



Holiday Camp Report- October 2017

Reporting Dates: 2nd – 6th October 2017

United Through Sport
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Summary

During school holiday breaks, parents often struggle to keep children occupied and away from any risk factors, such as drugs or alcohol. In response to this problem, as well as to help keep children mentally stimulated while away from school, United Through Sport organized a Holiday Camp in Walmer for local township children. The programme allowed children in the townships to have fun while participating in three development areas: sport, life skills and arts & crafts.

The 4-day Holiday Camp took place at Walmer Primary School from the 2nd until the 6th of October. UTS collaborated with Masifunde, a charity working in the Walmer township, in order to contact parents and children about the event. The camp consisted of four sport sessions (cricket, basketball, football and hockey) and a life skills session for children 10 years old and above. Children 9 years old and younger participated in arts & crafts sessions where life skills were taught in an informal and relaxed environment. Following three days of coaching sessions, the final day of the programme consisted of a hockey and football tournament that yielded more than 80 participants. Both the championship and runner-up teams for each sport won prizes donated by FC Groningen (a professional football Club from Holland). In addition, five children were also awarded a prize donated by FC Groningen for good behaviour throughout the camp. Children who returned everyday were awarded life skills certificates on the final day of the camp.

The theme of the programme was apartheid and equality. Because of this, boys and girls were not divided in separate groups, but rather had to work together as a team in each sport. This was the underlining factor in choosing which sports to include in the camp; all four sports - cricket, basketball, football, hockey- are not only male or female sports and could be mixed between boys and girls. Life skill sessions also taught about apartheid and



equality, as did arts & crafts by focusing on sharing and discussing how everyone is different, but yet equal.

In a focus group at the end of the camp the children reported feeling happier and more confident after the camp. They also reported that they had learned about togetherness, gender equality and the need for caring for each other and supporting each other.

Challenges

The number of children expected on the first day was not reached, but this was a foreseen challenge. As with most holiday programmes, awareness of the camp relied heavily on kids spreading the news via word of mouth, as the programme operates in an informal environment outside of structured school time. The first day proved to be the most difficult as there were not enough children to have five groups, and therefore basketball and life skill sessions were cut out for one day. The number of children participating in the programme increased the second day, but the target number of 100 was still not reached. Despite the challenges of having low numbers, the group of staff and volunteers were very flexible and were able to adjust the programme accordingly.

Conclusion

Due to the flexibility and planning of both staff and international volunteers, the holiday programme was successful despite lower attendance than anticipated (total of 87 registered participants). The children were happy and engaged throughout the camp and were able to improve their athletic skills as well as learn valuable life skills. The programme ended with a tournament, arguably the highlight of the camp, where prizes were awarded to the champion team in both hockey and football. In addition, new UTS volunteers were able to get hands-on experience coaching in a comfortable environment with respectful children. Finally, FC Groningen was able to see their generous donation put to use in the tournament.

A short video of the camp can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/4Mh8hGCoiF8>









