

1 Team - 1 Dream

Working in partnership with clubs, players and PFA Scotland to tackle mental health in football



Description

Although progress has been made over the years to tackle mental health in football, more work is needed. Middle-aged men remain at greatest risk of suicide.¹ This age group is also one of the most dominant in football crowds across Scotland.

Attitudes to mental health amongst football clubs and players are beginning to change. Increasingly players are opening up about mental health difficulties. Research undertaken by Hampden Sports Clinic and PFA Scotland to investigate the incidence of mental health issues in football players across the 42 SPFL clubs, found that of 600 player responses, 64% say they themselves or a team-mate had experienced a mental health issue.²

Women's football has seen growth not only in Scotland but also across the UK.³ Football is the fastest growing participation sport among girls.⁴ Glasgow City FC is at the forefront of the sport and has reported a need to raise awareness of mental health issues amongst players and fans to improve the health of Scotland's population.

Methodology

To raise awareness of mental health support among fans, players and clubs in general, Breathing Space, Scotland's mental health phoneline:

- Formed official partnerships with a number of junior and senior football clubs and implemented an action plan for each club. These included Clydebank FC, Newmains United FC, Vale of Leven FC and Glasgow City FC
- Worked collaboratively with PFA Scotland for their Support: Mental Health in Football campaign. The confidential support line gives players with a wide range of issues access to doctors specifically trained in sports mental health. Players are then referred on to a network of counsellors, psychologists, psychiatrists or addiction counsellors depending on their issues
- Worked with the SFA and PFA Scotland and the final 16 clubs in the Scottish Cup to promote Breathing Space to fans through social media, videos and match day programme advertising
- Participated in a National conference at Hampden Park to promote mental wellbeing in sport

Aims/Objectives

Breathing Space is an early intervention listening service for anyone in Scotland feeling low, stressed or anxious.

To improve the health of the population, Breathing Space:

- Worked in partnership with PFA Scotland, the SFA and football clubs in innovative ways
- Encouraged fans, clubs and players to 'open up when you're feeling down', thus helping to minimise the risk of suicide and build more connected communities

Results/Outcomes

500K
Views on Glasgow City TV

255K
Fans Reached

200
Players helped

1
National Conference

Fans

Clubs

Players



Player Endorsement

Marketing materials

Social media



Mental wellbeing network

Wellbeing presentations with staff



Club endorsement

Workshops

Marketing materials

References:

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