



Engage one third of the pre-5 population in the Bridgeton, Camlachie, Dalmarnock and Parkhead areas in a physical activity project to help encourage active travel, community connection and engagement in local organisations, venues and green spaces

PROJECT REPORT SUMMARY



Project Aims

The Walking Bears project aims to engage one third (around 250 children/families) of the pre-5 population (mainly 3 – 5 years) in the Bridgeton, Camlachie, Dalmarnock and Parkhead areas in a physical activity project to help encourage active travel, community connection and engagement in local services, organisations and green spaces.

In summary, the project aims to:

- Encourage walking for local journeys
- Increase exploration and use of local greenspace
- Raise awareness of and confidence engaging with locations of interest
- Improve engagement with local organisations/services

Funding

£10,000 secured from Smarter Choices, Smarter Places Open Fund. The Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) Open Fund aims to encourage people to change their behaviours to walk or cycle as part of their everyday short journeys. In addition, £5,950 was secured from Paths For All “Walking For Health” fund which aims to increase the number of new walkers taking part in Health Walks; increase the amount of physical activity undertaken, especially those experiencing health inequality; and improve wellbeing or reduce ill-health.

Methods

Walking Bears was a community-wide, self-led project designed to encourage behavioural change and interest in increasing physical activity by educating participating families about local organisations, activities and green spaces. The design for this project was supportive of local organisations and encouraged connecting communities in the Bridgeton, Camlachie, Dalmarnock and Parkhead areas of the city of Glasgow.

Links were forged with local networks to establish the main early years’ services, providers and organisations in the project area. Through this consultation process venues of interest were mapped out to show things like nurseries, community organisations, venues and support networks from which a list of suitable “Walking Bears locations” could be confirmed.

Families were recruited through a variety of channels, mainly via local nurseries but also through libraries, organisations and Health Visitors. Each were issued with a Walking Bears pack containing many resources to help encourage and guide them, through active travel choices, around the local area to help connect them with local services and activities.

Results

Registration:

- 209 packs distributed to over 200 families
- 94% from SIMD 1 postcode areas (99% when including SIMD 2)
- 21% from BAME backgrounds (non-white Scottish, British or Irish)
- 20% adults not meeting the PA recommendations of 150mins or more per week

During project:

- 6 events delivered with over 200 families attending,
- Events delivered in partnership with local organisations (Free Wheel North and Baltic Street Adventure Playground) and GL family Glasgow Museums (Teddy Toddle) and Glasgow Libraries (We're Going on a Bear Hunt and Family Teddy Walks)
- Closed Facebook group with over 80 members, 400 reactions, 100 posts and 200 photos shared by participating families

Post project:

- 11 evaluation questionnaires completed (8 paper forms / 3 Smart Surveys) – 5% response rate
- Families rated their enjoyment of the project as 9/10 on average
- 82% strongly agreed they had increased confidence visiting and exploring green spaces
- 64% strongly agreed they used the project to spend more time as a family
- 100% of responders already meeting recommended PA guideline BUT they were active on 1.1 more days per week, on average (so made an already active population a little more active)
- Increase of 26% in number of project locations visited over the project duration

Project Strengths

- Stronger links with local community organisations, nurseries and health professionals
- Delivering community events in partnership with local organisations
- Facebook Group a useful monitoring and evaluation tool
- Delivered under predicted budget (~ £7000)
- Delivered to intended/target population

Learning

- Eligibility for participation very strict (age range and postcode areas)
- No weekly/regular activity delivered i.e. Family Teddy Walk
- Out of date information on printed resources
- Project timeframe – no fixed start or end date
- Evaluation process ineffectual

Conclusions

Project outcomes are supported strongly by positive anecdotal evidence, case studies and social media sharing which culminate to demonstrate the positive impact the project has had on local families. Despite this, there is an obvious lack of quantitative data as a result of a poor evaluation return rate. However, the project can document the families who engaged in the programme and received a pack and, given the profile evident in the data, we can be confident we targeted and engaged the right people who would stand to benefit most from engaging in this type of project.

From a Glasgow Life perspective, the project was successful in terms of making and sustaining strong links with local organisations, education establishments and health professionals who were involved at all stages of the project design and delivery. The aim is to maintain these working relationships longer-term either through this project or new strands of work.

Finally, the project was delivered to a modest budget of around £7000, under the estimated spend projected at the funding bid stage. We hope to reinvest any surplus into further activity in the area through some of the legacy work planned, including regular Family Teddy Walks and training/upskilling of local organisations and nurseries in Family Play and Health Walk offers.