



## HAF Summer 2023 – Case Study

Name of Organisation: **TWO BROTHERS GYM CIO**

Date of provision: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August

Intro:

Our gym specialises in coaching Muay Thai/kick-boxing as well as Mixed Martial Arts. We are based in the very deprived area of Birkenhead North. Our gym is very inclusive and for a few years now we have reached and helped numerous disadvantaged & vulnerable children/adults through various funded programmes. This was our 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive HAF Mixed Martial Arts Camp which we have held, aimed at children qualifying for State Funded School Meals and/or SEND.

Issue:

We had two participants who were brother and sister. When dad had dropped them off on the first day he stayed for a short while to speak to our coaches and said that his daughter may struggle to settle and for the camp to ring him if she was finding it too difficult due to her lack of confidence and shyness around new people and new environments.

Dad admitted that she had not stuck at many previous holiday or after school activities he had taken her too previously.

The dad had registered both siblings in the hope that her older brother attending would make the sister feel less nervous in a new environment.

Barriers overcome:

Our coaches could see her initial reluctance and she was quite withdrawn on that first morning, but our coaches used a patient and nurturing approach and gave her simple tasks and activities for her to engage in that could bring her instant success to help build her confidence.

We ensured she got to know as many of the other participants by name as quick as possible and we encouraged some of the other older girls to help 'look out for her' which they willingly did.

**Impact:**

The dad said to me at the end of the HAF holiday camp that he couldn't believe the difference in his daughter's confidence. He added that as a parent he'd been worried about her 'inability to mix with others' and engage in out of school activities but "since coming to the camp at your gym she's like a different person!"

Also, since our HAF camp finished, both the brother and sister have now joined as members of Two Brothers Gym and are continuing Mixed Martial Arts as a hobby which is great to see!

**5 top tips for other providers:**

1. To have patience with your participants, especially as there is likely to be children with Additional Needs such as ADHD.
2. To understand that some parents will book their children onto several different HAFs and by the time the holidays come they will see which one their child prefers. This can be frustrating but means that its essential to have follow up communication with non-attendees to see if they still require a place and then have a reserve list of parents you can approach to ensure places do not go unused.
3. Appreciate that tiredness and irritability can kick in with some of the children, especially from those attending each day and you may need to adjust your activities to accommodate this e.g. more games in the final session of the week.
4. Appreciate that the HAF brings together lots of children of different ages and from different schools and locations, so with this can come friction and uneasiness from some of the children.
5. As well as delivering the skills of the activity, do not forget the importance of your coaches instilling good manners, respect and effective communication on the youngsters through modelling good behaviour themselves and polite and continual reminders of expectations to the participants. This can have a real positive impact on the way the children communicate with each other and adults.