEFIT OF THE APP

Potential negative impact

Avoiding a negative impact on mental health through using the app:

Important to manage expectations & ensure safeguarding measures in place



"also one thing that I think people don't realise that people have mental health issues do is I used to have an app that would only do this too like once a day and I'd see again on the evening when everything's quite good and I'd look and see I said I was anxious and then my body would sort of be like right we're meant to be anxious, which sounds so backwards. But it was almost like well that's what I've put so that has to be true, and then I'd like stress, about it, which would then make more anxiety do you know what I'm trying to say, and so it just feels quite restrictive in that regard." (Youth Voice)

"I think there's probably a unique selling point that if it is based around football in some way and that might help a lot of, I certainly know without wanting to sound sexist at all, but maybe some young men who might be more challenged to find or explore mental health solutions themselves. But I think if it's branded in a certain way that makes you feel a certain way, so it's okay for that one versus something like a calm or mind or something like that that'd be great it's just how you, and I think, so I think on its own it makes more sense it's been that kind of category of an APP store." (Fan)



Football USP

Capitalising on the unique selling point of football to enhance engagement & well-being

Reaching audiences that may not engage as frequently

Could improve health & well-being

Ways in which the app could improve the health & well-being of those who engage:

App has potential to improve health & well-being

"That [linking between app] might help because I think there really is the potential to like gain some good self awareness from it, and some good understanding and some motivation and some education." (Youth Voice)

"The practical part they are you know the planning I think that's pretty useful because I think it's often quite difficult to know what to do what you know, sometimes people have been feeling a little helpless, so I think, giving them something that's practical steps you can take to improve your situation is. You know that's really valuable." (Fan)

"I think it's tricky football isn't isn't a sport kind of from my experience, where where mental health is directly kind of talked about, it gets done around about ways, but it's not something that's an active discussion." (Coach)

"I think right now coaches are in a in a really difficult position because we're more aware of mental health than we were a couple years ago and I think the conversation is more prevalent now. But the tools to kind of broach it are still very patchy." (Youth Voice)



Embedded culture

Using the app as tool to promote positive culture around well-being within sport/teams:

App could promote a culture of openness around mental health, & support coaches, athletes, & parents with having discussions

Key messages

Potential for positive impact on well-being

Design + content + safeguarding = well-being



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE WEBINAR (OBJECTIVE 3)

Supporting community-based organisations to promote young people's wellbeing through sport psychology

Join researchers from the University of Birmingham and our community partners St Basils and Street Soccer to learn more about how **sport psychology** has been **translated to support disadvantaged young people in community settings** through apps, toolkits and interactive tools.

- Translating sport psychology techniques into the matchFit app
- Sport Psychology to support young people experiencing homelessness: The MST4Life™ project
- What is a psychologically informed delivery style?
- Panel session with researchers and community partners

DETAILS:

- 📅 Tuesday 18th October
- 🕒 9:30-12:30 (GMT)
- 📺 Zoom
- 📄 [Click here to register](#)

Logos: UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM, St Basils (Works with young people), STREET SOCCER, matchFit app, MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING TOOLKIT.

In October 2022 the knowledge exchange webinar titled ‘Supporting community-based organisations to promote young people’s wellbeing through sport psychology’ was delivered and attended by 28 individuals from a variety of organisations from the United Kingdom and Europe (see Appendix 4 for list of registered attendees). In total 68 individuals had signed up for the webinar on Eventbrite but not all were able to attend so the recording was sent to them after. The webinar was advertised on social media (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn) and sent out to new and existing contacts at community-based organisations supporting young people.

WEBINAR AIMS

Through sharing work from our projects with Street Soccer and St Basils the webinar had four main aims:

- 1**
To increase the reach of the MST toolkits and raise their and the research teams profiles.
- 2**
To increase engagement with the website
- 3**
To Expand our partner network
- 4**
To signpost attendees to public engagement activities at The Exchange exhibition 'Making home a place to be'.

To meet these aims the webinar consisted of a three main talks as well as a panel with Q&A session, as highlighted in the first image on the next page.

Overview of the webinar



9:30 Welcome and outline



9:45 Sport psychology to improve wellbeing: Apps (Street Soccer)



10:15 Sport psychology to improve wellbeing: MST4Life™ and the MST toolkits with St Basils



10:45 Break



10:55 Psychologically informed approaches to improving wellbeing



11:30 Breakout discussions: What barriers and enablers are there to using digital and non-digital tools to improve wellbeing in your work?



11:45 Panel Q&A with speakers



12:15 Conclusion and next steps

Researchers from the University of Birmingham were joined by representatives from community partners (Street Soccer CEO Keith Mabbutt and St Basils CEO Jean Templeton) who also contributed to the session relating to their organisation and the panel Q&A session. See below for the overview of each main talk.

WEBINAR TALK OVERVIEWS

TALK 1: SPORT PSYCHOLOGY TO IMPROVE WELLBEING - APPS WITH STREET SOCCER

This talk provided information on findings from the evaluation conducted on the matchFit app. An overview of the app was provided as well as further insight and context from Street Soccer. The talk also covered how data was collected and presented some of the key findings described in the objective 2 component of this report. Finally, key considerations were provided to support attendees when choosing or even designing apps for supporting young people's well-being.



Overview of the project: Street Soccer



Data collection & analysis



Key findings



Another example of supporting wellbeing through apps: FIKA



Lessons learned



Keith Mabbutt (Street Soccer Foundation)

TALK 2: SPORT PSYCHOLOGY TO IMPROVE WELLBEING - MST4LIFE™ AND THE MST TOOLKITS WITH ST BASILS

This session discussed research from the 10-year partnership between the University of Birmingham and St Basils, showing how sport psychology tools and techniques were adapted to promote wellbeing and independent living skills of young people experiencing homelessness through MST4Life™ programme and toolkits.



TALK 3: PSYCHOLOGICALLY INFORMED APPROACHES TO IMPROVE WELLBEING

The final presentation session looked in more detail at how to deliver psychologically informed programmes through the CARES model and how to evaluate programmes in a psychologically informed way (e.g., different methods) using examples from MST4Life™ and the MST commissioning and evaluation toolkit.



EVALUATION OF THE WEBINAR

The webinar was evaluated through (1) feedback forms completed by attendees, (2) website analytics and (3) analytics from Twitter.

ATTENDEE FEEDBACK

Following the webinar, attendees were provided with the opportunity to give feedback through a short online survey (10 Likert scale questions and two open-ended questions).

All respondents (N=6) answered strongly agree for "I've learned new things from attending the webinar", reflecting the appropriateness and effectiveness of this dissemination method. Overall, respondents indicated that they had learned about key factors concerning the utility of apps to support young people's wellbeing, and increased their knowledge around digital intervention tools in general. Further, information around the importance of community-focused research that informed the MST toolkits was well received; and respondents reported that the knowledge acquired in the webinar can be applied to their own work. See Figure 7 for a full breakdown of the questions and average responses.

The two open ended questions focused on what the three most important takeaways from the webinar were (Figure 8) and what could have been improved. Key findings related to the interest in collaborative, psychologically informed co-design approaches, and the use of the MST toolkits to support young people; and the need to consider costs when sharing learnings about, and implementing digitised intervention strategies.

Figure 7

Average online survey results across all respondents.



Note. Maximum score for each question was 5. Higher average score across all respondents (and wider blue shading) indicates overall stronger agreement with the question.

WEBSITE ANALYTICS

Through looking at the analytics on the website we can see that around the webinar there was an increase in traffic to the website with a peak of 51 visits on the day (18th October 2022) (Figure 9).

Figure 9

Website traffic peak on date of webinar.

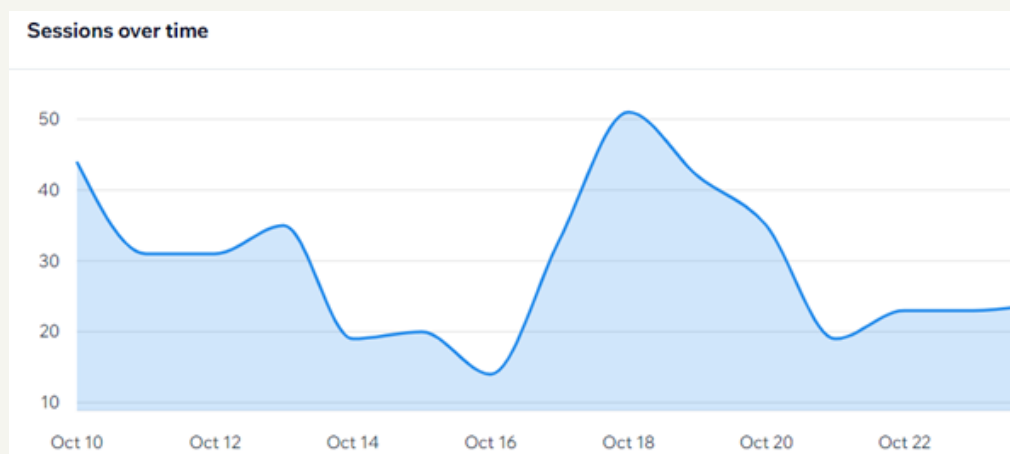


Figure 8

Example open ended question and answer from the webinar.

Q2. What, for you, were the three most important take-away points from today's webinar?

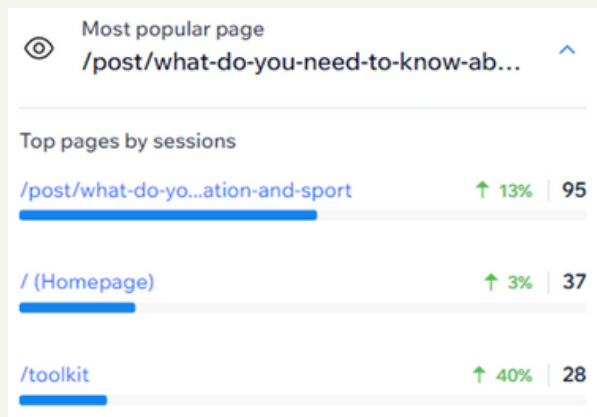
"How working with a university could help my organisation"

"The Toolkits, Positive Association for MST, Learning about how apps can be helpful"

We can also see from the website analytics that during the period October 14th-October 21st, 2022, that there was a 40% increase in visits to the toolkit page on the website (Figure 10).

Figure 10

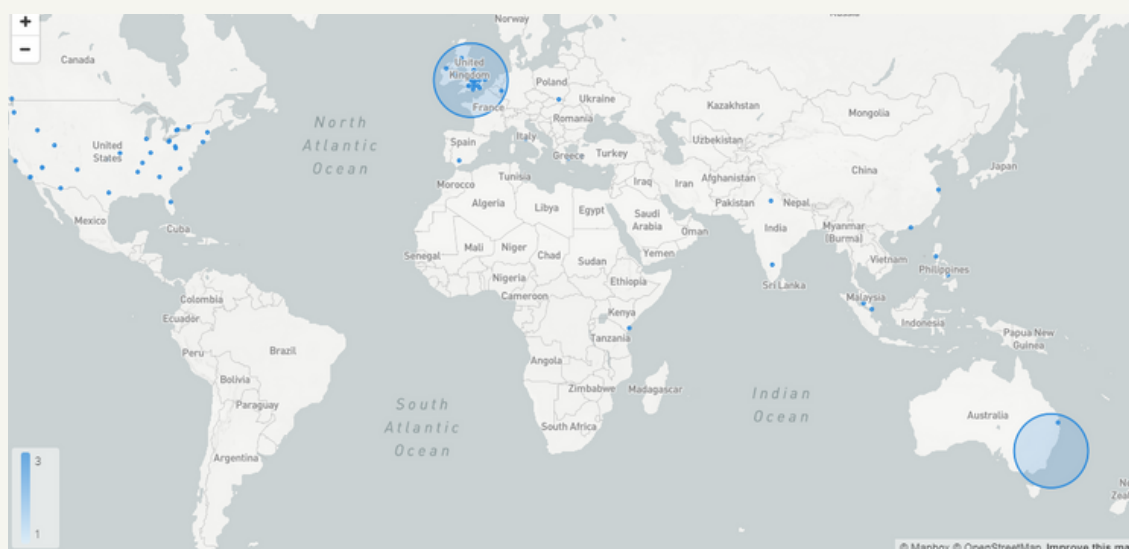
Screenshot showing increase in visits to the Toolkit page.



In summary, through the online webinar we were able to increase global awareness and potential reach of the teams work in relation to the MST toolkits. Figure 11 shows the website interactions around the day of the webinar. Outside of the UK, most visits came from the USA, Ireland and Australia, with some interaction also emerging from countries such as Kenya and India.

Figure 11

Webinar website traffic peak.

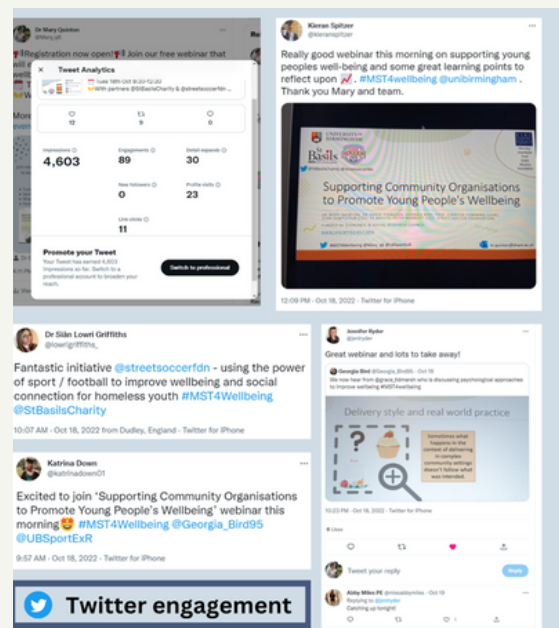


TWITTER ANALYTICS

We can see from Twitter that there was good engagement during the promotion of the webinar as a well as during and after the webinar through our hashtag “#MST4Wellbeing”. Through the webinar registrations, attendance and Twitter engagement, this project was successful in increasing the reach of this work, the toolkits and expanding our network of contacts (Figure 12).

Figure 12

#MST4Wellbeing focused Twitter engagement.



IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

LESSONS LEARNED

Overarching lessons were learnt from the evaluation of matchFit and the webinar. These lessons (highlighted here and in Figure 13) are important for those who might be thinking of developing apps or digital based content in the future and those who might be directing young people to apps as a means of support for health and wellbeing.

DESIGN

The appearance of apps are as important in promoting acceptability as their content. Apps should be easy to use and consistent, with gamification elements and progression information.

CONTENT

Skill-based content presented via apps can be helpful to young people. However content should be accessible, useful and presented in

dynamic and fun ways. Autonomy, flexibility and personalisation are important; as is receiving appropriate guidance on how and when to apply the skills that are learnt.

SAFEGUARDING

Clear signposting to relevant organisations should be present in digital content that promotes mental health-focused knowledge; as well as dynamic adjustment, to account for differences across individuals (e.g., in push notifications).

CO-CREATION

Potential recipients (and those delivering programmes or services) should be included in its creation. Co-creation can ensure that apps, games, services, and programmes are meaningful and relevant to their context.

DIGITAL POVERTY

A vital point to consider is digital poverty. Highlighted in the feedback during the webinar (using Padlet boards) digital poverty

Figure 13

Lessons learned from the matchFit evaluation.



would be a barrier that would need to be considered in terms of the reach and impact of digital methods such as phone apps.

NEXT STEPS

Following the activities and research conducted (as presented in the earlier sections of the report) next steps are presented below.

MATCHFIT 2.0

Based on the evaluation of the matchFit app, feedback will be implemented into the next version of matchFit - matchFit version 2.0. The plans for this are in the early stages, but through ongoing discussions between the University of Birmingham researchers, Street Soccer Foundation, and potential app developers, there are a number of promising avenues for continued collaboration to improve the app and expand its' reach into new audiences.

THE EXCHANGE

Further expanding the reach of the MST Toolkits, the MST4Life and Toolkits featured in the University of Birmingham's exhibition "Making Home a Place to be" at The Exchange. The pilot phase of the Exhibition took place between October-November 2022, and the main exhibition took place between February-October 2023. See below an image from the main exhibition.



The overarching aim of the exhibition was to challenge public perceptions of what home is in the context of homelessness, displaced persons, and care provision for the elderly. The research team (Prof Jenn Cumming, Dr Mary Quinton, and Dr Grace Tidmarsh) have been successful in receiving funding of £2k from two funds at the University of Birmingham's Public Engagement Fund to support the delivery and evaluation of the team's involvement in the exhibition.

The Exhibition included three public engagement events:

- Public lecture. The lecture was delivered by Dr Mary Quinton with special guest, St Basils CEO Jean Templeton and contained some interactive elements. The public lecture covered the work of St Basils across the West Midlands as well as how sport psychology supported the wellbeing and positive outcomes of young people experiencing homelessness through the My Strengths for Life™ programme. You can watch the public lecture here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVs8O6WjpEk>
- Family friendly activity. This was a fun and interactive emotion awareness activity, adapted from the emotion awareness grid activity within the My Strengths Training for Life programme and MST Toolkits which is suitable for everyone including families. This allowed children and their grown ups to gain a better understanding of different emotions that they experience, and what the emotions might mean to them.
- Exploring home through poetry workshop. This unique workshop was led by an experienced poet and helped individuals to consider the different

experiences of home whilst guiding them to create a poem about what home means to them. There was also some guests from St Basils youth advisory group who supported the workshop. Within these events, we aimed to challenge people's perceptions of youth homelessness and recognise the strengths that these young people have. By receiving the funding, we were able to capture data on the public's perceptions of youth homelessness and how these events and the exhibition may change perceptions in a more positive way.

THE TRANSITION HUB

To extend further the current partnership with St Basils and the use of the MST Toolkits the team at the University of Birmingham are working with staff at St Basils new service, the Transition Hub, to evaluate the service. The Transition Hub differs from other St Basils supported housing support in that it is for the most perpetually excluded and isolated young people experiencing homelessness within the West Midlands. The service aims to assess young people's needs and provide in-house holistic specialist care (e.g., clinical psychologist, occupational therapist, and Aquarius worker to support with drug and alcohol misuse). As part of this evaluation, next steps will be to develop a bespoke evaluation tool that enables understanding of the extent to which the service supports the development of soft outcomes in the young people as they take steps towards independence. To support this next step the research team (Prof. Jenn Cumming, Dr Mary Quinton, and Dr Grace Tidmarsh) have been successful in receiving funding of £4.5k from the University of Birmingham's Life and Environmental Sciences Impact Urgency Fund. Furthermore, Dr Grace Tidmarsh has secured an ESRC Postdoctoral fellowship which will fund additional future work planned

with regards to the Transition Hub.

FUTURE FUNDING

Planned future funding will continue to work towards changing the public's views, and challenging stereotypes and stigma around homelessness as well as supporting youth homelessness services to deliver evidence-based and psychologically informed services. Furthermore, future funding will also continue to contribute to expanding the reach of the Toolkits through engaging in different target audiences. Below we outline the funds that will be applied for and describe how it will further the impact of our work.

1) Digitising mental skills training toolkits: creating a new partnership with Get Ahead Mindset

Funder: University of Birmingham's Life and Environmental Sciences Impact Urgency Fund (£5k received as of February 2023). This funding will support the digitisation of the MST Toolkits as we work towards establishing a new partnership with Get Ahead Mindset

2) Improving wellbeing and positive exercise habits through the Get Ahead Mindset app

Funder: Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council – Impact Acceleration Award (internal)

3) Embedding mental skills into Get Ahead Mindset: scaling upwards and outwards

Funder: UKRI Knowledge Transfer Partnership

4) Understanding public's perceptions of youth homelessness through creative methods

Funder: Arts and Humanities Research Council: Impact acceleration award (internal). This funding will support the analysis of the poetry from the poetry workshop and further work in collating these into an eBook and their dissemination.

CONCLUSION

Following the work conducted by researchers from the University of Birmingham with their partners Street Soccer and St Basils, we know that digital and non-digital methods can be used to translate sport psychology to support the wellbeing of young people in community settings. However, for this to be successful it is essential that the content is accessible and that potential recipients (and those delivering programmes or services) are included in its creation. Co-creation in this way is important to ensure that digital tools are meaningful and relevant. Furthermore, this work highlights the importance of psychologically informed approaches to programme delivery and evaluation to support young people to engage in an environment that is supportive of their needs and with a more equal power balance. Finally, evaluating how programmes are delivered alongside their outcomes is essential to support development of high quality, sustainable, and meaningful and relevant programmes/services that meet young people's psychological needs.



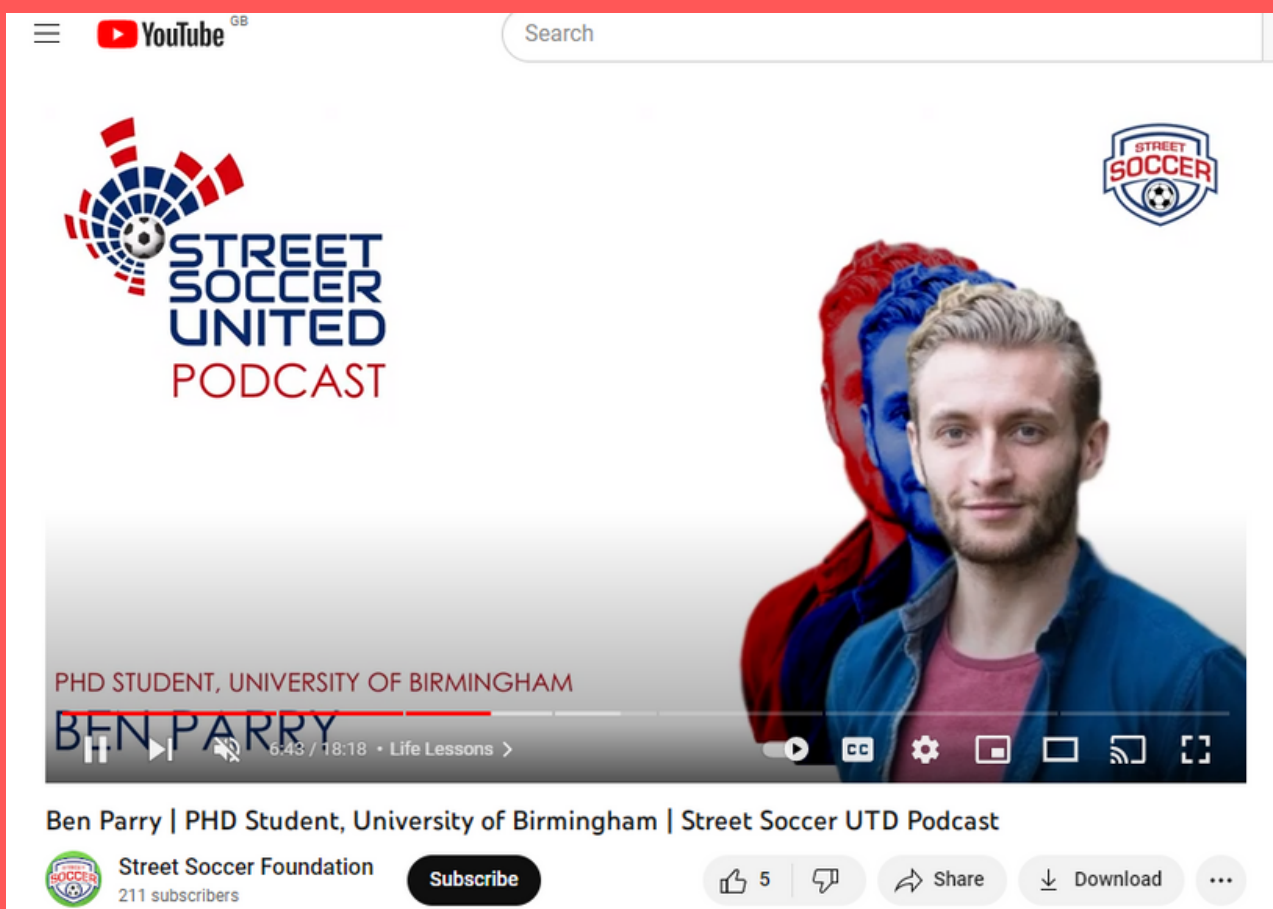
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: PODCAST INTERVIEW FOR STREET SOCCER UNITED PODCAST

**[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?
V=JCK6SV8XY6K](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCK6SV8XY6K)**



APPENDIX 2: BLOG FOR STREET SOCCER FOUNDATION WEBSITE

**[HTTPS://STREETSOCCERFOUNDATION.ORG.
UK/NEWS/THE-SPRINT-PROJECT-MENTAL-
HEALTH-WEEK/](https://streetsoccerfoundation.org.uk/news/the-sprint-project-mental-health-week/)**



Home - News - The SPRINT project – Mental Health Week

The SPRINT project – Mental Health Week

Staying Connected during Lockdown, a guest blog by Birmingham University

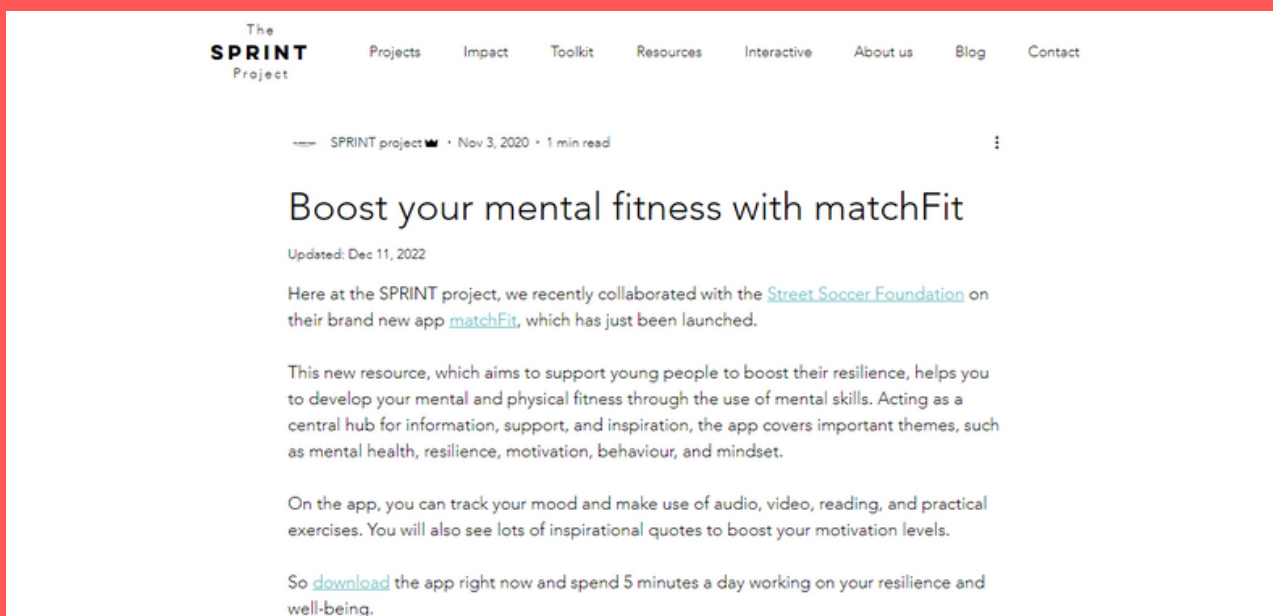
We are an experienced team of applied academics at the University of Birmingham interested in applying techniques and methods derived from sports psychology to novel contexts. Our

Related News Articles

Our Holiday Camp Team
06/04/2023
Our Coaches: Sports Entertainers

APPENDIX 3: BLOG FOR SPRINT PROJECT WEBSITE

[HTTPS://WWW.SPRINTPROJECT.ORG/POST/BOOST-YOUR-MENTAL-FITNESS-WITH-MATCHFIT](https://www.sprintproject.org/post/boost-your-mental-fitness-with-matchfit)



APPENDIX 4: LIST OF ATTENDEES REGISTERED FOR WEBINAR

JOB TITLE	ORGANISATION AFFILIATION
Research Fellow	University of Birmingham
Assistant Coach	ITDAT Academy
Operations Coordinator	MCC Foundation
National Youth Engagement Manager	St Basils
Sport Psychologist	The Journey
Social Worker	-
Manager, Research & Evaluation	MLSE LaunchPad
Manager, Scoreboard	MLSE LaunchPad & MLSE Foundations
Programme Director	London Youth Rowing
Assistant Coach	ITDAT Academy
Associate Professor	University of Lincoln

Community and Education Manager	Exim Dance Company
PhD Student	Lancaster university
Community and Youth Engagement Activator	LivingSport
Active Communities Officer	Active Surrey
Insight, Monitoring & Evaluation Lead	Active Kent & Medway
ICS Inequalities Programme Director	NHS
Inequalities Project Manager	Birmingham and Solihull ICS
Project Officer	Active Suffolk
Project Manager	Wesport
Physical Activity Development Officer	GBA
Dance Practitioner	Exim Dance Company
Case manager in Housing First	GAT Portugal
Professor	University of Birmingham
Project Officer	Active Suffolk

Children and Young People Officer	Be Active
Teacher	Caroline Chisholm Catholic College
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer	Empire Fighting Chance
Associate Professor in Psychology	Heriot Watt university
Founder - Sport Psychology Coach	Tiebreaker Psych
Fellow	University of Southampton
Academy Director	Blackburn Youth Darts Academy
Research Assistant	Dokuz Eylül University Nursing Faculty
Senior Lecturer in Physical Education	Solent University
ESRC Doctoral Researcher	University of Birmingham
Student	Glasgow Caledonian University
Assistant Relationship Manager	Active Lancashire
Project Lead Pendle YES Hub	Active Lancashire
Gymnastics Coach	Evolve Gymnastics Academy

Managing Director	Valleys Gymnastics Academy
PE Lead	Perry Court E-ACT Academy
Student	Glasgow Caledonian University
Trainee Sport and Exercise Psychologist	Glasgow Caledonian University
Sports Project Officer	Herts Sports Partnership
Manager of Health, Wellbeing, and Performance	One Dance UK
-	Dallaglio Rugby Works
PhD Student	Nottingham Trent University

Note. An additional 21 people registered for the webinar but did not provide job title or organisation affiliation information.

