

## **HMP Stafford Pilot Project March 19-21 2019**

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### **Summary**

A three day pilot led by Andy Mouncey involving 11 selected men to test how endurance-based physical activity, sport and PE can be used differently and deliberately to improve engagement & learning, challenge limiting beliefs, develop self-management and emotional resilience and strengthen relationships between staff and men alike.

In particular to test a programming model for HMP Stafford and to gather evidence on:

- Sustainable Rehabilitation: Putting fitness first produces quick, direct mental health benefits so that rehabilitation is faster, broader, more cost-effective and sustainable
- Emotional resilience can be taught and this...is how you teach and test it using physical activity for this population
- Teamship: A shared challenging experience promotes empathy, (reduces conflict) and brings people closer together
- Coping Strategies: Long term success – achieving goals by persevering through setbacks, managing mood and playing by the rules – is a process that can be taught this...is how you teach and test it using physical activity
- Engagement: Learning is made easy when done out of a classroom and after physical exercise

### **What We Did**

- Set a gym-based triathlon challenge on the final day
- Made a base in the sports hall and arranged communal eating to keep everyone together for every activity all day
- Ensured sessions were fun, different and challenging with space to learn
- Gave permission to 'fail' and ask for help
- Used personal stories to challenge beliefs and behaviour without confrontation
- Emphasis on Progress Not Perfection
- Moved regularly between locations: Gym-sports hall-outside
- Used a cycle of physical activity-learning-checking repeatedly so we could start early (8am) finish late (6pm) and still keep all engaged
- Set personal and scalable targets for every activity with a challenge to match and beat
- Used buddy pairs, personal diaries and frequent questioning and checking
- Focused on active breathing as a coping strategy for stress

### **Headlines**

All completed the program and the triathlon challenge

All made public commitments to continue in their own way/with peers

Communal eating is possible and had many benefits

We now have a programming template and 11 advocates of this approach

We have data (enclosed) we can now use to inform future program design and a funding case