



Project



Community Street
Soccer Program:
Townsville Women's
Correctional Centre

Partner



Year

2012

Purpose



The Big Issue commissioned the Centre for Sport and Social Impact to evaluate the soccer program within the Townsville Women's Correctional Centre, which uses engagement with sport as a method of rehabilitating prisoners during their confinement, and reintegration into community street soccer programs upon release.

The project sought to answer the questions:

- what can sport programs do for prisoners within correctional facilities?
- what are the experiences and outcomes for these participants?
- what, if any, program delivery and management improvement opportunities are available for the program?

Method



A review of the research literature was undertaken to provide a broad understanding of development through sport, particularly its relationship to crime reduction and prisoner rehabilitation.

Individual interviews were then held with twelve soccer program participants covering the following key themes:

- experience of the soccer program within the Townsville Women's Correctional Centre
- factors influencing participation in the program (both positive and negative)
- perceived outcomes from participation in the program (both positive and negative)

Application



Overall the evaluation of the program is a positive one, with clear and demonstrable positive outcomes for both the individual inmates and the Correctional Centre as a whole. Inmates have the opportunity to role model and rehearse appropriate behaviours in a fun and supportive setting, they develop bonding social capital with fellow inmates, and are linked to external support networks and opportunities upon release. 'Soccer day' is something that they look forward to, and it has a number of positive effects for the participants, including: improvements to their physical health, levels of stress or anxiety and some indications of improved behaviour.

Improvements to the program planning and delivery process were identified and reported to The Big Issue.

