

WHAT IS THE LAUREUS SPORT FOR GOOD FOUNDATION?

The Laureus Sport for Good Foundation was founded in 2000 by DaimlerChrysler (now Daimler) and Richemont and is supported by its Founding Partners Mercedes-Benz and IWC Schaffhausen.

The Foundation is built on the belief that whatever the social problem facing a community – be it drugs, HIV/AIDS or sectarianism – sport provides the vehicle by which transformation can happen. The Foundation’s aim therefore is to fund and promote the use of sport as a tool for positive change.

The Foundation supports more than 50 projects across all continents, encompassing different sports, social issues and cultures. There is a growing network of subsidiary National Foundations in Argentina, France, Germany, Italy, South Africa, Spain and the United States.

The work of the Foundation is supported by 43 world-class athletes of the Laureus World Sports Academy who support the Foundation’s work, lending their time and profile. Michael Johnson, Boris Becker, Sebastian Coe, Tony Hawk and Nawal el Moutawakel are just some of the representatives of sporting excellence who are part of the Laureus Academy.

HOW WAS THE RESEARCH DONE?

Researchers from the Department of Psychology at Royal Holloway spent seven months collecting data from eight Laureus funded projects on three continents, Europe, Africa and South America. They also spent time visiting six projects so that they could observe Laureus work in action.



1 ISLP, London, UK 2 KICK on Ice, Berlin, Germany 3 Centro Sportivo Martinitt, Milan, Italy 4 MYSAs, Nairobi, Kenya 5 Fight for Peace, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 6 PeacePlayers International, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa 7 Little Champs, Cape Town, South Africa

To reach their findings the team used:

- > Questionnaires
- > Interviews
- > Observational evidence

In total, their evidence gathering covered 227 young people worldwide. This data was then analysed in London for the final report.

MAIN CONTENT

The Royal Holloway team wanted to determine how taking part in a Laureus funded project can have an impact on individuals, both on their behaviour and their emotional well-being. From the collected data, they were able to give specific feedback on what they had observed at the different projects. However, they were also able to reach some conclusions about Laureus-supported projects overall. The highlights of these general findings are set out overleaf.



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RESEARCH
STUDY



ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

At Laureus Sport for Good Foundation we know the amazing impact sport can have on individuals from all walks of life. Every time I have visited one of our projects, or heard stories from an Academy member, my belief in the power of sport for social good is reinforced.

It is frustrating then, to see charities and social projects failing to recognise the way that sport can be used as a framework for social change. I believe there still remains a significant challenge for us to communicate to the world the true value of sport. We need to be able to present our evidence for the impact of sport in a robust and credible way.

To this end, during 2006 we commissioned Royal Holloway, University of London to conduct systematic research on a number of Laureus projects around the world. This booklet sets out some of their key findings.

You’ll see they present an encouraging picture; formalising what those who run these projects have always known – that engagement in sport can be a key factor in turning around individual lives and communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Patrick Leman and Alison Woodcock at Royal Holloway for their hard work. They have provided us with an invaluable resource both to assist in spreading the Sport for Good message and to plan our project work for the future. The pool of work that has been done to date, systematically and scientifically evaluating the impact of sport on psychological and social functioning, is small. The Laureus Sport for Good Foundation will continue to contribute to our understanding of the valuable impact on the communities they serve.



Ned Wills

Director
Laureus Sport for Good Foundation

FINDING

1

BEING INVOLVED IN A LAUREUS FUNDED PROJECT INCREASES POSITIVE KINDS OF BEHAVIOUR IN PARTICIPANTS.

To measure how being involved in a Laureus-supported project impact on the lives of participants, the researchers designed a 'change measure' which they used across all projects. As part of this, the team identified a list of behaviours that indicate a pro-social and healthy lifestyle. These included:

- > Increased levels of sport and exercise
- > Eating breakfast regularly
- > Having enough energy
- > Getting to school or college on time
- > Helping in their neighbourhood
- > Getting eight hours sleep each night.

The team used these behaviours as measures of how involvement in a Laureus project changed the day-to-day lives of those who participated. What they found was striking: across all projects, frequency of **all** these positive behaviours.

This finding demonstrates that sport used in this way can impact on a number of aspects of a person's life. It is not simply the case that it changes the way young people feel – though this too is important. It can also change the way they behave.



'It changed my life; I know myself – it has changed me physically and mentally.' Participant, Mathare Youth Sports Association, Kenya

'The project is everything to me. Without the project I could never be the kid I am today.' Participant, Fight for Peace, Brazil

'Having visited countless projects I have seen the transformative power of sport with my own eyes. But it is great to have those experiences confirmed by systematic research. I hope this research will serve as a platform from which we can persuade others about the important social role for sport in the world today.' Edwin Moses, Chairman, Laureus Sport for Good Foundation



FINDING

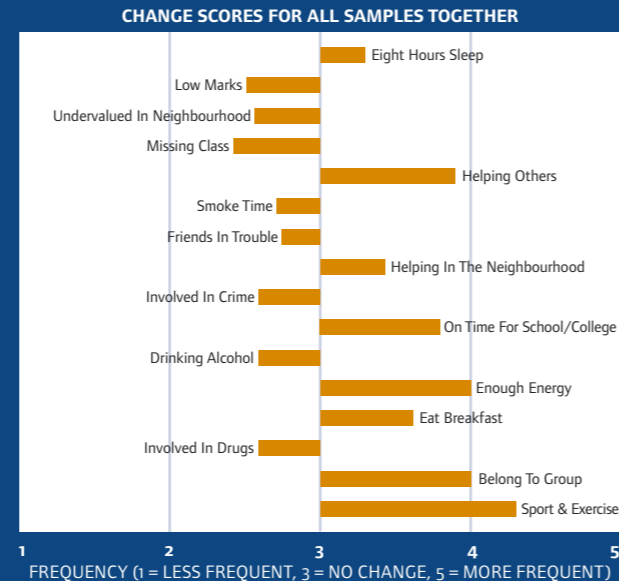
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BEING INVOLVED IN A LAUREUS-SUPPORTED PROJECT DECREASES NEGATIVE KINDS OF BEHAVIOUR.

The research team also identified a list of negative behaviours that they thought could be used to indicate unconstructive attitudes and that a young person is not making the most of their potential. These included:

- > Being involved with drugs
- > Being involved in crime
- > Drinking alcohol
- > Spending time with friends who tend to get into trouble
- > Smoking
- > Getting low marks at school
- > Feeling undervalued in the neighbourhood

Again, their findings were hugely encouraging. The researchers found that across all Laureus projects, frequency of these negative behaviours decreased amongst participants. Not only does involvement in a project increase positive activities that help young people make the most of themselves, it also decreases the likelihood of them adopting destructive behaviour patterns, and can even help participants to give them up. A summary of the results of the change measure is shown below. This diagram shows the average changes in different types of behaviour exhibited by participants at the projects researched. Bars to the right indicate that participants exhibited that behaviour more frequently as a result of being involved in the project. Bars to the left indicate that participants exhibited that behaviour less frequently as a result of being involved in the sporting programme. For example, participants on average 'helped others' more frequently and 'missed classes' less frequently as a result of being involved in a Laureus-supported project.



'[Fight for Peace] helped me a lot because my lifestyle was quite worrying as I was involved in drugs. The project released me from them and therefore I am still here.' Participant, Fight for Peace, Brazil

FINDING

3

THE LONGER INDIVIDUALS ARE INVOLVED IN A PROJECT, THE MORE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS ARE DISPLAYED.

As well as measuring frequency of positive and negative behaviours, the team also wanted to investigate what difference the length of time spent on a project made to the impact on an individual's behaviour. They carried out a series of correlations to see if there was a relationship between the length of time spent on a project and changes in behaviour.

What they found was that the longer individuals spent on a project, the more changes were seen in positive behaviour patterns.

The same was not true for reducing negative behaviours included in the questionnaire. These tended to stop fairly quickly once an individual joined the project. For many of the young people, however, 'prevention was better than cure', because they had joined the project as early as age nine or ten, and had learnt how to avoid involvement in negative behaviours.



'I get surprised by the fact that every time I push myself, I get more than I thought I would.' Participant, Centro Sportivo Martinitt, Italy

'MUSA has helped me to keep my self-esteem high – where once it was low – because someone else believes in me and will help me.' Participant, Mathare Youth Sports Association, Kenya



'In my own project, focusing on young women in Morocco, I have watched confidence gained and self-esteem grow in the girls who take part. It is fascinating to read that the research found such similar trends in projects whose situation could not be more different from Morocco. It says a lot about the universal ability of sport to impact on people regardless of gender, race or background.' Nawal el Moutawakel, Laureus Academy Member and International Olympic Committee Member

FINDING

4

THE LONGER AN INDIVIDUAL IS AT A PROJECT, THE MORE THEY VALUE THEIR COMMUNITY.

An important part of positive change for participants is the way they feel about their community, and whether they feel included or isolated. The research team looked at this area by measuring 'group esteem' scores. Group esteem refers to the extent to which an individual values their community and corresponds to how far an individual identifies as a member of a community.

The team found this measure corresponds to length of engagement with a project. So the longer individuals are involved in a project, the more positive they feel about their community. This is important because it clearly has knock-on effects for their attitudes towards and behaviour in the local community.



'I like the way the group is committed to what we do in the sports project, helping and cooperating with each other' Participant, ISLP, UK

'KICK on Ice has helped me to forget stress and depression through ice hockey.' Participant, KICK on Ice, Germany

'I used to drink and smoke, but I don't anymore.' Participant, PeacePlayers International, South Africa



WHAT NOW?

The Foundation is committed to continuing to make research of this kind an ongoing priority.

This first piece of research has given the Foundation some great evidence to support its belief in the power of sport.

It has provided the Foundation with a greater understanding of the mechanisms at work in its projects. This knowledge will aid the Foundation in the decision-making process about the best projects to fund in the future. It will also help the Foundation develop its understanding of how to get the most out of the projects it funds.

As well as these direct benefits to the Foundation, this research could also serve as a resource for other charities and organisations wanting to launch their own projects or enhance existing ones.