

Champions for Change

A healthy weight programme for children and young people who are overweight and obese



YMCA



@ymcamanchester

www.ymcamanchester.org.uk





Our mission and aims

“Through development of mind, body and spirit, we aim to provide a sense of belonging where people of all ages are inspired to achieve their full potential”

We seek out

We actively look for opportunities to make a transformative impact on young lives in the communities where we work, and believe that every person is of equal value.

We welcome

We offer people the space they need to feel secure, respected, heard and valued; and we always protect, trust, hope and persevere.

We inspire

We strive to inspire each person we meet to nurture their body, mind and spirit and to realise their full potential in all they do.

We speak out

We stand up for young people, speak out on issues that affect their lives, and help them to find confidence in their own voices.

We serve others

We are committed to the wellbeing of the communities we serve and believe in the positive benefit of participation, locally and in the wider community.

Our aims have been delivered through various youth and community programmes and the Y Club, the YMCA’s fitness and leisure facility. We are focused on health and wellbeing, reaching out to individuals and communities experiencing the most disadvantage in terms of health and access to facilities.

In our work the promotion of health and wellbeing functions as primary prevention and early intervention, with a particular emphasis on improving physical, psychological and social health. We have several years’ experience of engaging children and young people in physical activity and health and wellbeing through informal and formal educational programmes; see the section on our experience.

Our ethos and approach

Within our youth and community programmes, to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of our work:

- We believe all children and young people should be given the chance to reach their full potential and as such we see our role as building their resilience and assisting in the exploration of their abilities/talents, their interests and social development.
- We recognise the social context of people’s lives, such as living in poverty, and the impact of trauma on lifestyle choices, self-care, in achieving, in having self-esteem and confidence, and in being resilient.

For this purpose, we provide a trauma informed service, taking into account the trauma experienced by children

and young people when we engage with them in work to make changes or learn. We therefore take a holistic view of each child, in context, and work in ways that are flexible and responsive to each young person’s needs. This contributes to their social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing.

- We recognise the value of a person-centred approach with an emphasis on individual and community assets.
- Our approach is to engage, involve, co-produce and co-design with the people we work with, e.g., our young people and our partners.
- We take a family approach and engage the carers where relevant to the needs of the child.
- We make use of evidence-based methods, e.g., motivational interviewing, solution focused approaches to engage participation, make and sustain changes; active learning such as reflection.



Our offer

We have 3 elements to supporting children and young people who are overweight or obese in making changes to achieve a healthy weight:

- Developing positive behaviour change; emphasising developing self-care, building self-esteem and confidence, developing a positive mind set, a “can do” attitude, exploring issues/barriers/solutions, getting started and maintaining changes.
- Tailored physical activity programme; increasing activity and reducing sedentary behaviour.
- Bespoke nutrition workshops; facilitating and empowering positive food choices in the process to lose weight.

Our work will be trauma informed, age and ability appropriate. We will do family/carer work where needed, e.g., particularly for 5-12 years.

Our delivery

The implementation of our offer will include:

- **An initial assessment;** this will examine readiness for change, their experience, areas of interest, levels of confidence, learning styles.
- **Life coaching sessions for individuals and families;** we will enable them to access their motivation for change, make choices, and develop their ability to make the changes.
- **A 10-12 week healthy weight programme;** we will work with the child and their family/carer to co-design the programme. This will enable them to make choices and consider ways to embed a new healthy weight lifestyle.
- **3-4 evaluation sessions;** these will be carried out with the child and family/carer, to look at new insights gained, areas of growth and areas that need changing. The learning process is iterative and interactive. Reflection, collaboration and goal setting is key to its success.
- **Participation of parents/carers:**
 - Parents/carers encouraged to exercise using the adult facilities at the Y Club, during the child exercise session; this can be use of the gym facilities, circuit training, badminton, swimming, Rugby fives, etc.
 - Parents/carers encouraged to participate in the fun activities when possible.
 - Parents/carers required to attend nutrition workshops/education sessions.
- **A reduced-rate membership to the Y Club:**
 - Offered to the family for the duration of the programme to support more activity.
 - Offered after the programme to support the continuation of an active lifestyle.

Developing positive behaviour change

The following aspects will be considered through one to one life coaching, within workshops and activity:

- Promoting self-care.
- Developing a growth mindset - positive thinking strategies.
- Goal setting: Setting short, medium and long term SMART goals.
- Learning to learn - the power of reflection.
- Body image and mental health awareness: Identifying the links between mental health and obesity, identifying the effects of social media on body image and self-confidence, breaking negative thought cycles, practicing self-care and identifying coping mechanisms.
- Recognition and exploration of the impact of adverse life experiences and trauma on lifestyle choices and food consumption.
- Exploring factors which will support/motivate making changes, support and maintain changes
- Identifying the physical, emotional and social benefits of physical activity.
- How to create and embed an active lifestyle; identifying barriers that exist in participating in physical activity and solutions/strategies to overcome, considering what they can do to make it fun and enjoyable.
- Exploring attitudes to eating and making informed food choices.
- Identifying personal strategies to encourage healthy eating and to implement diet changes over a long-term period e.g. meal planning, establishing routines.



Tailored physical activity programme

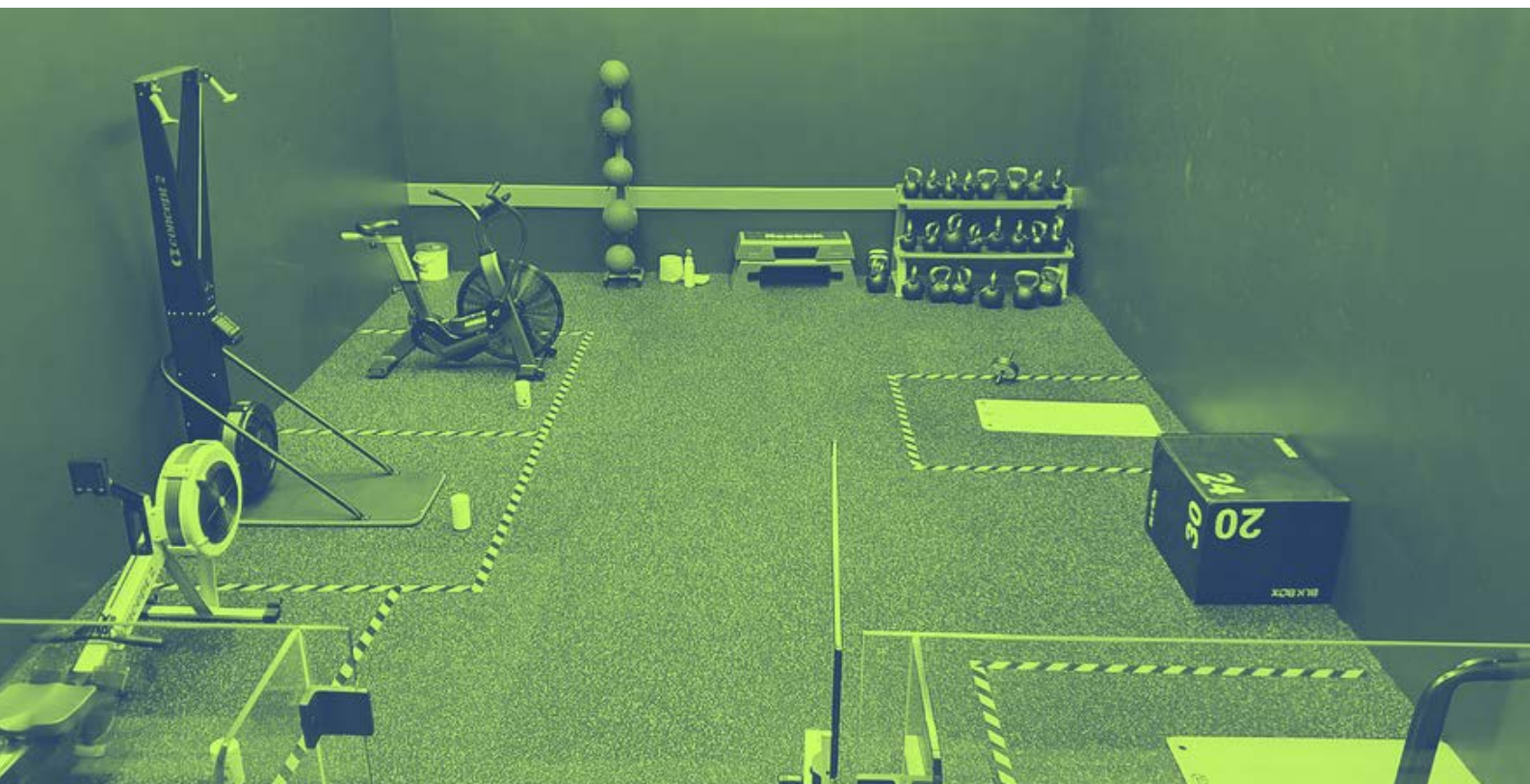
- Goal setting and review.
- 2 one-hour weekly sessions; some of this time will be to explore positive behaviour changes. One-hour will be an exercise session led by a certified personal trainer and or PE teacher, including warm up, strength, cardio-vascular and stretching activity; see example.
- Building activity into the day; ways to raise levels of activity and burn calories.
- Keeping activity diary/chart to motivate.
- Tailored physical activity based on age and ability, e.g., specific sports sessions, multi-active sessions which are more play based, brisk walking.
- Opportunities to participate in a wide variety of physical activities and exercises, identifying which ones bring the most amount of enjoyment and can be continued long term.

Bespoke nutrition workshops

The sessions will cover the topics relevant to the needs of the child and family/carer in regard to achieving healthy weight and promoting self-care.

They will be delivered both practically and in a “classroom” setting. We will use interactive methods. Topics which could be explored include:

- Nutrition overview and healthy eating; understanding and achieving 5-a-day, nutrients, amounts of each nutrient/food group for their needs, identifying quantities, hydration, understanding hunger, sugar intake, food label reading.
- Weight loss specifics; managing calories, portion size.
- Relationship to food; fussy eating, psychological aspects.
- Food and mood.
- How to make changes fun and easy to implement.
- Tracking and monitoring food intake, measuring quantities and amounts, keeping a food diary and recording moods.
- Trying healthy options.
- Purchasing and preparing healthy meals on a varied budget, making quick healthy meals, best choices for eating out, best choices for school lunch.
- Resources; recipes, websites, community assets.





Examples of ways in which we could deliver the content

Family fun activity workshops: Soft play activities and sports sessions/multi-skills sessions.

Outdoor play: Family activities that encourage play and physical activity in the outdoors, making the most of free space e.g., scavenger hunts, planning a picnic, wildlife explorer days, geocaching.

Active learning workshops: Delivering nutrition and diet sessions with a fun, practical, hands on approach.

Family cooking sessions: Creating opportunities for families to cook together making simple and healthy alternatives to foods children may not like, allowing children to develop a positive relationship with healthy food.

Parental support workshops: Supporting parents in embedding a healthy lifestyle into their daily routine. For example, meal planning, budgeting, planning physical activity into the day, identifying opportunities to spend time together and to be physically active.

Children and young people get to choose from a wide range of activities for example, dance, football, basketball, badminton, and if they want they can build their own indoor assault course. We combine fun and play in everything we do.

Example of the format of exercise sessions

Exercise sessions will be a one-hour session led by a certified personal trainer and/or PE teacher.

Exercise sessions will consist of a brief callisthenic-type warm up, followed by resistance exercises and floor exercises (push-ups, curl-ups, lunges). The exercise session will be continued with aerobic activity (jogging, swimming, water aerobics, brisk walking, jumping rope) and end with stretching exercises.

Children will be encouraged to exercise at a level of at least 6-7 (out of 10, with 10 being their maximum effort) for both the resistance and aerobic portion of the exercise session. The children will be instructed to “slow-down” or “lighten the load” if their breathing became too rapid.



Our team

We are an interdisciplinary team comprising:

- Health and wellbeing specialists, particularly in mental health and wellbeing, with over 25 years' experience between us.
- Youth workers with over 25 years' experience between us.
- Qualified PE Teachers with over 20 years' experience between us both in primary, secondary and further education.
- Qualified Coaches and PT instructors in a range of physical activity/sports with over 25 years' experience, working with all ages and abilities.

Our qualified teachers, youth workers and coaches specialise in SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability), SEMH (Social, Emotional & Mental Health), Challenging Behaviour, Health, Fitness and Physical Activity, Trauma and Resilience.

Our experience of working with children, young people and adults includes:

- Engaging and working with children and young people who are disadvantaged and vulnerable, including those with SEND, SEMH challenges, Looked After Children, children with behavioural problems and who are young carers. We have worked with them to achieve academically where they have been struggling in mainstream education and may have been at risk of exclusion. For example, we have offered bespoke trauma informed, informal and formal (accredited) educational programmes to 13-24 year olds, which build resilience through a youth-led process, mentoring, small group work, informed by the principles of participation and choice, e.g., setting their own goals. This is an approach that is used in both the alternative education programmes and our mental health work. In this work we develop relationships with parents, schools and caregivers via constant communication.

The focus of our educational work is physical activity and health and wellbeing; using a holistic, young person-centred approach we address mental health, body image, physical fitness, self-esteem, communication and leadership skills.

- One to one mentoring/ coaching of children, young people and adults to: develop existing or new skills; build emotional intelligence and coping strategies for personal difficulties; boost confidence and motivation.
- Running physical activity sessions through our Y Club for vulnerable children and young people, disabled, young offenders from the Youth Offending Team, young people at risk of exclusion. The Y Club has co-delivered the accredited learning programmes with the education team. They also work directly with specialist providers, e.g., SEND schools.
- Projects focussed on mental health and wellbeing, e.g., the Mental Health Champions Project and the Mental Health in Elite Sport for the wrestling community.

Our facilities

- We have access to the biggest gym and leisure centre in the city centre, the Y Club, we have car parking facilities and are within 5 minutes' walk of Deansgate-Castlefield tram stop.
- The Y Club has the following equipment and facilities:
 - Gym; cardio and weights equipment
 - 18m swimming pool
 - Dance studio
 - Soft play equipment
 - Sports hall
 - Indoor 100m running track
 - Sauna
 - Steam room
- Physical activity/sports that we offer include: Dance, Basketball, Football, Badminton, Tennis, Rounders, Tag Rugby Fives, Dodgeball, Ultimate Frisbee, Hockey, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Wrestling, Judo and Circuit training.
- A Junior Y Club



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