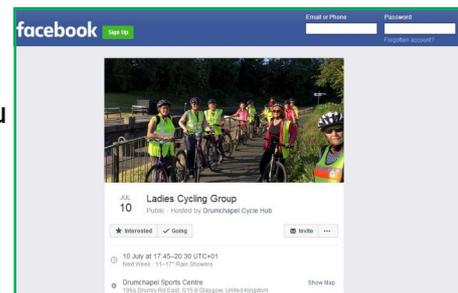


How should we promote sessions for the particular people we want to work with?



This question is important because...

People who haven't been active for a while are often nervous about getting involved. You therefore need to get the message right when you promote your activities. Exactly how you do this will depend on who you want to target and how they access your service (eg referral, signing up or just coming along to a session). It is said that people need to see something at least 7 times before they are likely to act on it so you need to spread the word in lots of places and in lots of ways.



Research

The University of Strathclyde's evidence shows that people are as much motivated by fun and meeting others as by becoming active. When advertising your services you should therefore take into account what motivates people to take part.

Key messages

- ✓ Think about your audience. Is it potential participants themselves, friends and family of potential participants, health professionals, or other organisations who may already have contact with the people you want to attract?
- ✓ The term 'inactive' can be unhelpful and act as a barrier for some. Consider language around 'becoming active' and 'active journeys' in your materials, and emphasise the social and fun.
- ✓ Once you know your audience you can come up with appropriate messages. You may need to promote your service to several different audiences and might need different materials for each one.
- ✓ You may need to explain:
 - who can come along
 - that your programme is specifically aimed at people who haven't been active for a while



How should we promote sessions for the particular people we want to work with? (continued)



- what to expect from a session (length, frequency, type of activity, how you accommodate people's different needs, whether they can come and watch before getting involved, any social aspects...)
- what the benefits could be (social, physical and/or emotional)
- when and where sessions happen
- what to bring (clothes, equipment...)
- any costs
- how to get involved (eg referral or open access)
- how you can support people to take part (eg meet or speak beforehand or encourage them to bring a friend along)
- how to find out more (website, e-mail, phone, social media...)
- ✓ Your messages to potential participants might include:
 - “Becoming more active will give you huge physical health benefits.”
 - “You can achieve significant benefits very quickly through minor increases in activity.” (small steps approach)
 - “Being more physically active can lead to big improvements in your mental health.”
 - “If you join our sessions you will have fun and get to know new people.”
- ✓ Use photos of real people – not stock images of perfectly proportioned athletes.
- ✓ Include quotes from previous participants and/or referrers.
- ✓ Use straightforward, friendly language.
- ✓ Ask people from your target audience to comment on draft materials.
- ✓ Your audience (young people, old people, new mums, health professionals etc...) will determine how best to promote your sessions.
- ✓ Ask previous and existing participants how they heard about you.
- ✓ Ways of getting your message out could include:
 - running taster sessions for existing groups of people
 - giving talks to potential participants
 - the internet (your website, community sites, condition-specific support forums...)
 - social media
 - word of mouth: “bring a friend”
 - targeted leaflet drops
 - leaflets and posters in “sticky places” – places where most people in a community go fairly often (shops, library, pub, health clinic, chemist...)
 - asking local chemists to put leaflets in appropriate prescription bags
 - local radio
 - local press

find related resources at
www.thrivetoolkit.org.uk