

Breaking Barriers with Mindful Table Tennis

Theme: mental wellbeing

Defining the Issue

Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year. Regular sport and physical activity, such as table tennis, can help to reduce the risk and symptoms of several mental health conditions, including anxiety, stress and depression.

Background Information

Bedford Borough Council run the *Mindful Sport* programme, which aims to improve the mental health of people in the community through social physical activity sessions. Table tennis is a key element of the *Mindful Sport* programme, with two weekly sessions for the local community.

The Project

- Table tennis takes place in two weekly afternoon sessions for an hour
- The sessions focus around free play, encourage people to integrate and talk to each other



The Results

The Mindful table tennis session attract an average of 12 participants each week, with the majority of them returning week after week. The project has allowed people of different ages, nationalities and those living with different mental health conditions to come together and support each other.

“What’s been so pleasing to see is the diversity of the participants and the positive conversations that happen between them” – Sport Development Officer, Bedford Borough Council

Key Learnings

1. Table tennis brings people together from different backgrounds
2. Table tennis can encourage peer support for people with mental health conditions

For more information on bringing table tennis to your community, visit www.pinginthecommunity.co.uk

For *Mindful Sport*, search ‘Bedford Borough Council Mindful Sport’



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