



STEM IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

Project Report



May 2024 - June 2024



make.more

Makemore Community CIC

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Introduction

This report details the impact of our Women's Fitness and Health project that was ran in partnership with Active Black Country.

Defining Physical Activity

The World Health Organisation defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure (World Health Organisation, 2024). This can include both moderate and vigorous activities, such as walking, cycling, sports, gardening, and weight lifting. In the UK, 60.8% of women are physically active compared to 65.6% of men (GOV.UK, 2024). This disparity underscores the need for targeted health interventions to promote physical fitness and well-being among women.

The NHS recommends the average person does 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week. However, 74% of people in the UK do not reach that guideline (Nana, 2024).



When we exercise, it reduces stress hormones and stimulates the production of endorphins, which together help to foster relaxation (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020). Meaning physical activity has a huge impact on both our physical and mental health.



The programme offered structured physical training and meal planning at no cost to participants, led by a qualified personal trainer. This approach aimed to address specific health challenges faced by women in the community, including barriers to fitness access such as financial constraints, limited access to facilities, and lack of knowledge about proper exercise and nutrition (Biddle et al., 2022).

In a similar vein, a previous men's health and fitness programme aimed to enhance physical fitness and nutritional knowledge among male participants, highlighting that many men face similar barriers to accessing fitness resources (Patterson et al., 2022). Both programmes sought to bring about healthier habits and improve participants' health outcomes through professional training and nutritional support.



Project Impact

286 children from across the Black Country took part in the STEM Pop-up workshops which were held across 6 different locations.

Event Feedback

The feedback from our pop-up STEM events provided valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of both children and parents. The survey results highlight the significant impact of our initiative on raising awareness and interest in STEM subjects.

Awareness and Understanding of STEM

Prior to the event, 55.5% of participants were already aware of the term STEM. Following the event, an impressive 87.2% reported an increased understanding of STEM. This highlights the event's significant effectiveness in educating attendees about STEM and possible careers.

Interest in Pursuing STEM

Interest in pursuing STEM subjects also saw a significant increase. Participants were asked to rate what their interest in pursuing a STEM career was prior to the event, and post the event. Prior to the event, only 27.3% rated their likelihood at the highest level (5), whereas post-event, this increased to 65.9%. Additionally, the lower ratings (1 and 2) dropped to 0%, indicating a heightened interest across the board.

Knowledge and Satisfaction Ratings

Following the event, participants rated their knowledge about STEM fields and opportunities from low to high, with 40.9% giving a rating of 4 and 25% giving the highest rating of 5. Satisfaction with the event was similarly positive, with 63.6% rating their satisfaction at the highest level (5), and 22.7% at level 4.

87%

of children increased their understanding of STEM following the Pop-up workshop



The Comment Wall

The feedback was gathered from 44 parents and class/ group leaders on behalf of the children

"Kids really enjoyed themselves, staff were amazing and my youngest daughter really had fun"

"Appreciated the chance to experience VR"

"Great event, kids loved it and a good selection of activities"

"Lovely and welcoming staff who explained things appropriately for the kids"

"Excellent to get kids interested in STEM"

"Really engaging workshop, both children loved the building and VR activities"

"Lovely setup. Very Inclusive"

"We came with 2 adults and 3 children (9,7 and 3), they were all engaged"

"Lovely experience for all the children and the staff were friendly"

"Nice drop in session, easy to access"

"Really interactive and engaging for all of the children"



Ongoing Support

Following the success of our initial pop-up STEM events, Make More continues to support and engage the children who attended by offering additional enriching workshops. These follow-up sessions are designed to deepen their interest and skills in STEM, ensuring they have continuous opportunities to explore and grow.

Two exciting upcoming workshops are the Game Design Workshop and the Robot Wars Workshop, each tailored to spark creativity and technical skills in unique and enjoyable ways.

Game Design Workshop, children will become game designers for a day. They'll sketch characters, settings, and storylines, transform their drawings into digital art, and learn basic coding to bring their game ideas to life.

Robot Wars Workshop invites future engineers and tech enthusiasts aged 8-14 to design, build, and code their own robots. Over two hours, participants will plan their robot's design, construct it using various tools and parts, learn coding techniques to program it, and showcase its abilities in a thrilling battle royale.

As an organisation dedicated to bridging the inequality gap, we provide underrepresented members of the community with access to educational opportunities and STEM resources they might not otherwise have access to.

By continuing to offer innovative and engaging programs, we ensure that children have ongoing support and opportunities to pursue their interests in science, tech, engineering & maths.

PROJECT TARGETS

Six pop up STEM experiences with at least 30 different children

85% or more of people surveyed say their knowledge on STEM increased

Provide a free STEM workshop place for 10 children who have visited a pop up event

80% of surveyed people report an increased likelihood to study STEM subject

PROJECT RESULTS



We thank you for your support of the programme

Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the venues across the Black Country that opened their doors, making our free pop-up STEM event possible for children in six locations. Special thanks to the dedicated Make More staff and leadership for their tireless efforts, and to our project funders for their generous support. Your collective contributions have been instrumental in inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers.

Venue Facilitators:

YMCA Black Country, Dudley Provision House, Wolverhampton Mander Centre, Halesowen Cornbow Shopping Centre, Walsall Leather Museum, Nova Training

Project Co-ordinators:

Simone Stone, Simeon Douglas

Make More Team:

Ell Worthington, Paul Dhami, Llewellyn Livingston, Israa Mohammad.

Project Funders:

National Grid, Local Giving, Community Matters Fund

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