

# 10 Key Reasons Why Sport And Coaching Matters.

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**Sport and Coaching needs to be much higher on our national agenda. I would like to comment on the key outcomes and positive impact that great coaching has on our communities.**

Let's have a quick look at 10 key indicators\* why we must invest in sport and support our coaches better:

- 1. Improvements in the health and well-being of our communities** – any physical activity, including sport, is linked to reducing risk in at least 20 major illnesses (including cardiovascular disease and some cancers). Preventative health measures are much easier and more cost effective than curative health strategies (i.e., once someone becomes ill, curative treatment can become complex and very costly).
- 2. Reduces cost and pressures on our health services** – taking part in regular sports activity can save us a lot of money. Reportedly, this can save each person between £1,750 and £6,900 in UK healthcare costs per year. On average, by participating in regular sport, we expect to live longer, be happier and experience a better quality of life.
- 3. Investment in sport and coaching boosts physical and intellectual outcomes** in the overall population. Underachieving young people who take part in sport see a boost in numeracy skills and a rise in other transferable skills.
- 4. Engagement in education and social activity** – the positive effects of sport on education include: improved academic attainment levels, lower absenteeism and risk of school drop-outs, social engagement and increased progression by reaching higher education.
- 5. Improves the overall productivity of the workforce** – sport-related activity is estimated to support over 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, approximately 2.3% of all jobs in England. Leisure, health and lifestyle is a growing business sector that requires more attention and support.
- 6. Improves the happiness index level in society.** In recent years, this was acknowledged and featured in the 'Big Society' pledge by UK government, while sports budgets actually have been under significant pressure; from local authority cuts, reduced delivery requirements within the national school curriculum, as well as broad and continued challenges to national sports governance budgets.
- 7. Stimulates economic growth in health and lifestyle sectors.** Health and fashion lifestyle activity trends are growing, not declining. Overall, it's probably a good thing that sport stays cool and trendy. Coaches can motivate and inspire people who might otherwise be less interested to stay involved in sport.
- 8. Delivery of sports programmes can dramatically reduce cost to the police, prison and probation services, as well as the criminal system** – sports programmes aimed at young people reduce the risk of criminal activity, gang culture and growth of extremist behaviour. It can help enhance self-esteem and reduce individual re-offending rates (i.e., returns on investment in sports programmes for 'at-risk' young people are estimated at £7.35 of social benefit for every £1 spent). There are clear financial savings to policing services and the criminal justice system, greatly benefitting the overall well-being of society.
- 9. Provides greater economic opportunities** for coaches, teachers and organisers in sport to deliver greater educational and health outcomes, right now, and for future generations.

**10. Backing our coaches to deliver better sporting chances in our communities.** Our coaches need a clear national strategy, where they might begin to feel that they belong at the centre of strategy and decision-making processes. This has not always been the case.

By elevating the sporting agenda of our nation, indicators show that it leads to improving life chances and better opportunities for many more people. It also engenders great values, such as tolerance and understanding through shared experience, no matter what the backgrounds of the individual participant.

**This article is aimed to motivate our understanding of the value and real power of sport – and to inspire us to elevate the role of coaches in our community. I also wish you health and happiness in doing so!**

(\*Statistics have been provided by Sport England and other related sources)

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