



## What was the challenge?

### Sainsbury's School Games for everyone – developing wider participation for secondary-aged girls

#### What were your proposed solutions and why?

The aim was to create girls-only social competition evenings after school with a number of activities going on at the same time. A social element was chosen as an alternative less formal structure to encourage interaction and based on other women's participation type events. The idea came from a discussion with a few PE staff about engaging different young people who do not usually get the opportunity. We originally considered a carousel that the girls rotated round but anticipated that this would take too much time, so instead we chose to offer three or four activities and the girls chose one activity to participate in. This was discussed with SGOs and female PE teachers from Oldham Schools. On the evening the event was driven mainly by the host school.

#### What were your findings?

- The girls enjoyed the more relaxed atmosphere and although there was a competitive element there was also a social interaction and friendliness to the activities. This was done through pre-event drinks and an encouragement to interact with young people from other schools.
- School staff took responsibility for each of the activities and first of all 'let them have a go' and then led into an informal competition.
- The schools that came along identified different young people who wouldn't usually get the opportunity to represent school.
- The girls enjoyed the social aspects and that it was not about serious competition. It created an alternative level of competition for participation.
- The sports chosen initially were football, trampolining, badminton and table tennis with a view to adapting following feedback from the young people. These sports were chosen because they are easily set up and adapted, and taster activities can be set up, leading to a competition.

#### What would be your top tips for other SGOs wishing to address a similar challenge?

- Start with only a few schools to get something that works for your local area and grow once you have a concept you are happy with.
- Get schools to agree on the 'type' of young person they will bring along and not just their regular team players.
- Use the first session to talk to the girls to find out what activities they may like to do at future events.
- Make sure it has a social aspect perhaps drinks at the start of the evening so girls can get to speak to each other.

#### What was the impact and who benefitted from your solutions?

The biggest benefit was in allowing different young people to have an opportunity to represent their school in an informal competitive setting where the focus was on participation. The schools that came along got to see their young people engage with people from other schools and to have a go at activities they may not normally get to do. Staff found the relaxed atmosphere a good opportunity to do some networking with other staff.

One of the staff members quoted that

*"the young people were inspired by seeing others having a go at something new which gave them confidence to get involved with something new. The girls' feedback was that they enjoyed mixing with girls from other schools and it being more informal and relaxed."*