



Covid-19 Response

Introduction

The Change Foundation is an award-winning charity that uses sport to change the lives of marginalised young people. We deliver targeted long-term interventions for the most vulnerable young people in our communities through Coach Mentors with lived experience, providing regular sport, personalised mentoring and work-related opportunities.

Being a sports charity Covid-19 has had an obvious and direct impact on our engagement with the vulnerable groups we work with, but we have adapted and are working hard to continue to support them through online mentoring, pre-recorded messages, sessions and workshops, sports related tasks and challenges and providing counselling and support on the phone. But we continue to create new ways to keep young people engaged otherwise we have the risk of the following to already vulnerable groups:

- Raised anxiety, frustration and paranoia
- Further isolation and loneliness
- Further time spent on social media affecting their mental state as emotions are even more exposed
- Boredom which enhances chances of breaking the Covid-19 rules and hanging around on the streets
- Higher risk of depression and self-harm

Delivering differently

For these reasons we have developed online 'sports at home' weekly engagement by creating a timetable of; TikTok dance challenges, fitness circuits and sports challenges recorded on smart phones, weekly well-being check-in's via WhatsApp groups and phone calls, referrals to online courses encouraging virtual learning and the creation of a Esports programme to help during this crisis. We continue our employability work of interview preparation and CV development remotely through business mentors. Currently we are supporting over 100 very vulnerable young people aged 16-25 by:

- Providing a new platform for young people to connect and compete while continuing to instil the values of sport.
- Providing routine to plan their time, alleviate boredom and frustration, having something to look forward to.
- Providing opportunities to work as a team and individually to demonstrate learning of transferable skills.
- Providing an incentive for marginalised groups to stay engaged.
- Providing an opportunity to connect Londoners from all parts of the city, giving them a chance to make new friends and connections, so they feel less lonely.
- Providing another platform to engage young people in something positive during social isolation.
- Providing a positive memory at this time, so that post isolation, they remain engaged and we can support them.

Contact: If you would like to discuss our response further please contact henryglynn@changefdn.org.uk or visit www.thechangefoundation.org.uk for more information about the charity.