

**THEME:**
Communities**TITLE OF LEARNING:**
Police & Crime Commissioner – Violent Crime
Reduction Unit**KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

How do we develop opportunities to be active in the community?

What We Did:

In Summer 2019 £600,000 was invested in reducing the risk of young people in the West Midlands committing and being victims of violent crime over the summer holidays. ABC partnered with the West Midlands PCC to commission organisations to provide free and accessible activity for young people in high risk areas.

After consultation with local groups and agencies, Active Black Country mobilised a collection of locally trusted Community Sports providers to establish a *Community Safety Partnership* to utilise sport and physical activity as a vehicle for diversionary activity. The West Midlands Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) commissioned the organisations, via ABC, to deliver open access activity for young people throughout the school summer holiday period. The summer provision was also aligned geographically to West Midlands Police Youth crime hotspots across the Black Country.

What we Learnt

The coordinated approach across the wider West Midlands provided valuable learnings for commissioning of future programmes and ultimately reduced youth crime whilst demonstrating the power of sport as a tactic for diversion. Following on from the summer programme there has been consistent commissioning from the West Midlands PCC into Black Country community providers for diversionary activities during school holiday periods and further application of the summer learnings.

Outside of outputs, the summer activities provided ABC and West Midlands PCC with softer learnings around wider sector services with regard to what builds retention amongst young people.

- Activities that were free of charge engaged more people
- Young people felt empowered when able to co-design or volunteer on programmes
- Some projects integrated public services (e.g. fire) and this helped them develop relationships with young people
- Projects succeeded where there was place-based collaboration with referral networks to signpost young people to other provision.

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Black Country**What Happens Next?**

These learnings are largely consistent with findings from other programmes. Giving participants the opportunity to codesign and feel intrinsic to an intervention, along with a clear pathway to further opportunities is critical for retention. ABC are continuing to work with the WMPCC on holiday activity projects in a monitoring and evaluation capacity, enabling us to further gauge the impact of different approaches.