



# FIGHT CONNECT IMPACT REPORT 2022-23



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

**RATHBONE**  
AMATEUR BOXING CLUB

 **HAWLEY**  
AMATEUR BOXING CLUB

WITH SUPPORT FROM:



Westminster  
Foundation



# INTRODUCTION

Fight Connect was a three term pilot partnership between In Your Corner, Rathbone ABC and Hawley ABC. We offered 3 x 12 week, 1.5 hours per week, psychologically informed boxing groups for young people aged 12-16, referred in from a range of services in Camden and Westminster.

These groups were co-delivered by a Clinical Psychologist and an accredited boxing coach, and aimed to help young people improve their emotional wellbeing and develop emotion regulation skills.

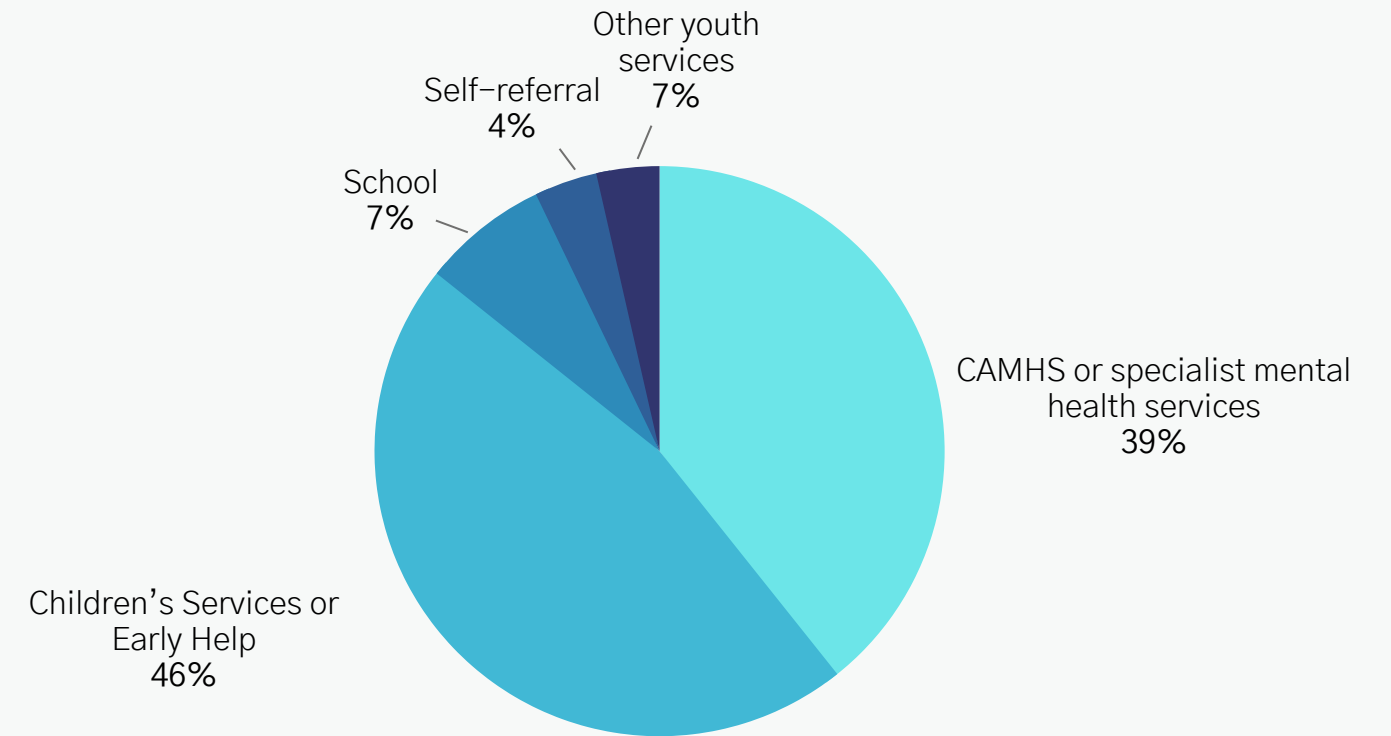
The groups used evidence-based ideas from psychological intervention delivered flexibly, alongside non-contact boxing skills, to provide an accessible route to improving physical and emotional wellbeing.

Building trusting relationships is at the heart of In Your Corner's work, and so we also supported young people to build relationships with each other, the coaches and the boxing clubs as safe community venues they can continue to access once they had graduated from the project.



# WHO WE REACHED

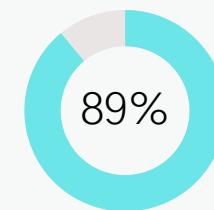
## ROUTES INTO FIGHT CONNECT:



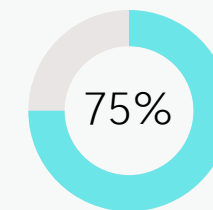
Male  
64%



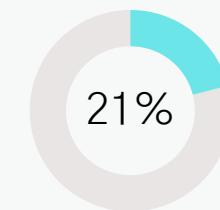
Female  
36%



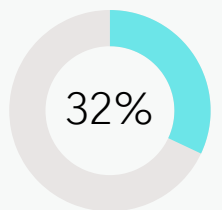
were from Black and Minoritised groups



known to have experienced trauma / adverse experiences



at risk of educational exclusion



had a diagnosis or traits of ASC or ADHD

# OUR IMPACT

68% (n=19) % of young people graduated from Fight Connect. We collected pre and post intervention data for all of them.

Young people set personalised goals for what they wanted to achieve in Fight Connect. They set Boxing Goals for their boxing skills, and Feeling Better Goals for their emotional wellbeing.

They rated goals on a ten point scale before and after the group, where 10 = maximum improvement\*.

Example boxing goals:

“I want to develop technical boxing skills”

“I want to feel motivated to train in boxing and fitness”

Example emotional wellbeing goals:

“I want to find ways to control my panic”

“I want to feel like I’ve got options other than to get angry”

	Average rating pre-group	Average rating post-group	Average Pre-post change	Is change more than 2.45*?
Feeling Better goals	4.0	7.3	+3.3	✓
Boxing goals	4.3	8.2	+3.9	✓
Confidence	4.8	7.5	+2.7	✓
Fitness	5.5	7.5	+2.0	

Scores above +2.45 indicate clinically meaningful change.

\*Goal Based Outcomes are widely used as an outcome measure in child mental health. See <https://bit.ly/3tLvRc0> for details on thresholds for clinically meaningful change.

## 68%

of young people graduated from Fight Connect

## 79%

of graduates completing the project intended to continue boxing

## WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE SAY ABOUT FIGHT CONNECT?

My anger is definitely a lot better. Before the only option (was to) get angry and get physical, but now I prefer not to get physical, it doesn't feel right. I can handle (my anxiety) better. I haven't been trying to look for fights. (Since coming to the group) I've been a lot more social. Before I was a little bit scared of talking to people... (I've liked) having the routine of going every week...I'm more disciplined...boxing has sparked it. I have been revising, not getting into trouble

I'm able to communicate more with my friends, talk more often. (I feel) safe to speak. Now I go out by myself sometimes...I wasn't doing this before, I wanted mum to come. Mindfulness and breathing (helped)...if I feel stressed I do them and I calm down.

I don't worry about things...I always used to be stressed about exams or tests but now I do some shadowboxing before to get some peace and take my mind off it.



Now, I don't feel embarrassed to do things. I am more confident in groups...I can express myself instead of being shy. (In the group) you can express yourself in front of a different group of people. You can understand people who have similar experiences..and try to understand how they feel.

## WHAT DO CARERS AND PARENTS SAY ABOUT FIGHT CONNECT?

Our daughter has become more confident and has higher self-esteem since she joined Fight connect, her communication at home improved within the first two weeks and she was better able to explain how she was feeling. She would come out of her sessions buzzing with excitement and wanted to tell us all about it. I would highly recommend to other parents, it really has helped us as a whole family unit.

She is a lot happier. She didn't want to miss groups and she really enjoyed coming. (She's had) no panic attacks. The boxing alongside her therapy was positive and she got a lot out of it

He had the most amazing time there and has shown a maturity and commitment I've never seen before

He's improved in confidence. He is not so scared to take on challenges. He is a lot calmer.

## WHAT DO REFERRERS THINK ABOUT FIGHT CONNECT?

We contacted all referrers to Fight Connect and asked for feedback.

**91%** of referrers noticed positive change in their young people, even if they didn't complete the programme.

**100%** of referrers would refer to the project again.



## WHAT DO REFERRERS THINK ABOUT FIGHT CONNECT?

”

The group helped to increase body confidence and create a more healthy relationship with exercise. (The young person) was struggling with feeling safe in the community – they reported that the group helped them to know how to recognise and regulate their emotions more. The group enabled them to make connections with other similar young people which impacted on their self-esteem as they felt less isolated.

”

Great communication before and after referring and it was amazing having the initial 1:1 session with the Clinical Psychologist and the young person, as it made her comfortable and aware of her goals.

”

This project has had a huge impact on the two young people I have referred. We need more projects like this.

”

A fantastic project, which is really well organised and planned and fantastically facilitated.

## SUMMARY AND THE FUTURE

Fight Connect engaged a complex group of young people from a range of diverse backgrounds within Camden and Westminster. The project supported them to improve their emotional wellbeing, as evidenced by clinically meaningful change on Goal Based Outcomes.

Alongside this, their confidence, boxing skills and fitness improved, and the vast majority of young people both graduated from the project and said they intended to continue to box. This is a great indicator of sustained engagement and relationships in their local communities.

In Your Corner have built strong relationships with referrers from a range of agencies and schools across Camden and Westminster, and feedback from referrers about their experience of Fight Connect and its impact was extremely positive.

This impact builds on, and further strengthens our growing body of practice-based evidence from our projects across London. We are now aiming to source funding to permit Fight Connect to embed in Camden and Westminster and provide a sustainable source of accessible, effective mental health intervention for local young people.

