



INSIGHT SUMMARY

Chapter One



UK YOUTH



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The Children's Coaching Collaborative

The Children's Coaching Collaborative (CCC) is made up of a number of organisations whose primary aim is to set standards to improve the provision of sport and physical activity for children and young people. Through the power of coaching, we aim to influence the sector to raise the bar of children's coaching.

The Children's Coaching Collaborative's fundamental truths rest on every child's right to play, to develop and to be heard. These are our beliefs and what we stand for. Above all, they are based on what children have shown us they need for them to feel the fun, freedom and belonging so vital to their participation.

The Children's Coaching Collaborative has based all decisions and recommendations of Article 3, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Right to Play, The Right to Develop, and The Right to be Heard.



Document purpose

This summary document will take you through some of the foundational insights which have fuelled the conception and strategic proposition of the Children's Coaching Collaborative campaign.



Summary

Keeping active is good for children and young people's mental health, physical health, individual development, relationships and for a sense of community.

Yet despite the immense benefits, more than half of children do not get enough exercise, particularly those from low affluence families, ethnically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability or long-term condition.

Children cite fun as the primary reason for participating in organised sport and its absence as the main reason for attrition. Barriers to enjoyment can relate to sessions being too serious with a heavy emphasis on skills and competitive success. Addressing these barriers requires more focus on holistic wellbeing and development including fostering autonomy and relatedness within a social context.

Coaching which makes enjoyment a priority can help foster long-term participation in addition to performance.

This is why the Children's Coaching Collaborative is seeking to create a grassroots movement of "child-first" coaches across the county, focused on unlocking children's enjoyment of activity – specifically coaches of children from lower income and minority groups.

This document includes reference to a range of evidence sources that have informed the campaign's conception.



The Research Behind the Campaign

“ WE KNOW KEEPING ACTIVE IS GOOD FOR THEIR MENTAL HEALTH, PHYSICAL HEALTH, INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS AND A SENSE OF COMMUNITY. ”

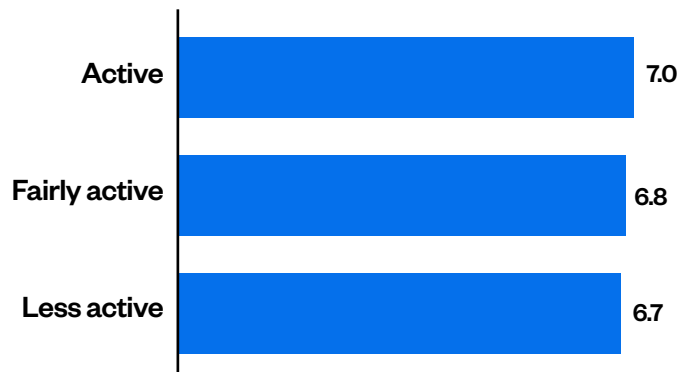
Sport England

Positive Associations

There's a positive association between sport and physical activity and levels of mental wellbeing, individual and community development.

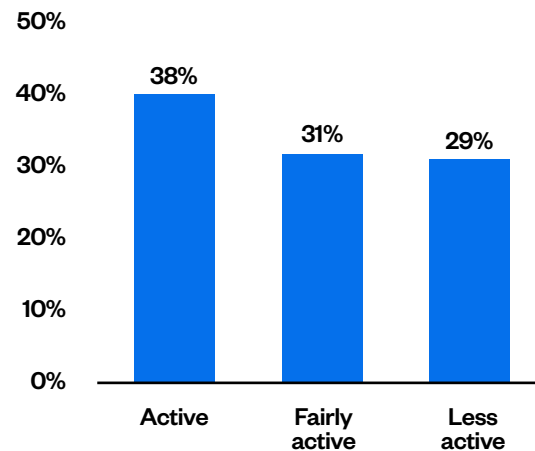
Mental wellbeing (shown here as happiness) scores are higher for children aged 7-16 who are active vs. those less active

How happy did you feel yesterday? (mean score out of 10 where 10 is happy and 0 is not happy at all)



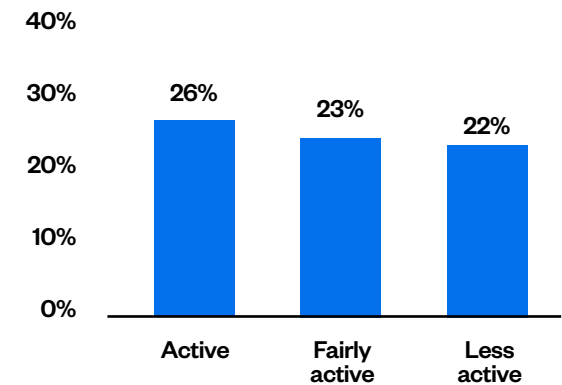
The proportion of children 7-16 strongly agreeing with 'if I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it' is higher for those who are active vs. those less active

If I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it (proportion who strongly agree)



Children aged 7-16 who are active are more likely to strongly agree they can trust people of a similar age to themselves vs. those less active

How much do you feel you can trust people of a similar age to you? (proportion who say 'a lot' when given the choice of 'a lot', 'a bit', 'not very much', 'not at all')



Source: Active Lives children and Young People Survey, Academic Year 2021 – 22. Published December 2022 (Sport England)

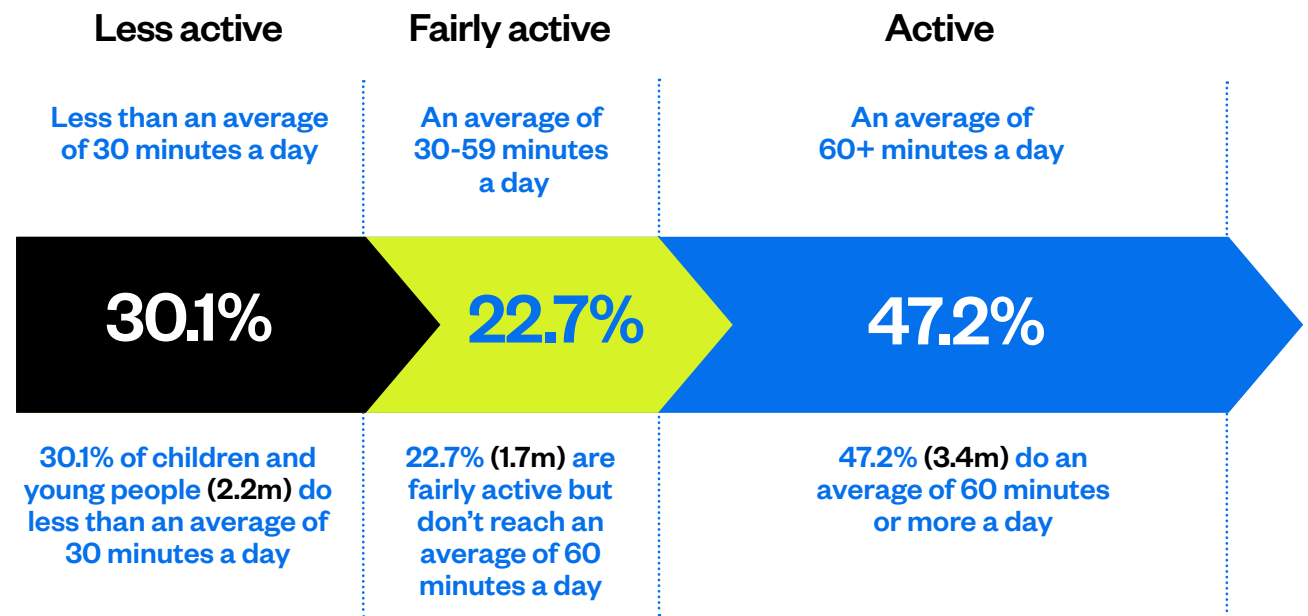
Not Enough Exercise

Yet despite the immense benefits, more than half of children do not get enough exercise.

Only 47.2% of children and young people (3.4 million) are currently meeting the Chief Medical Officer guideline of taking part in sport and physical activity for an average of 60 minutes or more every day.

Even fewer meet the CMO guideline among:

- Low affluence families
- Black and Asian children and young people
- Those with a disability or long-term health condition



Source: Active Lives Children and Young People Survey, Academic Year 2020-2021 (Sport England), My Active Future – Including Every Child (Activity Alliance)

Fun

Children cite 'fun' as the primary reason for participating in organised sport and its absence as the main reason for attrition.

Fun is the single largest predictor of sport commitment and sustained participation in childhood and through adolescence. Yet, research shows that fun and enjoyment is often compromised by:

- Participants being made to feel they have low competence or confidence
- Sessions being too 'serious'
- Too much emphasis on winning
- Pushy coaches and side-line shaming by parents

Reported enjoyment is lower among:

- Girls, especially those approaching or who have reached puberty
- Children from the least affluent families

“ ONLY 45% OF CHILDREN WHO TAKE PART IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SAY THEY REALLY ENJOY IT. ”

Sport England

Enjoyment is a key element of physical literacy

Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life. It is important because physically literate children do twice as much activity. Research shows that there are five components of physical literacy.

The 5 components of physical literacy are:

Enjoyment

Confidence

Competence

Knowledge

Understanding

The more elements of physical literacy there are, the stronger the association with positive outcomes.



“PHYSICALLY LITERATE CHILDREN DO TWICE AS MUCH ACTIVITY... AND ARE HAPPIER, MORE RESILIENT AND HAVE HIGHER LEVELS OF TRUST IN THEIR COMMUNITY.”

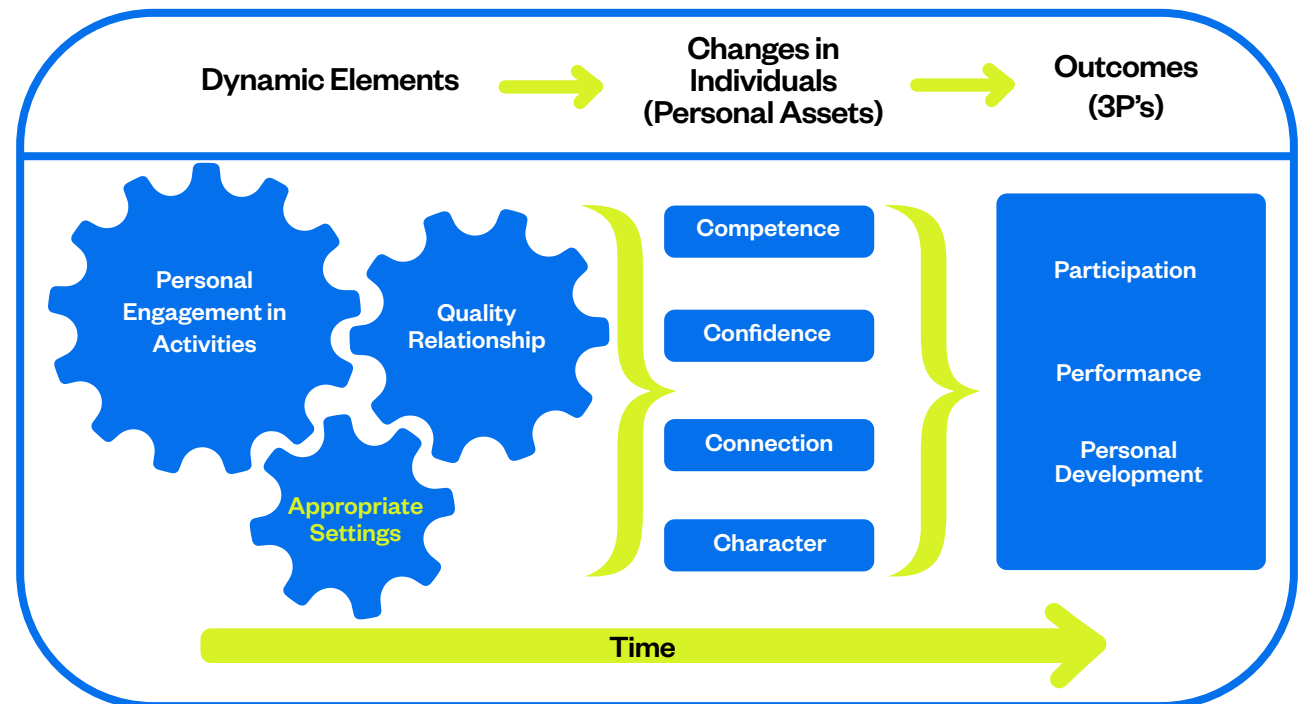
Coaching and enjoyment

Coaching which makes enjoyment a priority can help foster long-term participation.

While traditionally, performance narratives have been pervasive throughout sport, it is now increasingly understood that these can contribute to negative outcomes such as burnout, stress and drop-out.

But there are alternative conceptualisations of how developmental environments are shaped which embrace multiple outcomes, such as the personal assets framework (PAF) proposed by Côté et al., 2014. The framework suggests that dynamic elements of (a) personal engagement in activities, (b) quality social dynamics, and (c) appropriate settings will influence an athlete's long-term outcomes of performance, personal development, and continued participation in sport.

Personal Assets Framework for Sport



Source: Côté et al., 2014; Côté et al., 2016).

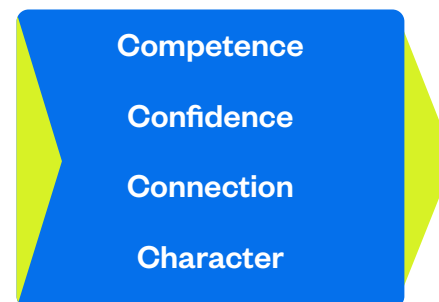
Case Study - A Norwegian Soccer Team

The case of Norwegian soccer club Bryne FC is a best practice example of successful attainment of personal development and long-term participation and performance through appropriate structure and application of the dynamic elements within the personal assets framework.

Dynamic elements: Bryne FC examples



Changes in individuals (Personal Assets)



Outcomes (3P's): Bryne FC examples



Source: "As Many as Possible for as Long as Possible"—A Case Study of a Soccer Team That Fosters Multiple Outcomes." - Martin K. Erikstad et al, 2021.

Self Determination Theory

Self Determination Theory proposes that participation has three key psychological prerequisites: autonomy, competence and relatedness.

When met, these needs increase desire to participate, and in turn nurture a context in which performance is also enhanced.

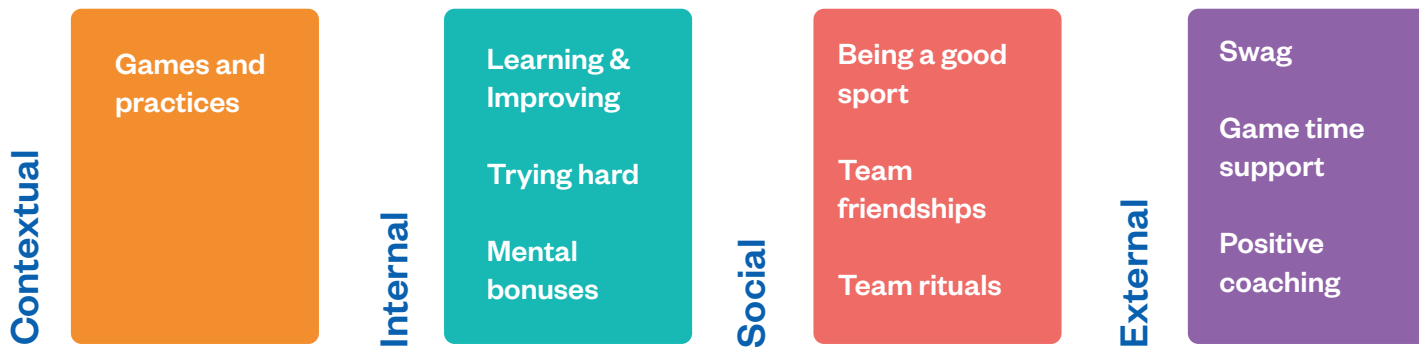


“Conditions supportive of autonomy and competence reliably facilitated intrinsic motivation, whereas conditions that controlled behavior and hindered perceived effectance undermined its expression. Subsequently, we investigated the acquisition and regulation of nonintrinsically motivated behaviors and, here too, we found evidence of the dramatic power of social contexts to enhance or hinder the organismic tendency to integrate ambient social values and responsibilities. **Contexts supportive of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were found to foster greater internalization and integration than contexts that thwart satisfaction of these needs. This latter finding... is of great significance for individuals who wish to motivate others in a way that engenders commitment, effort, and high-quality performance.**”

Understanding 'fun' in organised sport and physical activity

The Fun Integration Theory outlines the key dimensions of fun derived from statistical analysis of input from soccer players, coaches and parents.

Eleven discrete dimensions are identified and grouped into the four core tenets shown below. Dimensions with highest perceived importance to players' perception of fun collectively define the 'youth sport ethos': (i) Being a good sport; (ii) Trying hard; (iii) Positive coaching.



“

WHEN DELIVERED IN THE RIGHT WAY,
SPORT CAN EQUIP PEOPLE WITH THE
SKILLS TO SUCCEED, MAKE THEM
HAPPIER, MORE CONFIDENT AND
RESILIENT, AND EMPOWER
THEM TO BECOME LEADERS. ”

Youth Sport Trust

The Task for the Campaign

Objective

To create a grassroots movement of “child-first” coaches across the country, focused on unlocking children’s enjoyment of activity.

Specifically, coaches of children from lower income and minority groups.



Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research was conducted to understand coach mindsets and readiness to adopt child-first practices.

We learnt that:

Coaches are typically altruistic and motivated by positive outcomes for young people. Any campaign will need to recognise and build on their efforts.

Coaches believe they are already child-focused, and follow established principles often set by governing bodies. They understand that enjoyment is key to driving participation, but some argue that learning a new skill or safety precaution can't always be 'fun' initially. Despite this, a few are already - sometimes unwittingly - applying child-first techniques.

Therefore, beyond the minority of coaches already conversant in and applying child-first practices, there is a need to create an intention and good reasons to consider a different approach, as well as to support behavioural change.

While teachers share some core motivations with coaches, they can feel more constrained by the curriculum in terms of how they deliver physical education, and that they have less autonomy to adopt new approaches.

Source: White Rabbit Research, April 2022

60 coaches across England participated in a series of online focus groups and site visits, including:

- A wide range of sports - team, squad, dance, fitness, outdoor
- Paid and unpaid coaches
- Coaching children of all ages
- Coaches of 'under-represented' audiences: culturally diverse, disabled, low income, girls in traditionally male sports
- PE teachers in primary and second

Research objectives:

Understand existing attitudes and approaches to coaching children and young people

Identify barriers and enablers to taking up a more 'child-first' approach

Inform campaign target and messaging

Child-first Coaching via COM-B

Assessing the barriers to child-first coaching via the COM-B framework indicated the primary barriers related to capability.

The COM-B model developed by Michie et al (2011) is used to understand the drivers and context which influence how likely someone is to do something such as adopt particular desirable coaching practices. It states that for behaviour change to occur, there must be sufficient levels of capability, opportunity and motivation.

While the research identified barriers in all three areas, the primary barriers related to capability, driven by low awareness of child-first approaches and a lack of training.

Capability

- Low awareness of child-first approach - not part of development/training
- Lack the skills in specific circumstances e.g. addressing safety or challenging behaviours
- Fear losing control of children's behaviour or restricting their potential

Opportunity

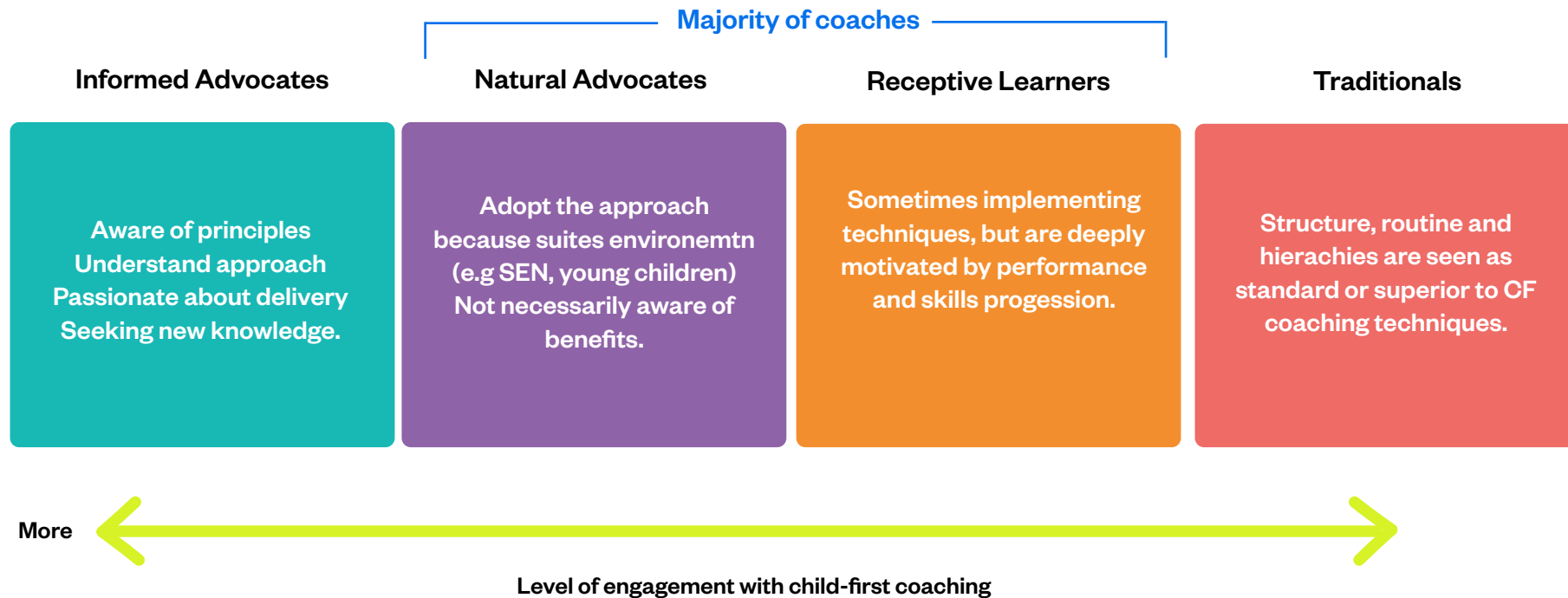
- Under pressure to meet expectations – evidencing progression to parents or following accredited programmes e.g., dance/swimming
- Resource/time limitations to take a more individualised approach or do additional training
- Official organisations and sporting bodies not yet embracing child-centric approaches

Motivation

- Approach is in line with most coaches' natural orientations and coaching already heading in this direction
- But to adopt a new approach coaches need to understand that it's a better way – were mixed feelings about letting go of tried, tested and accredited methods, especially with respect to safety and evidence-based progression

Source: White Rabbit Research, April 2022

The research also identified four archetypes with respect to child-first coaching



Source: White Rabbit Research, April 2022

Campaign Audience Focus

Campaign Role

	Primary Audiences for Messaging		
Tactical Audience	Natural Advocates	Receptive Learners	Overhearing audience
Informed Advocates			Traditionals
<p>Aware of principles Understand approach Passionate about delivery Seeking new knowledge.</p>	<p>Adopt the approach because suits environment (e.g. SEN, young children) Not necessarily aware of benefits.</p>	<p>Sometimes implementing techniques, but are deeply motivated by performance and skills progression.</p>	<p>Structure, routine and hierachies are seen as standard or superior to CF coaching techniques.</p>
<p>Activate Advocacy Support Informed Advocates to promote cause and campaign; share assets, amplify message, showcase child-first coaching.</p>	<p>Drive Behaviour Change Our Natural Advocates and Receptive Learners are predisposed to our campaign and represent our biggest opportunity to affect behaviour change. We need to inspire engagement, educate then on child-first tactics, and support them in shifting to a new approach to coaching.</p>		<p>Challenge 'Norms' Traditionals will require peer-to-peer persuasion requiring a visible grassroots movement shifting the coaching 'norm' over time.</p>

Source: FCB Inferno

Coaching together makes the incredible happen!

Strategic Campaign Proposition

