

Alice Robson – Written evidence (NPS0089)

Job Role: Head Coach of several clubs in Wakefield as well as Community Tennis Coach at Ackworth School delivering tennis outreach to 17 primary schools per year in the local community.

Knowledge of subject: Hold 1st Class honours in Sport Development from Leeds Beckett University. Conducted consultancy project on behalf of the LTA on female tennis coaches' experiences of Coach Education. Awarded LTA National Development Coach of the year 2020 for developing a tennis club from 17 members to over 200 members in just under 2 years.

How can children and young people be encouraged to participate in sport and recreation both at school and outside school?

- Role Models for underrepresented groups
 - e.g. need more female tennis coaches but also need to support these female coaches to stay in the sport and work in all aspects. Not many female coaches at a high level therefore lack of role models. Support could be through mentoring.
 - From my research I found that one of the reasons why female coaches left coaching was that they did not see how they could progress in their career. Mentoring is so important to being able to open up those opportunities and encouraging women that they can work at an elite level.
 - At Ackworth Tennis Club over the whole junior programme there is almost a 50/50 in girl to boy ratio. I believe this is due to the all-female coach workforce at the club. It gives the girls someone to look up to.
- Need to encourage school – club links
 - Multi-sport companies deliver PE in primary schools and do not always have links to clubs to encourage children to continue participating in the sport they engage with.
 - On the coaching programme at Ackworth Tennis Club 68% of all the children who attend coaching come from a school where I deliver school outreach. This shows that children will participate outside of school if given they know where to do go.
 - The connection with the school allows me to be able offer opportunities for people to try tennis for free and new courses for children who have never played tennis before (Tennis for Kids).
- Ensure that a child's first experience of sport is positive.
 - Many people are put off sport for life due to bad experience of sport as a child. Relationship with sport needs to be positive and needs to continue throughout their school life. Important to use external coaches especially in primary schools to ensure the first experience is high quality.
- Breakdown stereotypes of sports
 - Regular CPD for teachers and coaches about appropriate language to use.

- Try to keep girls and boys participating in PE together for longer and allow children to try all sports not just sports that are more gendered towards them.

How can adults of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those from under-represented groups be encouraged to lead more active lifestyles?

- Have a social aspect to the sport.
 - For women it is a main reason why they participate in sport.
 - From my experience coaching women is very different. They want to have the opportunity to talk to others. After my cardio tennis class, we regularly go for a drink after the session.
- Encourage subgroups for example over 60 groups
 - People want to feel like there is a session for them and that they won't be the odd one out.
 - People are becoming more and more insecure about how they look – given the opportunity they may feel more comfortable being with a group of people similar to them.

How can racism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny and ableism in sport be tackled?

- Encourage more role models of people who from an underrepresented groups
 - More Positive media coverage
 - Elite performers encouraged to speak out
- Share stories about coaches and players at a development level.
- Give more opportunities for people from underrepresented groups to be in positions of power in governing bodies
 - This would result in underrepresented groups having more influence on the way sport is structured and ran.
 - Mentoring coaches and staff governing bodies from these underrepresented groups in on how they can progress would help them to be promoted into positions of power.

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