



## FIGHT CONNECT

### Information for Referrers: September 2024

#### Project Overview

**Fight Connect** is a partnership between **In Your Corner & Hawley Amateur Boxing Club (HABC)**. After a successful pilot across Westminster & Camden in 2022-23, Fight Connect is back in Camden!

**Fight Connect** involves group programmes which combine non-contact boxing skills, with flexibly delivered psychological intervention. The project is facilitated by a Clinical Psychology team and England Boxing qualified boxing coaches.

The project has the following elements:

1. 2 x 12 week term-time groups (90 mins per week) which combine non-contact boxing (e.g. no glove to head or body contact) with a range of exercises and skills practice to enhance emotion regulation skills and emotional wellbeing. **The next group will be starting on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**
2. Graduates from the 12 week starter groups will work with the team to co-design a FIGHT CONNECT Graduates Group, with opportunities to gain AQA units in Boxing Skills; become Young Ambassadors for In Your Corner and co-facilitate projects, or take part in peer mentoring.
3. The co-designed Graduates Group will launch on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and is funded to run for 2 terms alongside the main groups.
4. Graduates will also have the opportunity to join Hawley Amateur Boxing Club and further develop their boxing skills, with subsidised places available.

After these groups are completed, we hope to have sourced ongoing funding to embed the project in Camden on a rolling basis.

The aims of the project are:

- To bring young people with similar experiences together, increasing their social relationships.
- To offer a therapeutic intervention for young people who do not wish to engage in talking therapies, are waiting for talking therapies, or for whom talking therapies do not seem to have been effective.
- To build physical fitness and boxing skills.
- To develop self-esteem and resilience via encouraging each other to try new activities and new ways of thinking.
- To develop emotion regulation strategies for coping with difficult feelings and consider personal resources for coping with future challenges.
- To experience positive role models and secure adult relationships via the coaches.
- To offer an accessible route into further targeted mental health intervention, further boxing/sports participation, or other structured activities if needed.



## What do young people, families & referrers say about Fight Connect?

Please read our [Fight Connect Impact Report](#) for project outcomes, and the views of young people, parents/carers and referrers.

My anger is definitely a lot better...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

**Young Person**

It has had such a fantastically positive effect on many of the young people I have been working with. You guys are brilliant!!!!

**Referrer**

He had the most amazing time there and has shown a maturity and commitment I've never seen before. He was very anxious before using public transport, and meeting new people. He enjoyed the sessions so much he pushed through all of this. It helped to channel his aggression in a positive way. X also said it has given him a new tool to use, a chill skill. It has helped with his confidence to take boxing to the next level, which has been his dream from a very young age. Thanks for this amazing opportunity and for building X's confidence!"

**Parent**

## How to make a Referral

Sessions will run on **TUESDAYS from 4.30 pm – 6.00 pm**. Referrals are open now for the group starting **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September**

### Eligibility

We would like to reach young people who are:

- **Aged 12 -15 on date of referral**
- **With behavioural, emotion regulation, or self-regulation difficulties**
- **With an address or attending a service/school in Camden. We will also accept referrals from nearby locations in the NCEL cluster that can realistically & consistently access the gym.**
- **May be open to, or waiting for CAMHS / a mental health service at the point of referral, or not.**



- We will prioritise young people known to a targeted service - Looked After/Care Experienced, Children's Services involvement (e.g. Child in Need, Child Protection, Early Help, Youth Justice).
- We aim to recruit a core group of 12 young people.
- If the young person is open to a service, we need a lead professional or care co-ordinator involved for the 12 weeks of the group to act as a contact and to support us to appropriately manage risk.

## Referral process

To refer, please fill out the **referral form**, password protect and submit to [isy@inyourcorner.uk](mailto:isy@inyourcorner.uk).

Once we receive the referral, we will contact you to clarify any information and then offer the young person and an adult (parent/carer/referrer) a 1:1 meeting to support initial engagement and to check out suitability.

**Please have a full conversation with the young person before referring** - It is important that they understand that as well as an opportunity to try boxing, the group has a focus on understanding and regulating emotions, and that they are "signed up" to some extent to trying out both elements of the group.

To support these conversations please see our **flyer, Instagram, and videos on our website** which all bring the project to life.

Our learning is that the referrals which lead to the best engagement in the group are those where the young person has been helped to understand the project by the referrer, where they are up for giving it a try, and where the referrer takes a proactive stance to supporting them to get through the door the first few times.

Please also consider **location, community safety, and travel** in the borough. **Camden Boxing Club** is about a 4 minute walk from Camden Town Tube Station, NW1 8NX.

## Contact

The lead contact for Fight Connect is **Dr Isabelle Lensvelt**. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

**Tel: 07858568244 Email: [isy@inyourcorner.uk](mailto:isy@inyourcorner.uk) Social: @iycboxing #WeAreInYourCorner**