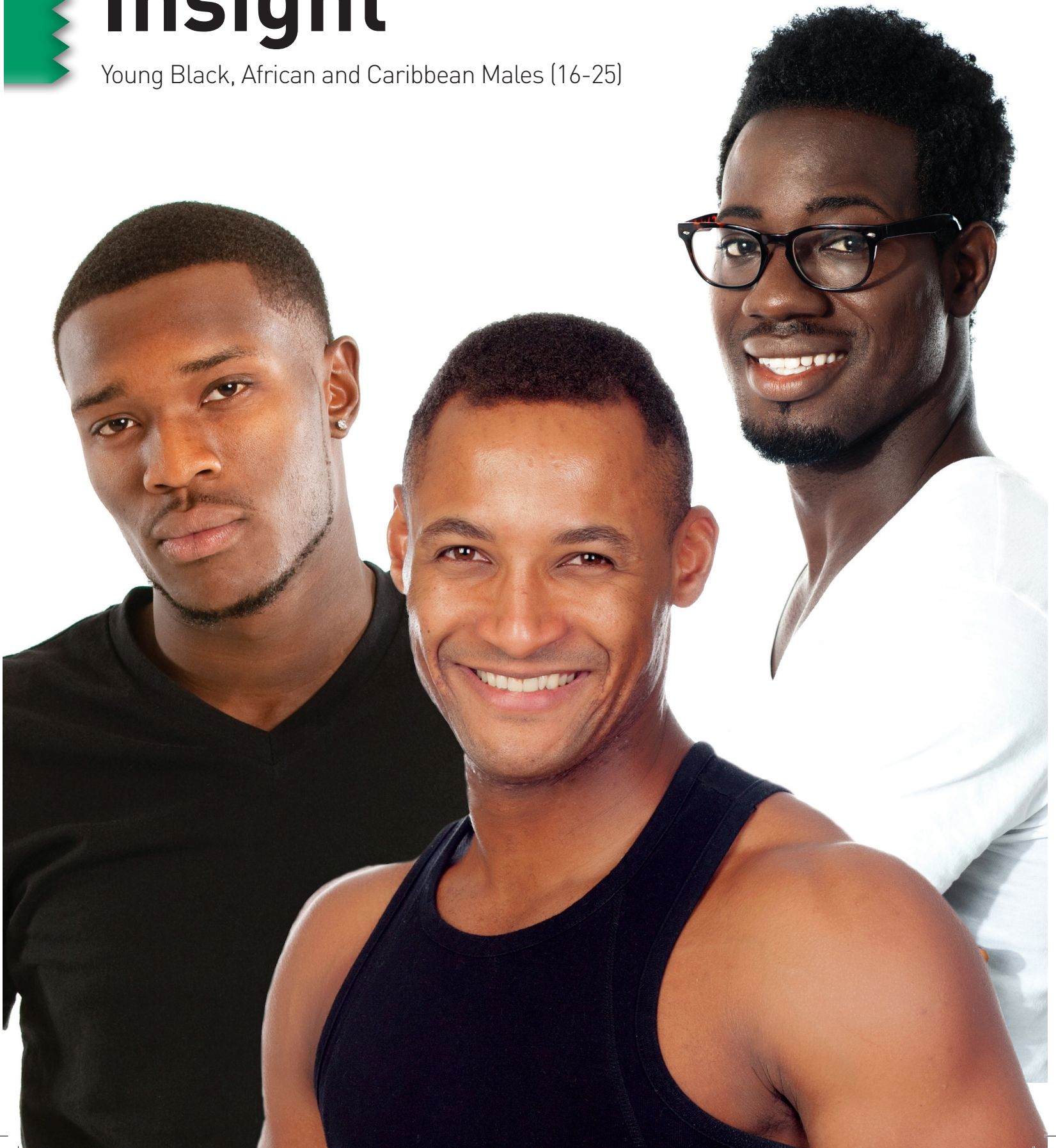


Sports Insight

Young Black, African and Caribbean Males (16-25)



Introduction

Our latest consumer research looks specifically at the young black, African, Caribbean male market (16-25) drawing on Sporting Equals past research supplemented by additional focus groups and interviews with young black men. It provides a valuable insight which sport providers can draw upon to make sport more inclusive for this segment and help increase participation.

Background¹

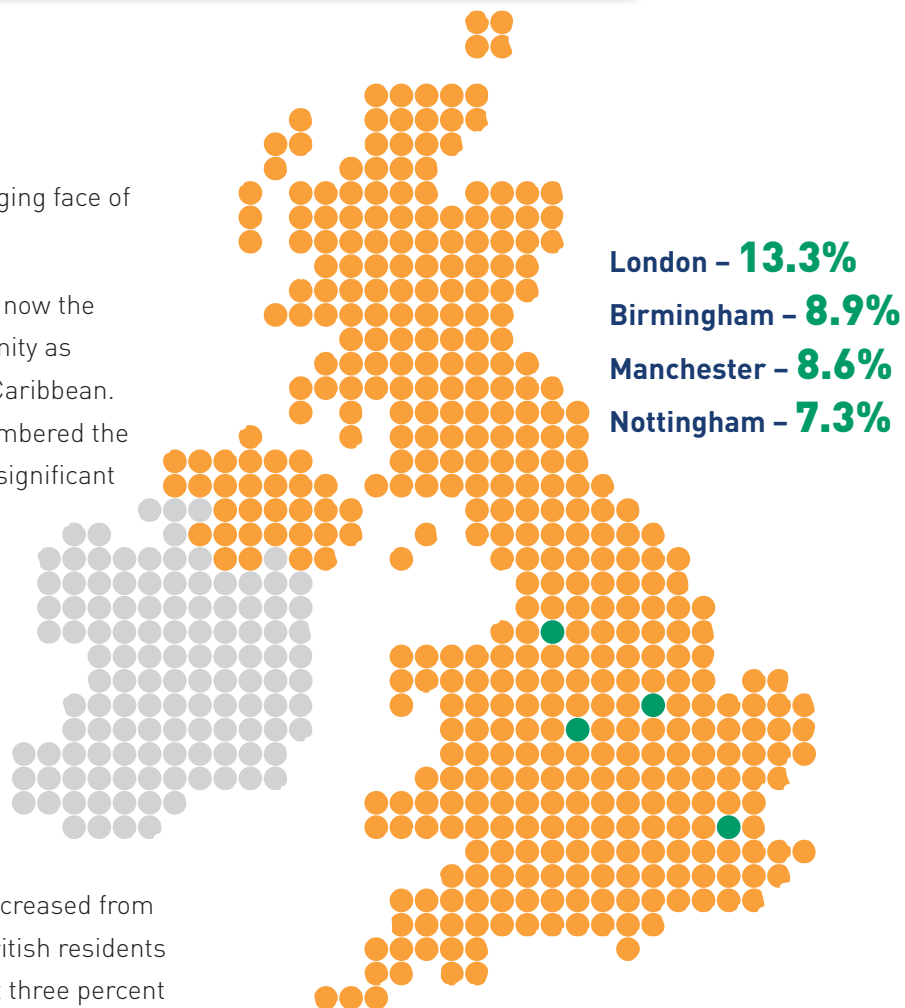
The 2011 Census has revealed the changing face of Britain's black communities.

People who identify as Black African are now the majority group in Britain's black community as opposed to those who identify as Black Caribbean. In 2001, the Caribbean population outnumbered the African population but there has been a significant reversal.

Between 2001 and 2011, those who identified as Black Caribbean has stabilised at 1.1 percent, increasing nominally by only 29,204. The Black African population has doubled from 0.8 percent to 1.7 percent or from 484,783 to 989,628.

And those who identify as Black Other increased from 0.2 percent to 0.5 percent. In terms of British residents born outside of the country, Jamaica - at three percent - represented the sixth biggest group born outside the UK in 2001. Ten years later, while numbers have increased in real terms from 146,000 to 160,000, the overall percentage has dropped to two percent.

Black communities were found in all regions, but the most significant populations are in:



In London, seven per cent of the population is Black African, and 4.2 percent is Caribbean.

Overall, black communities (including Black African, Black Caribbean, Black American or Black European) make up 3.4 percent of Britain's overall population which now stands at 56.1 million – an increase of seven percent since 2001.

One of the biggest trends to emerge from the 2011 Census findings was the growth of Britain's mixed race population.

Out of the 1.2 million mixed race Britons, a third identify specifically as Black Caribbean and White British.

1. Ethnicity in England and Wales 2011, Office for National Statistics

Identity

Amongst young black males the maintenance of dual identities, ethnic origin ties, and strong religious commitment are clearly not felt to be at odds with national belonging or represent 'separation'.

We also see that there is a tendency for marginalisation to increase in certain circumstances across generations.

Many young black males we spoke to were outspoken of resources being unfairly shared and 'skewed' to other minorities favour.

While exposure to other groups increases, so does sensitivity to injustice and prejudice.

The second generation perceives a lack of strong identity and some alienation, especially amongst the Black population with media portrayal focussing on negative culture.

What the evidence suggests, overall, is that while news about young men and boys regularly featured across all media types, most especially within tabloid newspapers, they tended to be reported in relation to

negative news values. A study found coverage of young black men and boys was dominated by crime-related stories with just over half (51 per cent) of the coverage in media monitoring periods related to crime.²

National Newspaper	No. of Articles	%
The Mirror	170	16.7
The Sun	161	15.8
The Daily Mail	105	10.3
Daily Express	86	8.4
The Guardian	77	7.5
The Times	77	7.5
The Daily Star	65	6.4
The Independent	56	5.5
The Daily Telegraph	45	4.4
The News of the World	41	4.0
The Sunday Mirror	25	2.5
The People	22	2.2
The Independent on Sunday	19	1.9
The Observer	18	1.8
The Mail on Sunday	14	1.4
Sunday Express	14	1.4
The Sunday Star	12	1.2
The Sunday Telegraph	6	0.6
The Sunday Times	5	0.5
Total	1020	100.0

Volume of coverage from National Newspapers:
All young black men and boys – May-Nov 2008

"The media seems to concentrate on the negative stereotypes by not concentrating on positive Black images of successful young African/Caribbean youths in society who are highly motivated to achieve and therefore not involved in the negative stereotypical role."

Marcus Makuna, 23



2. Media Representation of Black Males, 2011

The Role of Mental Health³

African-Caribbean young people in the UK are more likely to experience mental health difficulties than white British young people. This is perhaps not surprising, given that these young people experience increased levels of risk factors associated with mental health problems, such as school exclusion, low socio-economic status, and racial discrimination. For example, African-Caribbean children are six times more likely than white pupils to be excluded from schools (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998), and 70% of black and ethnic minority communities live in the most deprived areas of the UK (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002).

We discussed the use of sport to build in mechanisms to tackle the pressures and help build the healthy mind-set to overcome difficulties and benefit from the social advantages of sports participation.

Case Study

Marcus Makuna is the oldest of four children and has seen the direct benefits of sport help his younger brother overcome self-esteem issues and build confidence. The multi-sports sessions on offer catered for all young people's abilities but particularly focussed on building friendships and having fun.

"I think sports providers need to keep in mind that not all young people are brilliant at sport and being from Black background has stereotypes of sporty person. Sport is the highlight of my brothers week and given him the chance to 'hang out and chill' with peers in safe environment."

"A lot of the black role models are the wrong ones. A footballer, a gangster, a DJ - that's all they see and that's how narrow there lifestyle choice is. So we need to raise their self-esteem and show them that they have options, not all of us are rich, not all of us are in popular, and there is a place for you in society"

Leon Gilroy, 21



3. Journal of adolescence, 2010, Garraway

Our latest consumer research has suggested that traditional, formal sports offers (such as sports clubs) do not appeal to young black, African and Caribbean males and that there is a need for more informal or social based sports programmes in familiar settings such as faith centres, schools or community centres.

Feedback from the research conducted with young black, African and Caribbean males not in education or training suggested that for many of them they faced overt barriers to participation due to their perceptions around behaviour and lack of knowledge amongst sport providers in how to deal with them.

The key drop off point was after school, many participated in school sport however once they moved into adult participation they found not much was on offer for them. The vast majority of responses cited that poor experiences of school sport led to them looking elsewhere for entertainment or social interaction.

Most of the young black, African and Caribbean males identified with Sporting Equals 'interested but inactive' or 'occasional with potential' archetype. There is a high latent demand amongst this group but factors such as socio-economic status, education and awareness allow many to become distrustful of organisations and structured programmes.

Sporting Equals Archetypes

Culturally Excluded: Many young black males have no cultural restrictions in terms of participation. There is a minority which do not take part because of fears of body image or ability. The sports offer has to take into account that abilities vary and service providers need to build trust to enable greater engagement.

Interested but inactive : These are essentially 'couch potatoes' who may be sports fans but are not physically active. This group can involve issues faced by culturally excluded but the emphasis here is about getting the interested but inactive to change their behaviour so it is important to understand their triggers.

Early sporting drop-outs: Our research indicated that many young black males dropped off after school but maintained strong interest and following of sport. The main reason behind the drop off was due to costs, social benefits and other interests.

Fragile Regulars: Alongside the usual drop-off barriers it was clear that many participants made decisions dependent on season regarding which sport they played. Therefore it was common to lose touch with a sport once they had decided to take part in other activities.

Occasional with potential: our one to one interviews discovered that young Black, African and Caribbean males strongly affiliated with this archetype. In their own estimations they felt they did sufficient sport but on reflection knew lifestyle barriers allowed for further potential. Many had the commitment of work, education and family to consider and important decisions as to where to spend disposable income.



Accessibility

For many young black, African and Caribbean males accessibility to sport is often related to cultural norms within their community, and social status as determined by their location.

Location – with majority of black, African and Caribbean communities based in inner-city areas, close to work and transport links means they focus primarily on daily activities which often leave little time to participate in sport. Sports offers have to be local and easily accessible.

Facilities – facilities should be considered in terms of privacy and access to new communities. As new communities settle in from parts of Africa and the Caribbean it is vital to ensure services reflect the communities they serve to build relationships and trust.

Support – some African communities may need support to help break down barriers due to language, trust and confidence. The easiest way to do this is through offering taster sessions and group activities which can be done easily with friends and family.

Timing – it is important that timing is flexible to fit around home and other priorities. Many young people work to support their families and struggle with finding the motivation so a tailored approach focussing on the fun and social aspects of sport.

Case Study

A completely different set of issues arose through our discussions with a Somali parent at a young people's project in Birmingham. It was highlighted that one of the main barriers to Somali young people progressing at school was the language barrier. In many cases very little English is spoken by the parents and in some cases the children. This not only makes it difficult for parents to help their children but also means that parents cannot engage with the usual sports partners, leisure centres, gym, and coaches. Most marketing and standard communication is not translated and the language barriers mean that the parents cannot communicate on a one to one basis. One parent gave an example of a school contacting her after her son had been offered a place on a sports team visit to Football club. She felt difficulties posed by the language barriers meant he missed out which impacted his chances to progress.

Other general barriers from the research for young black, African and Caribbean males are identified below:

Barriers

- Parental Influence
- Fears around racism/discrimination
- Lack of suitable facilities which provide privacy
- Facilities Childcare
- Timing
- Cost



Motivators

GET FIT / BODY IMAGE

Many young Black, African and Caribbean males are strongly motivated by the desire to look and feel physically fit. As a consequence the majority of men who are involved in sport identified health and fitness as key reason for attending sport sessions and felt that they had experienced positive changes as a result.

BELONGING

The young men identified with peers and have a need to be part of that community. Therefore getting involved in the sport sessions to socialise and spend time with friends is a key motivator. Tastes in sport change as to what groups want to do at a social level. The majority of the time is spent playing football to allow 'banter' and collective dialogue within local spaces.

KEEP OUT OF TROUBLE

There were some responses regarding using the time wisely; going to local leisure centre for swimming or football was seen as a wise choice to spending time as a social activity rather than congregating on the street with mates. It was identified that sport is a good mechanism to develop relationships, mix with other communities and learn new skills.

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM PARENTS

Our research indicated that young Black, African and Caribbean males get support from parents to pursue sport as they see the added benefits. There is reluctance once costs become involved but parents do what they can. More education for parents will allow them to support young people in areas that will sustain participation and push talented individuals to pursue sport at a competitive level.



“Sport is a very important part of my daily routine, but not everyone has the same lifestyle balance. We need to make sport target beginners but then we don’t have the facilities to accommodate such an increase in numbers.

Swimming pools are always full on weekends, football pitches are all booked in advance and local facilities are having cuts from councils. Sports providers need to start taking the sport to people, into community centres, schools, parks.”

***Paul Barzey
– Youth Worker, YMCA, West London***

Sport by Sport Trends



FOOTBALL – A very popular choice that fulfils majority of demands from social interaction to health and fitness benefits. There is a marked drop off once the young people leave education and the need to develop grassroots sport. Offers such as Just Play are effective but they require further reach and exposure.



CRICKET – There is a latent demand for participation but this requires right numbers and access to facilities. It is perceived that cricket tends to target other ethnicities over young black people.



TENNIS – Although strong interest exists for Tennis, it is seen as difficult to access, with the need to book a court and the cost of equipment. Local courts are not always maintained by councils. A more fluid approach from sports providers will allow young black people to access the sport within local settings before moving into structured environments.



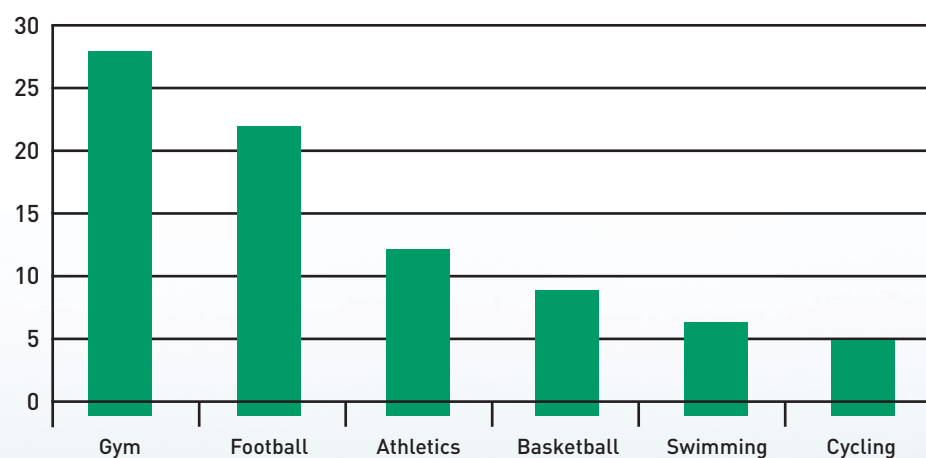
BOXING – A sport that resonates and appeals to young black, African and Caribbean males. More provision is required at a local level to encourage membership and allow new emerging communities to try and build confidence along with transition routes from community based venues to clubs.



Swimming – There is high participation amongst young Black males, and it is one of the more popular sports. The sports providers can look to further build on this with innovative new programmes or sessions that focus on health and fitness and which subsidise the cost of swimming during pool down-times.



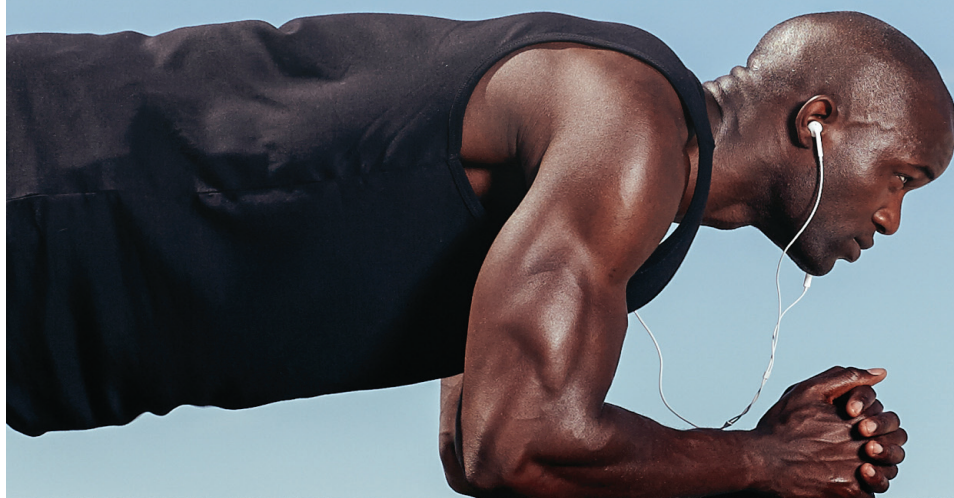
Active People Survey 8 (2013/14) - Most popular sports amongst Black males 16-25 years olds



Gym, Football and Athletics are the most popular sports for black young males

“Black children are constantly bombarded with images that suggest to them that their race is not the preferred race. Except in the spheres of sport and entertainment, when Black children look around them they find few role models in prestigious positions in society.”

Focus Group respondent



Links to the Sport England Youth Review

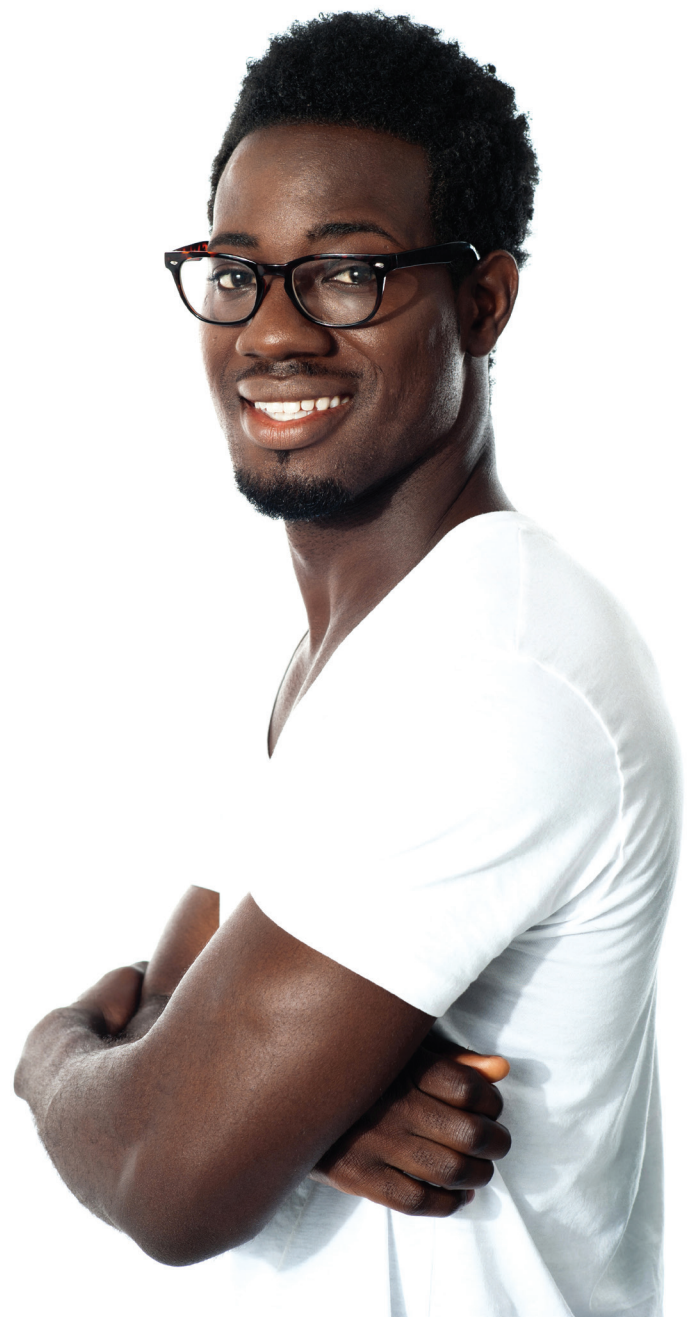
The environment in which young people have grown up is different to previous generations. Young black, African and Caribbean males have been shaped and influenced by new technology and communication. To maintain levels of interest in sport amongst each new generation, it is integral not to separate online and offline activities.

Young black, African and Caribbean people's behaviour does not always reflect their attitude to sport – we need to focus on changing behaviours not attitudes:

- Many young black people feel positive about sport but aren't necessarily looking to take part; for them, sport and physical activity needs to be more visible and accessible, with stronger reminders of their positive associations.
- Other young people are uninterested in sport but find wider reasons to take part. Promoting the benefits they are looking for is more effective.

For many, there is a shift in teenage years towards taking part for more functional or lifestyle reasons. Motivations change as young people grow up, with health, fitness and looking and feeling good becoming more important. The shift towards fitness-related activities is occurring at an earlier age than previously.

The feedback from young Black, African and Caribbean males reiterated that the supply of sport tends to reach those who are already engaged. There is a need for a broader offer which meets more diverse needs to break the norms of sport participation.



Top Tips

1. Offer sport in informal settings such as schools and community and faith centres to encourage take up amongst young black males that are interested but inactive or occasional with potential. They will be more receptive to their needs being catered for and more comfortable that sports club setting.
2. Target marketing and messaging with simple information that examples the benefits of participation, health, fitness and social aspects.
3. Advertise opportunities through a variety of ethnic media channels, including The Voice Newspaper and local African and Caribbean radio outlets. Consider who you are trying to reach and ensure printed material has option for other languages.
4. The use of taster and drop-in sessions with 'invite a friend or family member' feature can encourage sustained participation. This will help boost confidence to further pursue physical activity.



References and Acknowledgements

2 focus groups took place in London, in youth group settings with young black, African and Caribbean males. Individual interviews were also carried out at Laurel Road Community Centre in Birmingham and a selection of telephone interviews with coaches. We wish to thank all the young men, coaches and partners who were so willing to take part in this study. We also thank all the staff of the YMCA project, in particular Paul Barzey, the coordinator, for their encouragement and help in enabling this study to take place.



References

Club membership insight paper,

Sporting Equals, March 2012

The role of faith centres in the provision of sport and physical activity, Sporting Equals, June 2012

The role of faith centres in helping drive growth in sports participation, Sporting Equals, December 2011

Facilities insight paper, Sporting Equals, June 2011

Sport England, The challenge of growing youth participation in sport, August 2014

Toolkit for BME engagement, prepared for England Athletics by Sporting Equals, September 2010

The challenge of growing youth participation in sport, Sport England, 2014

A Portrait of Modern Britain Policy Exchange, 2014

The role of faith centres in helping drive growth in sports participation Sporting Equals, December 2011

Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census

Future Identities: Changing identities in the UK – the next 10 years, Institute of Education, January 2013

Media representations of black young men and boys, Cardiff University, 2011

©Sporting Equals March 2015

Sporting Equals
Promoting ethnic diversity in sport & physical activity

Sporting Equals

Building 300, Trinity Park, Bickenhill Lane,
Birmingham International Airport B37 7ES

Tel: 0121 777 1375 Email: info@sportingequals.org.uk

www.sportingequals.co.uk

Company Number: 5853520 Charity Number: 1119365