

# Report



## Mixed Martial Arts August-September 2012

The Mixed Martial Arts youth club was an extremely busy and exciting programme that ran for a six week block within the Factory Skatepark as part of the youth programme. A fully qualified instructor was brought in to deliver these sessions with the young people. The programme had a range of age groups sign up and each evening the club was full of enthusiastic young people bursting with great levels of energy.

This club started with learning the basic moves of mixed martial arts to ensure the young people had a solid understanding of positioning, listening and discipline prior to tackling more difficult moves and sequences. Within the session the instructor

also incorporated a fun element into the lesson plan to ensure the young people were able to focus and engage competently, building up their strength, endurance and reaction time in a fun positive way.

The games used to do this always tested the young people's fitness and confidence and helped them identify areas to work on more frequently to excel in mixed martial arts. Many individuals began to develop both physically and socially over the course of the programme. A few girls were unsure to begin with but with encouragement from the youth workers and continued praise and confidence building they did not give up and became really interested and excited to attend the club in the

following weeks.

This programme really did reinforce the importance of listening and helped the young people engage in a structured manner from the offset. It also allowed the staff to identify great qualities some of the young people possess in terms of leadership and determination. The young people learned a variety of new skills in relation to mixed martial arts moves from simple punches to sidekicks and front kicks using a range of techniques. Many individuals were so proud of their achievements at the end of every evening which definitely helped build their self esteem levels over this programme.

Many individuals were keen to demonstrate different moves and sequences they had learned at each session to their parents and friends when the club was finishing each week which stressed the importance of this club and what it meant to them in terms of personal achievement.

As a youth worker it was a pleasure to be part of this club as it maintained a great level of participants over the six week block and promoted the importance for health and fitness along with the need to ensure young people can engage in group settings and learn and developed social skills such as self esteem and confidence as well as effective communication and listening skills that can be adopted and aid them in day to day situations throughout their lives.

