

Keeping active during lockdown with table tennis Nottingham City Council and JRH Support

Theme: Coronavirus, physical activity, mental wellbeing, target groups

Defining the Issue

Opportunities for physical activity during the Coronavirus pandemic and national lockdown were reduced. To support action against rising inactivity and the risk of worsening mental wellbeing, Table Tennis England teamed up with Ping! partners to provide communities with home table tennis kits.

Background

During the Coronavirus pandemic and national lockdown, the way in which Table Tennis England's Ping! project was delivered had to change. Working with established partners, home table tennis bat, ball and net kits were distributed to communities most negatively impacted by the outbreak.

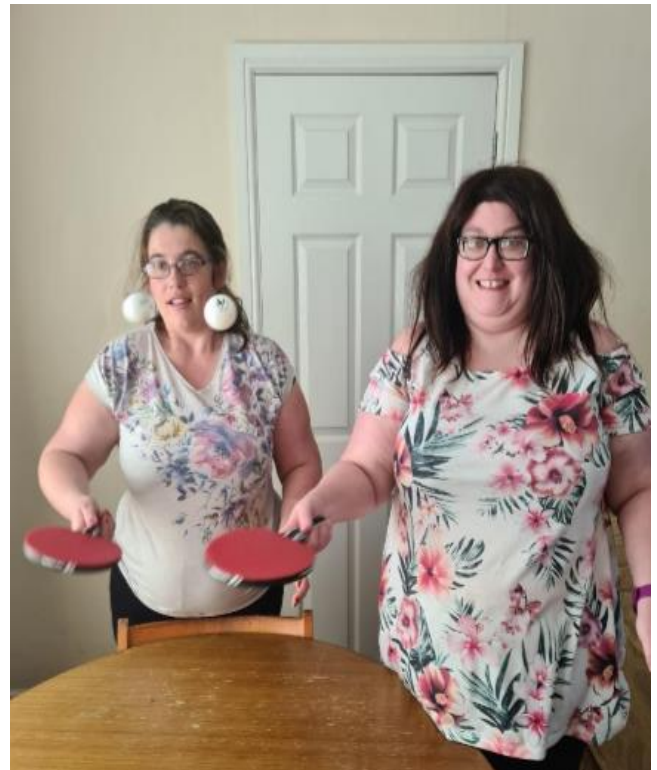
Off the back of a partnership with Nottingham City Council, John Richard Huthwaite (JRH) Support were recruited to support with kit distribution. JRH Support provide care and support services across Nottingham.

Leyander, Stacey and Jean are supported by JRH Support at their shared property in Clifton. They each live with a disability and benefit from the support provided to live independent lives.

Before the outbreak, Leyander, Stacey and Jean kept active by going on regular walks and accessing local leisure facilities. When the Coronavirus pandemic hit, nearly all physical activity opportunities came to an immediate stop.

"The impact of COVID-19 was really tough for the supported individuals and staff, with a negative impact on morale and provoking a general low mood."

"The general low mood caused by the challenges of COVID-19 made it hard to engage the ladies in physical activity."



Impact

The home table tennis kit donated to Leyander, Stacey and Jean, gave them the opportunity to keep physically active during lockdown. Despite being new to the sport, improvements in technique were quickly recognised.

"Having the donation of the table tennis kit was amazing! The girls opened the packet straight away. We cleared the dining room table and began to have a go. Stacey was reluctant at first to give it a go, but with some gentle encouragement, she found she enjoyed it and didn't find it too difficult! Now we're all starting to see improvements!"

"The majority of activity we were doing during COVID-19 was arts and crafts, so it was great to have something that got us active. We've even been sweating... both due to playing and laughing!"

Playing table tennis helped relieve the strains that come with being in lockdown and improved mental wellbeing.

"To have a physical activity we could do in the property without causing damage was amazing, and it lifted morale. We found it a really uplifting activity and saw improvements in mood and quality of sleep."

"It was surprising how well everyone engaged with it, as it is very rare that we find an activity that entertains all! It definitely helped with the relationships in the house."

As well as supporting Leyander, Stacey and Jean, this initiative provided staff at JRH Support with a new idea to meet support plan goals.

"From a wider perspective, it has had a really positive impact within the company, supporting us to support our individuals. We are looking to introduce the kit in other supported living properties, with another kit already on the way."

Key Learnings

1. Introducing table tennis into the immediate environment can change attitudes towards keeping physically active.
2. Table tennis can help boost mood and morale.
3. Table tennis is an accessible activity option for care and support services to offer.

Further Information

For more information on the Ping! programme, visit www.pingengland.co.uk



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