What can we learn from using boxing as an intervention for children and young people?

Jo Taylor

August 2018

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of

the UCL Institute of Education,

Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology.

The Manor
Concreted souls, cheek by jowl with industry folk
We share the same roads but not the same code
Low self-esteemers, Mercs and Beemers
Small winners
It-is-what-it-is-ers
But you deserve more
The Manor
Throwing bricks at glass ceilings
Do or die
He who dreams with open eyes is alive

Kano, Seashells in the East End

Declaration of word count

The word count (exclusive of appendices and list of references) is 33516 words

Declaration of own work

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Signed

Jo Taylor

May 2018

Abstract

This thesis presents an exploration of the experiences of children and young people (CYP) participating in boxing as an intervention (BAAI) at a charity. This charity provides boxing training with the stated aim to reduce gang involvement, school exclusion and mental health needs. These issues have attracted a large amount of government and media attention as they are reported to relate to negative life outcomes for individuals. Research into boxing is a developing area and there is a lack of understanding about how CYP experience participation. In the wider sports literature, it is argued that interventions can provide CYP with personal development opportunities, social support and therapeutic input; and there is a developed debate around how CYP experience might vary according to the method of intervention delivery. More broadly, the research base for informal education also describes a range of benefits which individuals can receive from learning opportunities outside of school or college. However, the engagement process is argued to an individual one, with CYP's experiences being influenced by their preference, context and history.

For this study an ecological model helped to understand the CYP's experience of BAAI in relation to the interaction of individual factors, social variables and history. These experiences were explored by conducting semi structured interviews with CYP and coaches, which were analysed using thematic analysis. Findings included themes which described how coaches facilitated a developmental journey through boxing training; involving the attraction, and retention of CYP, the building of trust and the expression of a long term vision for attendees' futures. Four more themes detailed factors which contributed to participants experiencing benefits as a result of BAAI. These findings were organised in relation to how they might fit into the ecosystem of a CYP, to better understand how boxing training was being experienced. Recommendations for professionals and directions for future research are outlined.

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1   Introduction

Gang involvement, school exclusion and vulnerability to poor social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) may impact negatively on the potential of young people to succeed in life. Boxing as an intervention (BAAI), a form of informal education, is an attempt to tackle these issues. This exploratory study explored the experience of children and young people (CYP) taking part in BAAI at a charity in an Outer London borough (named PunchNProgress). All participant and organisation names in this thesis are pseudonyms.

Personally, I have experienced physical, psychological and social benefits from boxing and have consistently heard a popular narrative around the potential of

boxing training to provide benefits for vulnerable CYP (e.g. "channel their anger", "develop discipline", "get them off the streets"). As a result of this I was intrigued by the use of boxing as a form of intervention and started exploring the theory of change presented by organisations. After discussions with a number of charities and organisations, it seemed that their rationale was based on a similarly anecdotal understanding of boxing and evidence from their practice as boxing trainers. I was struck by the lack of academic research which focussed on this area and also by the lack of understanding around how this boxing intervention was being received by the participating CYP. On a personal level, it felt important to develop a greater understanding of how CYP might be supported by boxing training and also to explore what professionals could learn from existing practice in this area.

The areas BAAI is aimed at addressing pose very real negative implications for CYP and society more broadly. For example, exclusion is argued to trigger long term psychiatric issues in CYP and each cohort of excluded children has been estimated to cost the government £2.1 billion (Parker et al, 2016; Gill, Quilter-Pinner & Swift, 2017). Secondly, gang involvement has been linked to negative life outcomes and a cumulative negative effect on CYP (Haymoz, Maxson & KIllias, 2014). On a societal level, the Metropolitan Police in London has estimated that half of murder committed by young people are gang related (McMahon & Belur, 2013). Lastly, improving the SEMH of CYP has become a governmental priority, with a recent green paper arguing for the need for more preventative and early intervention measures for protecting SEMH (DfH & DfE, 2017).

BAAI is a recent development, where boxing training is used as a developmental tool, and there are a small, but increasing number of organisations in London providing this intervention. These organisations deliver BAAI as a form of informal education (IE) outside of school, college and university. IE has a place in supporting the cognitive, social and emotional development of CYP (Hein, Reich and Grigorenko, 2015). However, it is also clear that there will be a large amount of variation in how a CYP experiences IE, depending on individual, historical and cultural differences (Bornstein, 2012; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). There is also some debate about how easily individuals are able to apply the benefits developed through IE, to other areas of their life (See & Kokotsake, 2016).

In this exploratory study, the experience of taking part in BAAI was explored through interviews with CYP and coaches. Participants were able to provide useful insight

into the way boxing training related to the issues of gang involvement, school exclusion and SEMH needs. Findings described the coaching process for developing CYP at PunchNProgress and also some of the factors which combined for participants to experience benefits as a result of boxing training.

This study attempted to contribute to the literature on BAAI in a number of ways. Firstly, boxing research is underdeveloped with a small number of studies, even less research which is not funded by a sporting body. Secondly, there is a lack of data exploring CYP's experiences of taking part in boxing training. This research also intended to provide useful insight for professional practice. Educational Psychologists (EP), they have a new focus on preparing children for the transition to adulthood (SEND CoP, 2015) and this exploration of BAAI provided an opportunity for EPs to learn more about how IE can be used to develop benefits for CYP. For practitioners working in IE, or providing sports interventions, an increased understanding of how CYP experience boxing training could support the adaptation and iteration of provision.

Below, Chapter Two provides an exploration of the literature relating to BAAI. It focusses on: informal education, boxing and martial arts and sports as a form of IE. This is then related to the use of ecological metaphors to understand participant experience and research into the development of protective factors in CYP. Chapter Three describes, examines and justifies the research methodology. Findings are presented in Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four explores the process of coaching a developmental journey at PunchNProgress, using BAAI. Chapter Five outlines the factors which contributed to benefits for CYP attending PunchNProgress. Chapter Six offers a discussion of the findings, provides a critique of the research and options for future research directions and outlines recommendations for practice

2 Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

For a child or young person in the UK, there are many potential barriers to educational achievement and positive life outcomes. Across London, charities are providing BAAI for children and young people to prevent gang involvement, reduce

school exclusion and reinforce social emotional mental health (SEMH). In order to assess the merits for researching children and young people's (CYP) experience of boxing training, it was important to understand some of the potential risks these barriers may pose and the mitigation boxing training may offer. Accordingly, these areas formed the first phase of the literature review, next systematic searches were carried out to explore the existing literature for boxing, martial arts, informal education and sports (see Appendix 1). The literature review involved a cyclical process, where after data collection and analysis, the theoretical framework was adapted to include an ecological model of resilience and some key psychological theories were outlined to provide context for the findings and discussion (see Figure 2.1). The literature review will be concluded with the study's research question and a short section describing the relevance of this research for educational psychologists.

Figure 2.1 Phases to the Literature Review

1	2		3	4
Context to Boxing	Existing Literature	Data Collection and Analysis	Ecological Resilience	Psychological Theories
Gang Involvement, School Exclusion, SEMH	Informal Education, Sport, Boxing, Martial Arts	N/A	Resilience, Ecological Models.	Attachment, Control, Self Efficacy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

2.2 The Context to Boxing as an Intervention

For this research boxing will be defined as:

[Boxing is]… a sport in which two people wearing large padded gloves fight according to special rules" (Harper-Collins, 2017)

Boxing training may vary but will generally involve activities to develop the skills and fitness of an individual. Anasi's (2002) autobiographical account of training for an amateur boxing tournament provides a good outline, describing features to include: warming up using a skipping rope, stretching the body, practising offensive and

defensive techniques in the mirror (shadow boxing), hitting a punching bag, hitting boxing pads with a trainer and practising technical combat with a partner (sparring), (see p3-8).

PunchNProgress identified its provision of BAAI as being aimed at reducing gang involvement, school exclusion and SEMH issues. As such, it seemed important to outline these issue in order to better understand the context of the CYP, the relevance of the intervention and to provide a foundation for designing this research.

2.2.1   Gang Involvement

It can be difficult to define a gang, due to there being barriers to accessing and understanding them as a phenomenon (McMahon & Belur, 2013). I will adopt the following definition based on the fact that it has been used by the Home Office, to influence public policy (HMG, 2011), the definition was coined by Antrobus (2009) after an international review of the features of gangs:

[Gangs are] a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who
1) See themselves and are seen by others as a discernible group
2) Engage in criminal activity and violence
3) Identify with or lay claim over territory
4) Have an identifying structural feature
5) Are in conflict with other, similar gangs (p21)

Gang membership itself can be dangerous, the Metropolitan Police suggested that half of all the murders by young people were gang related (McMahon & Belur, 2013) and that one fifth of all youth crime was gang related (Brand and Ollerearnshaw, 2008). As well as criminality, being a gang member can negatively affect the domains of family, work and finances (Krohn, Ward, Thronberry, Lizotte & Chu, 2011)

According to a sample of 797 young people, gang involvement in the UK was outlined to involve a range of social and environmental risk factors and could be predicted by weakened social bonds (Alleyne & Wood, 2014). Notably, participants reported that they perceived joining gangs to present more rewards than risks. A European perspective identified a range of risk factors for gang involvement

including: unstructured time, neighbourhood problems, low parental monitoring and low self control (Haymoz et al, 2014). It was concluded that interventions should focus on attempting to counter as many of these risk factors as possible (p18).

As well as risk factors leading to gang involvement, it should be noted that gangs can provide protective factors. Barbieri, Clipper & Vasquez (2016) took a longitudinal perspective, focussing on the reasons and results of gang membership and described how gangs could provide love, safety, security, a sense of belonging and positively influence self esteem. The study concluded that potential interventions would have to provide similar benefits for CYP.

Overall, it can be seen that gang involvement can be dangerous for CYP and that gangs member may be involved in a large amount of crime. There are a wide range of social and environmental risk factors which can predict gang involvement and CYP seemed to receive a range of benefits from gang membership. By exploring CYP's experience of taking part in BAAI it was hoped this research would provide some insight into the risk and protective factors they experienced. Which, could help identify some of the ways boxing training might interact with a phenomenon like gang involvement.

2.2.2   School Exclusion

On a macro level, school exclusion is an important issue to tackle, with estimates of the costs of exclusion stating that each cohort of children goes on to cost the government over £2.1 billion (Gill et al, 2017). The DfE (2017) released guidance showing that exclusion figures are actually rising, after a reduction between 2006 and 2013.

On an individual level, exclusion from school is perhaps the most explicit form of rejection by a school of its pupils (Munn & Lloyd, 2005). The experience of school exclusion has been linked to an increased likelihood of homelessness and unemployment (DfE, 2012). It has also been associated with difficulties with relationships, crime involvement and social exclusion (Nuffield Foundation, 2004).

Interventions for exclusion are required to address a series of systemic issues as well as supporting the individual (Munn & Lloyd, 2005). For CYP participating in

boxing training, it was unclear how they perceived school. It was also not clear how their experiences at PunchNProgress might relate to forming relationships or their perceptions of social inclusion.

2.2.3   Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Supporting SEMH in schools has become a national priority. In 2017 the DfE and DfH released a green paper outlining ideas to improve SEMH in schools. This paper outlined a focus on early intervention (p10) and prevention of mental health issues (p31). It also described a new focus for Educational Psychologists to facilitate CYP working with tertiary providers to improve SEMH (p34). The report builds on advice from the DfE (2016) which outlined that the prevalence of poor SEMH may be as high as 1 in 10 for children between 5 - 17 (Murphy & Fonagy, 2012). On a societal level, the financial cost for poor SEMH has been estimated as varying between £11,030 and £59,130 annually, per child (Suhrcke, Puillas & Selai, 2008).

For CYP, SEMH issues have been associated with negative impacts on: educational attainment, social relationships, life chances and physical health (Goodman & Joyce, 2011; Shiers, Jones & Field, 2009). Accordingly, there is a large incentive for professionals to have access to interventions which can help improve CYP's SEMH. Unfortunately, many interventions lack monitoring, evaluation and an evidence base and many CYP do not have any access to any SEMH provision (Murphy and Fonagy, 2012; Votanis et al, 2013). There was a consensus that more research is needed to evaluate SEMH interventions and to interpret them in relation to evidence bases. This study intended to contribute to this process by exploring CYP's experiences of boxing training, and allowing them the opportunity to describe their perceptions of mental health in relation to PunchNProgress.

Overall, gang involvement, school exclusion and SEMH seem to be multifaceted with complex aetiologies. Each of them was seen to be an issue which could negatively affect lives and also pose a financial and ethical challenge for society to solve. There was a need to research CYP's experiences of BAAI, to provide insight into how they related to these important issues; and to explore whether they considered boxing training to provide any resources which helped supported them in these areas.

2.3   Informal Education

Due to a lack of research into boxing, the literature for informal education (IE), sport and martial arts was used to place BAAI into the academic landscape. Hein et al (2015) outlined how Western theories of cognitive development describe an interaction between formal and informal learning spaces - both of which contribute to cognitive development. For example, across a lifespan, an individual will experience an interaction between their cognitive predisposition and the formal and informal education settings they are exposed to (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Both formal and IE can provide a child with important learning opportunities. Hein et al (2015) support this argument by defining the family as an informal setting and the school a formal setting; and then suggesting that few people would want a child to be limited to just one of these settings. Dugdale (2009) refers to the combination and summation of learning across contexts as the "Learning Landscape" and emphasizes that learning spaces can be formal or informal, as well as virtual or physical (p52). This conceptualisation of an individual learning across multiple settings (a *Learning Landscape)* is important because it shows how an individual's learning can be influenced by different aspects of their ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

It should be noted that there will be large amounts of variation in an individual's experience of learning. For example, a person's maturity, predisposition and preference might interact with the content and context of the spaces they learn in (Bornstein, 2012). This would lead to a possibility that every individual would experience a different interaction of educational factors: from different areas of their life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Super & Harkness, 1986).

Harrop and Turpin (2013) described how individuals may benefit from different combinations of formal and informal educational experiences. It is argued that individuals will shape and be shaped by their learning experiences; and so will benefit from education differently. This notion is particularly relevant for individuals who may struggle in formal education because it could be possible to support them through an informal education intervention, like boxing training.

2.3.1 Informal Education as an Intervention.

If IE is the education which occurs outside of the formal education provided by school, then the possible variations are very broad. IE can provide a vehicle for intervention for CYP who struggle to access education in formal spaces. Many examples of IE being used to support academic outcomes can be seen across education systems. IE has been operationalised through arts activities, outdoor education programmes and sporting activities (See and Kokotsake, 2016; Laidlaw, 2000; Shulfuf, 2010).

However, despite the prevalence of examples of IE supporting academic outcomes, the evidence of impact remains unclear. Shulruf (2010) details an effect size of 0.15 for sporting activities on grade point average in the US. Laidlaw (2000) outlined that once research has been filtered for poor methodology, an effect size of 0.6 for outdoor education was actually to 0.17. See and Kokotsake (2016) reviewed research across multiple aspects of extra curricular arts activities and summarised that research was inconclusive and much of it was methodologically flawed (p43). Part of the difficulty of designing methodologies and measuring effects might relate to the diversity of forms which IE can take and this poses a problem for educators; IE is being used widely and yet there is a need for more research to evidence its impact.

BAAI could be conceptualised as a form of IE. As such, the concerns about efficacy and generalisability may also be pertinent for BAAI. This is argued to be particularly relevant due to the demographic of children attending charities providing boxing training: those vulnerable to gang involvement, exclusion from school and poor SEMH. Research into BAAI would develop a further understanding of the impact it may or may not be having on CYP. In order to better understand boxing as a form of IE, research into the role of sport in the life of a CYP was explored.

2.4 Sport in the Lives of Young People

Sport may hold more than an extracurricular place in the lives of CYP. There are examples of sport being used as a form of IE (McMahon & Belur, 2013; Laureus, 2011) and it has been argued to hold therapeutic potential (Amour & Sandford, 2013).

2.4.1 Sport as Informal Education

The use of sport as IE has been described to fall into two categories: Sport Plus and Plus Sport (Coalter, 2010). Sport Plus interventions are described as aiming to develop sport related outcomes (participation, skill development). Plus Sport interventions are described as prioritising development outcomes of CYP, through the use of sport. For example, sport may be used to attract CYP, but the aim of the intervention is focussed on improving educational, social and personal outcomes (Coulter, 2010).

Simply encouraging participation in sport (e.g. Sports Plus) has been identified to provide CYP with some benefits. Academic reviews of sports based interventions identified them as providing a diversionary activity and a "hook" away from illegal or harmful activities (Laureus, 2011; McMahon & Belur, 2013). As well as the popularly understood benefits to participating in sport (e.g. health benefits), research outlined an argument for creating social value by reducing teenage crime, violent behaviour, and drug use. Although, it was acknowledged that it is hard to establish a causal link between sport as IE and a reduction in anti social behaviour (Laureus, 2011; McMahon & Belur, 2013). Also, Chamberlain (2013) provided a cautionary note on using sport as a hook, writing that it is important to ensure that they offer a diverse, inclusive provision, or CYP may feel alienated.

Using sport as a vehicle for supporting educational, personal and social outcomes (e.g. Plus Sport) has been described in a number of ways in the IE literature. Sport as a form of IE can provide a medium for transformational leadership (Astin & Astin, 2000). Morgan and Bush (2016) described how coaches could embody leadership principles and quickly become a trusted source for CYP. This research built on Shields' (2010) theory of transformational leadership in education, arguing that similar impact can be achieved through sport as a form of IE.

It was useful to view BAAI in relation to Sports Plus and Plus Sport in order to better analyse the CYP's experience of participation, in relation to the aims of the organisation. For example, did CYP experience personal benefits despite the main aim of boxing being a diversionary activity? Or, were CYP benefiting from being hooked away from antisocial behaviour, despite the intention of BAAI to provide them with skills and relationships?

2.4.2 Sport, Relationships and Coaching

Research into IE and sport identified the coach as an important aspect of interventions. Indeed, some of the benefit provided by helping professionals has been argued to derive from the relationship which is formed (Rogers, 1980). Hart and Mueller (2013) described how sport interventions could be viewed through the lens of Social Bond Theory (Hirschi, 1969). Where, through the development of social bonds with coaches and peers, CYP are less vulnerable to engaging in antisocial behaviour.

The development of relationships is a complicated thing. Anderson, Feldman, and Minstrell (2014) detailed how relationships can be built through relational trust: the exchange of tokens of respect. Brooks (2016) elaborated on this, by outlining that relationships between coaches and children can be facilitated through fairness, openness and honesty (p23).

Clearly, the development of secondary attachments is a positive, protective process (Bowbly, 1982; Fraley & Waller, 1998) and the ability of coaches to facilitate the development of CYP during sport as IE seems to be an important factor. However, it is unclear how BAAI might operationalise this, or how CYP might experience the coaching process.

2.4.3 Sport as a Developmental Tool.

Amour and Sandford (2013) collected impact data from 600 pupils. They concluded that sport could be used as a vehicle for personal development and outlined that consistent participation provided the best results. However, they cautioned that it was complicated to predict how skills were transferred outside of interventions.

Naylor and Yeager (2013) attempted to provide a framework for character education in sports, aimed at developing prosocial behaviour. They stated that there is a commonly held idea that sports provide character education. However, they argue that negative behaviours are as common in athletes and state that sporting environments must actively push an ethos of prosocial action. This was supported by Brown, Fry and Moore (2017) who described how sporting environments which are perceived as 'caring' can foster intrinsic motivation to participate and also lead to increased life satisfaction.

As well as encouraging prosocial behaviour, sport has been used to provide education in emotional awareness and regulation. Laborde, Dosseville & Allen (2016) conducted a systematic review of 36 studies and concluded that sport can facilitate greater awareness of emotional states and improved use of coping strategies. The therapeutic benefit of sports was also outlined by Bernstein and Mcnally (2017) which described how acute exercise can facilitate a subjective improvement in emotional recovery to subsequent stressors This phenomenon has been researched in relation to coaches, who were judged to be able to facilitate emotional regulation through the use of stories and narratives in training (Tamminen & Bennett, 2017).

Sports as IE has been identified as providing opportunities in relation to personal development, emotional awareness and regulation. If BAAI holds the potential to provide similar opportunities, then research into this area could be useful. By exploring whether CYP reported similar experiences at PunchNProgress, this research could help identify another tool for improving the life chances of vulnerable individuals.

2.4.4   Therapeutic interventions through Sport

There seems to an understanding that sports can be therapeutic, used either as a vehicle to provide a therapeutic intervention or as a tool to deliver a therapeutic benefit.

Sport has been used to improve a range of mental health issues (Rosenbaum et al, 2015). This has included reducing depression and anxiety and also improving self esteem and cognitive functioning in clinical populations (Biddle and Asare, 2011). However, there are a lack of formal programmes which provide a systematic approach to using sport in this way

There also appears to be a burgeoning practice of using sports to deliver therapeutic interventions. McArdle and Moore (2012) describe the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy principles in sports with athletes and mixed martial arts (MMA) have been used as a vehicle to deliver mindfulness training to students. Milligan et al (2017) worked with 24 CYP and focussed on four key areas: awareness, calm, attention, acceptance through MMA. Benefits were recorded with mental health measures and

qualitative interviews, across individuals at high and low risk of mental health problems.

Bandura's (1977) theory of self efficacy which described the factors which influenced individual's perception of their ability to achieve things. Bandura (2010) related this to an education context and described how self-directed mastery activities were able to strengthen and generalise personal efficacy. This may mean that sport could be used to improve self efficacy in individuals.

As described above, there is a lack of clarity around the CYP's experience of BAAI. It is not clear if they will experience aspects of it as therapeutic. It is also not clear if coaches intend to influence more than just boxing.

2.5 Boxing as an Intervention

Research identified a small pool of organisations using BAAI. The majority were charities or boxing gyms providing boxing training but there was also an alternative provision school which had incorporated boxing into its curriculum (McMahon & Belur, 2013; Laureus, 2010, Walker Research Group, 2016). The majority of literature discussing these settings was produced by professional bodies linked to boxing. In addition, The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Boxing (TAPPGB) produced a report discussing the benefits of using BAAI and an independent impact report for one charity has been commissioned (Sampson & Vilella, 2013; TAPPGB, 2015). As a growing area of interest, which relates to national priorities, there is a lack of academic research into BAAI. Systematic searches for "boxing" and "martial arts" produced 9, 4, 0 and 2, 3, 1 relevant journal results on Web of Science, ERIC and APAPsychnet databases respectively (see Appendix 1).

The sources identified above argue that BAAI can facilitate a range of benefits, which supports research from IE and sport as an intervention. However, it is noted that three of the sources above are funded by sporting bodies arguing for the efficacy of boxing, which may undermine their objectivity. As with IE and sport as an intervention, it seems that the research base for BAAI needs to be developed. It is clear that CYP are being provided with boxing training but there is little understanding of what makes this intervention effective. Accordingly, it was important to understand CYP experiences of boxing, how it fits into their lives and

what processes contribute to benefits being achieved.

2.5.1 Boxing as a Martial Art

Due to a lack of research into the impact of boxing on CYP, I explored research into martial arts more broadly to present an understanding of potential costs and benefits to participation. However, this research base was also relatively undeveloped.

Research is divided over what benefits martial arts can develop and whether participation can lead to any negative impacts on CYP. Trulson (1986) identified three beneficial components to traditional martial arts: the teacher as a role model, including psychological/philosophical elements to training and emphasizing self control to students. Fuller (1988) reviewed literature relating to martial arts and psychological health. This study proposed that martial arts may provide a form of psychotherapy through being a "system of potential training" (p318). Currently, it is not clear what elements of martial arts training facilitate benefits for CYP and whether boxing training would typically embody them.

Research also appeared to lack consensus around whether different types of martial arts might influence CYP in different ways. Where, more traditional martial arts might cultivate a decrease in hostility (e.g. Tae Kwon Do, Karate) and modern martial arts (e.g. boxing) might increase hostility (Binder, 2007). Fuller (1988) added to this debate by arguing that martial arts which involved sparring could leave to increased aggression (p322).

Research seems conflicted over the idea of using 'aggressive sports' to reduce aggression. Endreson & Olweus (2005) argues that power sports (including boxing training) can lead to increased measures of aggression. Bushman (2002) used hitting a punching bag as an experimental condition, when researching anger and concluded that if rumination occurs during aggressive activities then it can lead to an increase in scores on anger measures. This research contrasts with interview data from The Walker Research Group (2016) which reported CYP found boxing training useful for reducing perceived anger and aggression. Harwood, Lavidor and Rassovsky (2017) conducted a meta analysis of nine intervention and longitudinal studies. They noted an effect size of 0.65 for martial arts reducing externalising behaviour, like aggression and violence. But, concluded that research into this area

is limited and there is little understanding around the mechanisms for how martial arts might influence anger or aggression.

The ability of sport to facilitate emotional regulation has been noted. Similar effects have been demonstrated for combat sports. Szabo and Urban (2014) used measured emotional intelligence, neuroticism and extraversion across boxers, judokas and non athlete controls. They found that boxers scored highest for: understanding and control of emotions, higher than controls (and the same as judokas) for appraisal of others' emotions and lowest for neuroticism.

Overall, research into martial arts presented a variety of arguments about the interaction with aggression and potential psychological benefits. It also seemed to imply a difference in impact across types of martial art. Research into IE would argue that some of this variation might be dependent on the delivery and coaching of BAAI (Brown et al, 2017; Chamberlain, 2013). However, it was not clear how CYP might benefit or the risks they might face due to participation in boxing training. Which, indicated that there was a need for research into their experience of the intervention.

2.5.2   Popular Understanding of Boxing

Despite the lack of research into boxing there appears to be a popular understanding that boxing can help vulnerable CYP. This was argued by TAAPGB (2015) and can be seen in quotes from popular figures:

"Boxing is egalitarian. In the ring, rank, age, color, and wealth are irrelevant... After a strenuous workout, I felt both mentally and physically lighter. It was a way of losing myself in something that was not the struggle" - Nelson Mandela (Mandela, 1995, p193)

"*To be successful in the ring you have to get control of your emotions -- that includes anger. And the kids who stick with it in the gym are much less violent than when they came in through the door"* - George Foreman (Marino, 2004, p1)

The idea that boxing is a positive activity is elaborated on by Wacquant's (2006) ethnography of a boxing gym. Wacquant explores the processes which might contribute to this impact and lists the following: the activity of training, training partners, role models and the space within which boxing takes place in.

It was important to acknowledge this popular understanding of boxing because it is possible for the public sphere to influence the delivery of interventions by professionals (e.g. Rutter, 1998). The enthusiasm for using boxing with vulnerable CYP might be justified but it does not seem to be motivated by an evidence base; which supported the need for this research.

2.6 Boxing, Informal Education and Resilience

After analysing the data for this research, I felt that it would be useful to conceptualise the findings in relation to an ecological model of resilience. As outlined above, IE can be an individual process which involves an interaction between different aspects of a person's education and development (Bornstein, 2012). This understanding seemed to lend itself to the being described through the use of an analogy involving an ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). During the data analysis, participants' experience of boxing training was influenced by their history and current context and this further supported the utility of an ecological lens to understand how the intervention might fit into a person's life. Participants described BAAI to facilitate a variety of benefits and relieve a range of problems across their lives and this seemed to be well described by the idea of protective and risk factors as detailed by resilience research. In order to best introduce this ecological model of resilience, I will provide a brief outline of resilience research, explore existing examples of adaptations to ecological models and then the specific proposition - an ecological model synthesising Bronfenbrenner and Moriss' (2006) Bioecological model and a social, process based understanding of resilience, as described by Ungar (2008, 2013).

BAAI is aimed at preventing gang involvement, school exclusion and SEMH issues. In outlining the literature above, these issues were often framed in terms of risk factors for negative outcomes and providing protective factors to prevent them (Haymoz et al, 2014; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Goodman & Joyce, 2011). Similarly, the use of sport as IE was framed by research in terms of removing CYP from negative situations and providing them with personal development (McMahon & Belur, 2013).

The resilience literature provided a way to understand these negative life experiences using one set of terminology. It also provided a lens through which to view IE; where the development of CYP can be understood in terms of countering

risk factors for negative life outcomes and increasing the chances of positive experiences (e.g. Laborde et al, 2017; Milligan et al, 2017).

Below, a definition of resilience will be outlined and an overview of contemporary resilience research will be provided. The form and function of risk and protective factors will be described and this will be mapped onto BAAI, in order to provide a way of understanding CYP's experience of taking part in boxing training.

2.6.1 Defining Resilience

Masten (2015) presents four phases of research into resilience: early research considered it a trait and explored how to measure it, then focus changed to consider what processes might lead individuals to be resilience (e.g. Rutter, 1985), the third phase was encapsulated by consideration into how to promote resilience (e.g. Gilligan, 2009) and the fourth phase involves emerging data from new genetics and neuroimaging. Ungar (2008) argues for a social and cultural understanding of resilience. Where, protective factors are dependent on what is available locally to an individual and what a family or culture can provide (p225). Ungar elaborates that cultures may develop different understandings of what resilience looks like. This is relevant to boxing, because some individuals interpret boxing as a maladaptive discipline (e.g. aggressive and violent) but for someone else with a different life experience, boxing may represent a functional coping strategy (p228).

Resilience is going to be defined in this research as: "*the process of harnessing biological, psychosocial, structural and cultural resources to sustain wellbeing*" (Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013, p333). This definition is particularly useful because it acknowledges the interaction between within-person biological and socio-cultural resources. It also identifies the process of accessing resources as key, which relates to the BAAI and the lack of certainty about how CYP experience it.

2.6.2 Resilience, Risk and Protective Factors and IE

Gilligan (2009) describes how adults and professionals should 'tilt the balance in the child's life in favour of protective factors' (p9). In that, it is more practical to attempt to outweigh risk factors than remove them. Research has shown that there are many options for developing protective factors (Hart, Blincow & Thomas, 2008). Masten (2015) describes how small changes which can contribute to a child's wellbeing and reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes as 'ordinary magic'. IE and BAAI seem to

have the scope to tilt the balance, but there is a lack of clarity about the potential benefits and processes involved.

2.7 An Ecological Approach to Researching Boxing as an Intervention

An individual has a unique Learning Landscape which is comprised of different formal and informal educational settings (Dugdale, 2009). The interaction between these settings will influence the development of an individual, so when considering how to research the experience of CYP attending BAAI an ecological model seemed appropriate. I hoped that this would allow for the conceptualisation of a participant's previous life experiences, existing risk and protective factors and the interaction between boxing training and other educational environments (e.g. family, friends, school, work).

Ecological models have been used to describe areas of thought including: child development, business innovation, communication and learning relationships. This approach is supported by Hodgson & Spours (2015), which describes a 'diverse effort' by a 'range of researchers' to 'use ecological metaphors to understand complex situations' (p26).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model has been used by many educational psychologists and is particularly useful for understanding how an individual's development is influenced by interactions with their environment. (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield & Karnik, 2013; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This can be seen in the way IE is described in relation to the interaction between formal and informal education and the focus on how learning is applied across different contexts. It can also be seen in the way the Academic Resilience Approach suggests interventions which are aimed at the individual, family, school and social levels (Eryigit-Madzwamuse et al, 2013).

There is a precedent set by researchers who have adapted Bronfenbrenner's work to help conceptualise findings during research. For examples, Hodgson and Spour (2013) used his model to help describe how individuals had high and low opportunity areas in their environment. And, Finegold (1999) adapted Bronfenbrenner's work to conceptualise ecosystems which contained particularly influential 'high skill' contexts. This seemed like a fruitful approach for this research - using an ecological model as a way to understand how BAAI fitted into a child's life and the benefits it may

facilitate.

Recent conceptualizations of resilience have framed it as a process and not a trait. This understanding explains that resilience includes social and cultural elements and that an individual must go through a process to harness resources (Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013; Ungar, 2008). This process involves an interaction between an individual and their environment which applied psychologists have utilised to design Resilient Therapy which focusses on increasing protective factors in an individual's life (Hart et al, 2008). Resilient Therapy techniques have been adapted for education, into the Academic Resilience Approach, which provides a model for supporting vulnerable CYP's development, based on developing protective factors on an individual, familial and social level. (Eryigit-Madzwamuse, Hart & Haynes, 2013). This work has been distilled in the Resilience Framework, which provides intervention suggestions for developing protective factors at the level of the individual, family and society (Hart & Blincow, 2012). As well as considering how to promote wellbeing by facilitating protective factors across an ecosystem, Ungar (2012) considered an ecological understanding of resilience, where different processes can lead to different outcomes and wellbeing can be achieved in multiple ways across individuals (Ungar, 2012). This was extended by Ungar, Ghazinour and Richter (2013) which used Bronfenbrenner's ecological model as a lens to review resilience research, outlining how an ecological model of resilience would account for the reality that different processes promote wellbeing differently across individuals (*differential impact*) and that protective processes are valued differently in different groups and cultures (*cultural moderation*).

Accordingly, this research synthesised Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) Bioecological Model with the idea of a process based, social understanding of resilience, to create an ecological model of resilience. I wanted a way to conceptualise BAAI in relation to other elements of a CYP's microsystem (surroundings, friends, family), macrosystem (cultural context) and their chronosystem (history, experiences) and within child factors. This model helped to frame a CYP's context in relation to the risk and protective factors they may have developed previously.

Figure 2.2 An Ecological Model of Resilience
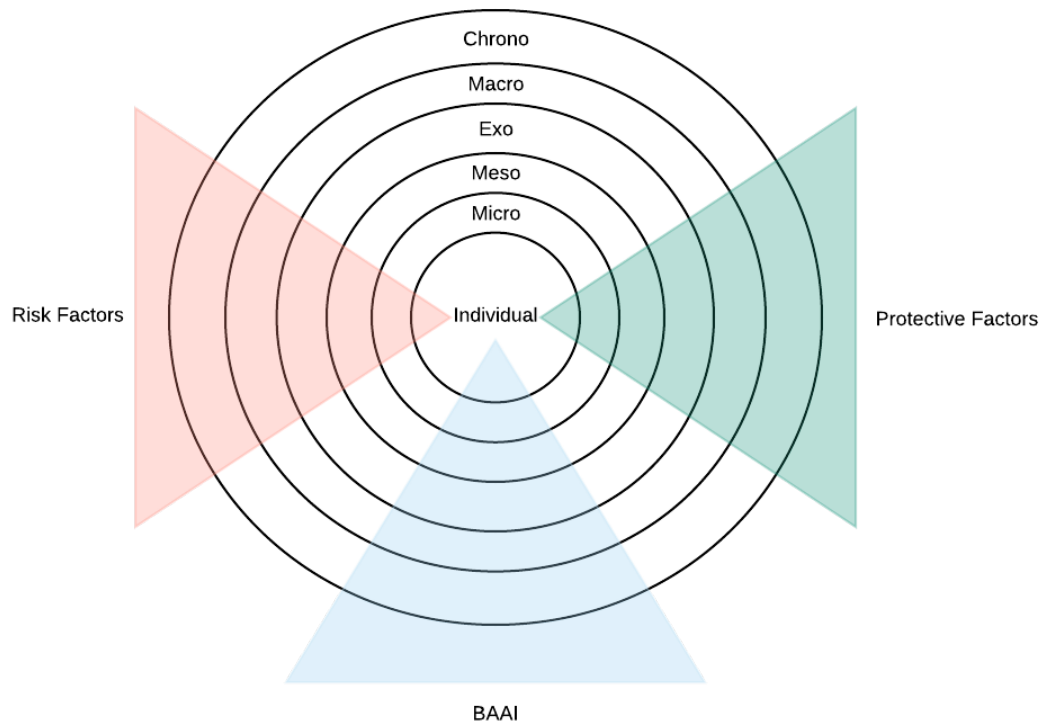
It also allowed for an understanding of the process CYP had to go through to access resources at PunchNProgress and presented a culturally and socially specific understanding of a CYP's experience of proximal processes. Lastly, it provided a way for readers to understand the processes which contributed to benefits for CYP in relation to multiple levels of their ecosystem. In order to support the use of this ecological model to explore CYP's experiences of BAAI, Hart and Blincow's (2012) Resilience Framework was adapted to show how processes for developing protective factors might fit into specific systems around an individual. The Resilience Framework is a tool used in applied psychology and Figure 2.3 presents how recommendations for promoting CYP's wellbeing can be spread across their ecosystem. In relation to exploring CYP's experiences of BAAI, it was hoped that this figure would support readers to understand how the intervention could support development.

Figure 2.3 Protective Processes Across an Ecosystem

Individual Level	Microsystem	Macrosystem	Chronosystem
Help CYP to know them self	Somewhere for the CYP to belong	Understand boundaries and keeping within them	Predict a good experience of something / someone new
	Have a laugh		
Being brave	Fostering interests		
Being safe	Tap into good influences	Helping CYP to understand their responsibilities and obligations	
Putting on rose tinted glasses	Keep relationships going		
Calming down and self soothing	The more healthy relationships the better		Focus on good times/places
Exercise and fresh air	Make friends and mix with other CYP	Being free from prejudice and discrimination	
Highlight achievements	Get together people the CYP can rely on		
Develop life skills	Responsibilities/ obligations		
Help the CYP to take responsibility for them self	Solving problems		
	Helping CYP understand other peoples' feelings		
Foster their talents	Make school / college life work as well as possible	Help CYP understand their place in the world	Remember tomorrow is another day
Play and leisure	Engage mentors for CYP		
Instil a sense of hope	Lean on others when necessary	Help CYP used tried and tested solutions to problems	
Enough money to live	Access to transport		Help CYP make sense of where they are from

2.8 Conclusions of Literature Review

BAAI is described by PunchNProgress in relation to tackling gang involvement, school exclusion and SEMH issues, which all have the potential for wide ranging negative outcomes for CYP. As such, it was important to contribute to a development of the research base for BAAI, to establish how it might provide benefits for vulnerable CYP. IE was described to be a personal process, which is experienced differently by individuals based on their own history and context (Dugdale, 2009). In addition, formal and informal learning environments were seen to influence each other, so it was important to use a lens which could frame an individual's development in terms of their history, experience and the interaction of their learning environments. Critically, research did not seem to provide data on how young people might experience taking part in a boxing intervention and so this was adopted as a key focus for this thesis.

A model was proposed which synthesised the Bioecological Model with a social understanding of resilience (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Ungar, 2008). This was framed as a tool to conceptualise the risk factors an individual may have experienced, their history and context, as well as the protective factors they might develop, as a result of an intervention. IE and sport were outlined in relation to concepts like: personal development, social bonds and therapeutic experience (Amour and Sandford, 2013; Hart and Mueller, 2013). All of these processes could provide CYP with benefits at different levels of their ecosystem. In relation to research into boxing training, there was a need for an exploratory study to clarify how it was being experienced by CYP and whether any of the potential benefits associated with IE are being provided by PunchNProgress.

> **Vignette: using an ecological model of resilience to explore CYP's experiences**
>
> *One of my participants, Jawden described boxing as "his uncomfortable place, where he grows". Bronfenbrenner's ecological models would account for boxing training as a proximal process in his microsystem. The chronosystem would represent the fact that Jawden experienced domestic abuse as a child. However, the added value of this model is that we can understand the cultural specificity of boxing as a protective process – where Jawden considers choosing to make himself uncomfortable as a good thing, when his teachers or professionals might have assumed that reducing his discomfort was more appropriate. Additionally, we can see that he may be experiencing a range of protective and risk factors at once. For example, he might be interacting with both gang members and inspiring coaches in his microsystem.*

2.9 Relevance to Educational Psychology

Having considered the literature above, it was clear that this research would build on the existing research base for IE and sports as educational interventions. Before considering how this research was going to be undertaken, it was important to highlight how it could contribute to the knowledge and practise of EPs.

Historically EPs have been involved with children up to the age of 19 years old, but mostly up to 16 years old. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) increased this age range to 25 years old and brought with it an agenda for EPs to prepare children for adulthood (p120). CYP between the ages of 16-25 will not always be in school or formal education, so EPs need to know what activities can be offered to support their development. Understanding more about IE, how CYP are engaged by these activities and the benefits they may provide, can help upskill EPs in this area. In relation to this aim, this research provides an exploration of how CYP experience BAAI and then a conceptualisation of how this intervention fitted into their ecosystem more broadly.

The DfH and DfE (2017) green paper frames EPs as professionals who can support CYP to access preventative and early stage mental health support in tertiary organisations. This research provides recommendations for how EPs could support organisations to deliver interventions in a more efficacious manner. It also illustrates the experiences of CYP accessing a tertiary organisation and presents the processes of engagement and coaching. This might prove to be useful for EPs working with organisations external to formal education for the first time.

A key part of EP practice is to support the learning and life chances of vulnerable CYP (HCPC, 2015). BAAI is being delivered by charities to vulnerable CYP who may be involved in gangs, have been excluded from school and/or experiencing SEMH issues. As well as the ethical importance of understanding the processes of an intervention which CYP are participating in, the areas of gang involvement, school exclusion and SEMH are governmental and national priorities (HMG, 2011; DfE, 2017; DfE, 2016). Which, enhances the relevance of research into BAAI for EPs.

In terms of general EP practice, this research presented an applied use of ecological and resilience models which could be useful in supporting EP practice in other areas, with different age groups. Specifically, this study provided discussion around

facilitating CYP's transitions between settings, building relationships with CYP, and developing protective factors (e.g. catharsis, self efficacy, increased controllability).

2.10 Chapter Summary and Research Question

BAAI is being proposed by organisations as a tool to support CYP across a range of areas. PunchNProgress supported these claims with evidence from their context and from practitioners, however there remains scope for academic research and a psychological perspective to support these claims (O'Hare, 2016). As a form of IE, boxing training will be experienced differently by the CYP taking part (Bornstein, 2012). However, there remains a lack of analysis of the experiences of the individuals taking part in BAAI. As such, this exploratory study wanted to understand these experiences as a starting point for conceptualising the intervention being provided by PunchNProgress. In order to make this contribution to the research base, in relation to the priorities and gaps outlined by the literature review, the overall research question for this research was:

What is the experience of children and young people taking part in BAAI?

3 Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology including the philosophical and psychological underpinnings, the rationale behind the research design and methods and ethical considerations. The sampling process is outlined together with the development of the interview protocol and data collection procedures. Finally, the approach to data analysis is detailed.

3.2 Psychological Underpinnings

This research occurs in the context of my training as a trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP). The university course has two central principles: person centred practice (Rogers 1980) and conceptualizing the child as existing within a developmental ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As such both these principles feature in the methodology. Applying the principles of person-centeredness to the

methodology meant considering potential power dynamics in interactions and providing unconditional positive regard to participants. Ecological models have been useful for understanding the way in which an individual's development is influenced by interactions with their environment. Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) Bioecological Model influenced the way in which participants were contextualised within their IE learning environment, in relation to the processes which may be providing them with benefits (see 2.7). The Bioecological Model also influenced the way resilience was defined and how findings were discussed, in relation to the systems around a CYP.

3.3 Philosophical Stance

Individuals hold a set of beliefs about the world which can be described as their 'personal philosophy' (Cresswell 2012). When planning and designing research, clarification of these paradigms can help highlight the links between ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (the nature of knowledge) and methodology (how the researcher will attempt to uncover this knowledge).

This research has been developed in line with a Constructivist worldview. I prescribe to "everyday constructivism", which argues that the mind is an active component in the construction of knowledge and processing of stimuli (Schwandt, 2000, p197). So, I believe that, broadly speaking, people have different experiences of phenomena (Merten, 2010, p18).

Social constructivism emphasises the idea that the way in which an individual views and interprets the world, along with the language they use to describe it, is reality (Burr, 2015). In relation to this ontology, this research applied a phenomenological epistemology, attempting to gather individual's subjective experiences (Bogdan & Bikden, 2003). This epistemological position supports the exploration of how individuals experience and perceive certain phenomena (Bryman, 2008); in this research, the experience of BAAI. Practically this meant that qualitative methods were used to collect data. It also meant that I recognised the potential for my misunderstanding CYP's perspectives and attempted to counter this in the methodology. Gubrium & Holstein (2000) describe phenomenology as relating to how individuals create and understand their own life spaces. In relation to the framing above of BAAI as a form or IE, occurring outside of school and work, this

seems particularly appropriate. But, it also highlighted the relevance of using an ecological model to conceptualise CYP's experience of boxing training.

3.4 Rationale for the Research Design

The lack of depth of previous research meant that this was an exploratory study. I wanted this research to help find out how CYP experienced an organisation providing BAAI, to provide insight and generate ideas for future research (Robson, 2002). There were a number of reasons why I chose to collect data from PunchNProgress. Initially, I had meetings with three other organisations who were used, one had just commissioned a two year impact measurement study and the other two were not able to confirm participation within the required timeframe. I also thought it would be useful to focus on a single setting due to the the lack of understanding about BAAI. Where, at this stage it may have been difficult to compare practice or delivery across settings. Accordingly, due to the wish to focus on one setting and the logistics of organising data collection and consent, PunchNProgress was selected as the setting for this research.

The qualitative nature of the design allowed for representation of multiple realities in line with the collection of subjective experiences, and a way to explore how participants made sense of BAAI as a space within their ecosystem (Bogdan & Bikden, 2003; Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). This approach was supported by the literature review which highlighted how personal the interpretation of accessing resources to support resilience can be (Ungar, 2008). It also allowed for the flexibility to explore areas which was described to be important to the participants during data collection, which complemented the exploratory nature of this research.

I wanted to gain the views of the service user to provide a basis for future academic discussion. The range of ages at PunchNProgress meant that many of the CYP would be preparing for the transition to adulthood; as such, it felt important to prioritise their experiences in the data collection. The literature on IE suggested that the experience of a *Learning Landscape* would be a personal one, based on previous history and experiences (Dugdale, 2009). Accordingly, I considered that it could be difficult for relatives to accurately understand or interpret CYPs' experiences of taking part in BAAI, as they were not part of that context (Ungar, 2008). This meant that I did not include family members in the sampling for this

research.

3.4.1   The Pilot Study

The pilot involved 4 CYP from PunchNProgress who formed a purposive sample of individuals who had been taking part in BAAI for at least 6 months, attending at least twice per week. These inclusion criteria were chosen because I wanted to try to ensure that participants had an in depth knowledge of the training and would have experienced the intervention over time. As an applied psychologist, in school I recommend that interventions are applied consistently for 6 weeks before they are reviewed. However, because I did not know about the structure or application of BAAI, 6 months provided a more conservative choice. PunchNProgress use the threshold of attending twice per week for identifying "active members" so this was adopted for this study. Staff recommended 10 CYP who met these criteria and four participants were selected using opportunity sampling. This sample included two males and two females, between the ages of 18 and 21.

A focus group with three participants and an interview were completed. I wanted to test the viability of focus groups as a method of data collection because I felt that they might counter balance potential power dynamics (Kvale, 2007). Focus groups could have also facilitated my understanding of the importance of topics and issue, through the reactions of the group (Merten, 2010 p240) and this seemed a useful feature for exploratory research.

3.4.2   Developing the Pilot Interview Schedule

Kvale (1996) details 'the 1000 page question' - a discussion of how to get useful output from interviews, without ending up with a mass of data which cannot be analysed usefully. A question was borrowed from Kvale (1996) as a starting point for schedule design: "how can these interviews assist me in extending my knowledge of the phenomena I am investigating?" (p280).

A range of questions were included in the schedule, based on those outlined in Merten (2010), and effort was made to ensure that questions exploring BAAI included a focus on: background, knowledge, feelings, opinions and sensory input (p243-4).

Due to the lack of research into boxing, the pilot process was intended to help

identify areas which could be explored with the participants during the main research. I used a combination of the following influences to outline potential areas to investigate: personal experience of boxing, popular and sociological material on boxing (e.g. Anasi, 2002; Marino, 2004) and research into sports as a form of IE. Using these influences, a draft interview schedule was written based on the research question. Accordingly, most questions revolved around exploring the participant's experience of partaking in BAAI. The use of an ecological model influenced the interview schedule by requiring questions which would explore how boxing training fitted into different systems of a participant's life (e.g. individual level, microsystem, macrosystem and chronosystem). The schedule was kept consistent across the focus group and interview (aside from semantic edits to reflect the number of participants) in order to test the questions with different data collection methods (see Appendix 2 and 3).

3.4.3   Reflections on The Pilot

In relation to data collection, the majority of pilot participants who participated in the focus group described how they would have preferred 'more time to elaborate on their views' or 'to do an interview next time'. Participants wanted to expand on the complexity of their opinions which would have been better facilitated with a one to one interview. I also reflected on the useful data which had been gathered from questions which had not been on the original interview schedule and it seemed important to retain a level of flexibility in the structure of interviews in the main research.

Some interviews were completed in a "1-1 room" which was located next to the main foyer/socializing area. It became clear that using this location would not be suitable for the main study because it was distracting, may undermine anonymity and could interfere with recording equipment.

3.4.4   Main Study Research Design

The pilot was used to help shape the design of the main study. Coaches were mentioned to be an important element of BAAI and so the main study included them in the sample, to triangulate the data from the CYP. By including another perspective of CYP's experience of boxing training, I hoped that there would a reduced chance of misunderstanding or misrepresenting their beliefs. I also decided that this design would allow for the research to capture a greater complexity of perceptions, which

would allow for the analysis of more subtle experiences (Yardley, 2000).

3.4.5   Main Study Method

Using one to one interviews meant that the data collection process could help make sense of the subjective way that participants explained their experience of BAAI and also allowed for an exploration of that which cannot be observed (e.g. thoughts, feelings and intentions), (Bryman, 2008; Patton, 2002). Semi structured interviews specifically allowed for the collection of rich data due to the use of open ended questions. They also provided the ability for the interviewer to ask for more information, clarify points and rephrase questions if they are misunderstood (Willig, 2008).

3.5   Sample

PunchNProgress is located in an outer London borough with a population of approximately 333,000. The demographic is comprised of 13% White British, 13% White Other, 46% Asian/Asian British and 18% Black/Black British. According to the index of multiple deprivation, the borough was ranked the 8th most deprived area in UK. Approximately 7% of the population are unemployed and 11% do not have any qualifications (London Borough of X, 2017).

PunchNProgress opened in 2007 and according to their internal data collection, approximately 1600 CYP attended in 2016, about half stayed for more than a month and a quarter stayed for six months or more. Of those who stayed for six months or more 82% were classed as "active members" attending twice a week or more. Approximately 80% of attendees were male and most individuals identified as Black (40%) or Asian (15%). Timetabled training starts at 4pm although there seemed to be informal training sessions throughout the day.

The research involved two levels of sample: CYP and coaches delivering the BAAI at PunchNProgress. I used purposive sampling of CYP attending PunchNProgress and coaches helping to deliver the training sessions.

3.5.1   Sample Recruitment

All of the pilot participants volunteered to be part of the main research (Kate, Az, Kos and Nancy). All of them were interviewed with the new schedule because of the

extra questions which had been included. In addition, the three participants who participated in the focus group had requested more time to expand on their views after the pilot.

For remaining participants, recruitment was essentially opportunistic, but included a number of stages. I met CYP over 6 months of attending PunchNProgress, before and after their training sessions. After meeting individuals who appeared interesting in participating, I noted down their initials in my research diary. I then checked potential participants with staff at PunchNProgress. This was intended to clarify if staff considered CYP to have the emotional resources to participate in an interview, and also to establish if they might meet the inclusion criteria. At this stage, I also asked staff who they would recommend as potential candidates due to being regular attendees, who understood the training process well. These two pools of CYP were combined and I sought verbal consent, then the following week, they were provided with a consent/information form to take away (see Appendix 6). This time delay was intended to allow them time to think, to reduce the power imbalance between us. It was also a chance for CYP to speak about the research with parents/carers. However, this was framed in terms of talking about participation with 'someone you trust' because many of the CYP at PunchNProgress did not live with family or carers. The next week I followed up and arranged interview time/dates as appropriate.

3.5.2   Inclusion Criteria

- CYP participants were required to have been attending PunchNProgress for at least 6 months. This was the threshold used in the pilot and reflected my desire to have a sample which had experience of BAAI over time.
- CYP participants were required to have a history of attending at least twice per week. PunchNProgress used this threshold to define "active members" and it was adopted in the pilot.
- CYP participants were required to be within the 16-24 age bracket. This was in keeping with the transition to adulthood agenda outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015). It also fitted with one of the focus age groups highlighted for preventative and early stage intervention by the DfH and DfE (2017) green paper. Lastly, it allowed for the sample to include the largest range of contexts (e.g. school, college, training, work) which seemed appropriate for an exploratory study. One participant was thought to be 16 but then said at

the end of the interview that they were 15. They asked that their data be
included.

- Coach participants were required to have been delivering BAAI for at least 6
  months. After discussion with the manager at PunchNProgress, we decided
  that this level of tenure would mean that coaches had a good knowledge of
  the CYP who were attending and the processes of the intervention.

Table 3.1 Sample Overview

Participant Group	Details	Data collected
12 children and young people attending PunchNProgress, receiving BAAI	10 male, 2 female. Aged between 15 and 24.	12 interviews
4 coaches delivering BAAI at PunchNProgress	3 male, 1 female. Aged between 25 and 33 years.	4 interviews

3.6   Data Collection

3.6.1   Developing the Final Interview Schedule

The interview schedule for the main study was adapted from the schedule used in
the pilot. This included additions based upon pilot data and also reflection on the
process of gathering data through an interview (see Figure 3.1). It should be noted
that the schedule was developed before the proposal of the ecological model of
resilience as part of the theoretical framework and so was not influenced by this
thinking.

Figure 3.1 Sample Changes to the Interview Schedule

Pilot Participant Response	*Researcher Reflection*	*Action*
"The coaches are behind you" (Kos) "when the coach said that, it was a big thing" (Nancy) "they [the coach] really motivated me" (Az) "the coach is, like a mentor too" (Az)	Coaches are an important part of BAAI. It could be useful to explore this with a section in the interview schedule.	Addition of the following items: *Can you tell me a bit about your experience of working with the boxing coaches?* *Could you talk about how the coaches fit into [Charity Name]?* *Explain what you find most useful about what the coaches do at [Charity Name]*

		Is there anything you wish they did more of?
"[boxing] It is more than a sport" (Kate) "It is more intense than other sports" (Nance) "In football you can take breaks" (Az)	A number of participants explored boxing in relation to other sports in the pilot data. It could be useful to explore whether participants think that boxing is distinct to other aerobic sports.	Addition of the following items: *Describe to me how boxing fits into what you do here?* *How do you think boxing compares to other sports?* *[If mentioned impact above] How much of the impact you have described could be achieved through other sports?*

Despite interviewing CYP and coaches, the schedules kept a similar focus because the aim of the research was to explore CYP experiences of BAAI, so changes were limited to semantics (see Appendix 4 and 5). The final semi-structured interview schedule included a series of open ended questions organised into the sequence outlined in Robson (2002, p277) with distinct phases: introduction, main body and closure. The introduction phase allowed for participants to be put at ease and for attunement to be built with informal introductions. This phase included time for participants to ask questions about the process and to be reminded of their right to withdraw. It was also when I explained how data would be used, their right to withdraw data and the scope of the consent they had given. During the main body of the interview I was focussed on maintaining attunement, reflecting on how my questions were impacting the participant and considering how I was reacting to their answers. I made sure that I clarified statements and repeated back answers to ensure that we were sharing the same meaning (Merten, 2010, p18). The closure phase was used to ensure that the participants understood their ability to withdraw their data and had my contact details. It was also important as a way to ensure there was some reciprocity in the process, where participants could debrief on the experience of the interview and ask questions about the research (Lincoln, 2009). The specific structure and example questions are outlined below in Figure 3.2 and a complete CYP interview schedule can be found in Appendix 5.

Figure 3.2 Interview Schedule Rationale

Phase	Focus	Example Questions	Rationale
Introduction	Attunement	N/A	Participants put at ease, rapport building, interviewer answers remaining questions
	Logistics	*"How long have you been coming here?"* *"What do you do here?"*	Obtaining an overview of the participant's involvement with BAAI
	Why PunchNProgress?	*"Why did you first get involved here?"* *"Describe to me the things which keep you coming back?"*	Gathering data on how CYP started BAAI and whether PunchNProgress is experienced as different to other clubs or sports.
Main Body	What is the CYP experience of BAAI sessions?	*"Of what you have done here, what seems most important?"* *"What would your friends say has been the biggest change in you since you've been coming?"*	Gaining an understanding of what CYP's experience to be beneficial about BAAI.
	Boxing as a sport	*"Describe to me how boxing fits into what you do here?"* *"How do you think boxing compares to other sports?"*	Exploring how boxing compares to experiences of other sports (based on pilot data).
	Application to other areas	*"Explain how helpful this is for your everyday life?"* *"Are there any parts of what you do at PunchNProgress which are hard to apply in other areas?"*	Questioning how boxing fits into a CYP's *Learning Landscape* and ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Dugdale, 2009).
	Coaches	*"Can you tell me a bit about your experience of working with the boxing coaches?"* *"How do coaches fit into PunchNProgress?"*	Exploring the role of coaches in the experience of BAAI (based on pilot data).

	About you	*"Are you involved in any education, training or employment at the moment?"* *"If we were to rewind a few years, what would you have been like?"*	Gaining an understanding of the individuals who formed the sample (history, experiences).
Closure	Debrief	N/A	Supporting participants to understand the research they have contributed to, how their data will be used and their right to withdraw.

3.6.2   The Interviewing Process

All interviews took place at PunchNProgress in a meeting room which provided privacy for participants. Interviews were arranged with participants by agreeing a date and time which suited them and they were reminded by email the day before. If arranging an interview with a CYP then, once they arrived, staff showed them to the interview room and the process began. Whereas, coaches were met before and after training sessions. After allowing the participant to ask any preliminary questions the consent form would be signed or collected and then the audio recording device would be introduced and turned on.

3.6.3   Reflections on the Process of Participant Interviews

A number of participants referenced the fact that they had 'seen me around PunchNProgress' and seemed pleased that I had put in time to get to know the context. This was interpreted to be in contrast to PunchNProgress funders, who were observed to attend for a day, take photographs and conduct interviews with young people. For example, Jawden finished our interview by saying "*you think we don't notice you coming around, putting in the effort, but we do*". This helped reassure me that participants felt comfortable taking part in the data collection process.

Over the interviewing process, I reflected on the openness of participants, about half referred to mental health issues, bereavements, experience of violent crime and gang involvement without being prompted. This was interpreted to be a sign of attunement with participants but also contrasted my work as a TEP, where meetings can require lengthy rapport building phases.

Interviews were often influenced by informal systems at PunchNProgress

(Checkland, 2000). For example, I would often schedule an interview with a participant, at a convenient time, confirm it on the day and then arrive to find that the participant was no longer available. This was interpreted to be a result of the way PunchNProgress operates: I observed spontaneous boxing training, informal conversations meaning that sessions started at a different times and changes to timetables which were not advertised to users. As such, I attempted to be flexible, respect the context of the CYP and coaches and extend unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1980). Over time, the majority of volunteers did complete an interview, with only 3 volunteers not participating (2 CYP and 1 coach).

3.7   The Practitioner Researcher Role

I had to navigate being an applied psychologist and boxing enthusiast during the research process. Due to holding a Constructivist mindset, I acknowledged that I may feature in this research in unintentional ways. I agree with Braun and Clarke (2006) which states it is "important at this point for us to acknowledge our own theoretical positions and values in relation to qualitative research" (p7). I used a number of strategies to reflect on and critique my position in relation to the research, including: a research diary, presentations, discussions and supervision.

I used a research diary to reflect during the data collection and data analysis process. For example, writing down my thoughts while reading transcripts and listening to the audio of interviews. This helped me to remove researcher driven codes from among the inductive codes and also to highlight instances where psychological theories might be influencing the interpretation of interviews. My research diary was also useful in helping me to remember what my reactions and interpretations had been to participant responses in situ, which facilitated my reflection on the meaning behind transcribed interviews.

I used presentations of my findings as a way to receive the critique of other applied psychologists. During this process, it was observed that I was describing a wide range of narratives from PunchNProgress, which prompted me to reflect on the way I had arranged codes into themes. And, eventually lead to the description of present themes in two Findings chapters, each with a single narrative.

Supervision was also useful as a tool to counter balance my personal knowledge, experience and enjoyment of boxing. In discussing my data collection and analysis in

this forum I was required to consider how boxing might be perceived by individuals without any experience of the sport or by those who had a negative bias towards pugilism. This supported my ability to spot biases during the analysis process and my attempts to create a narrative in my thesis which accurately represented the data.

3.8   Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines from the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2014) and the University College London Institute of Education (IOE) were used in the design of this research. Ethical approval was obtained for the pilot and main study from the IOE and from the manager of PunchNProgress (see Appendix 9).

3.8.1   Informed Consent

Informed consent was operationalised as a process. Participants were briefed at each stage of the recruitment phase and before any data collection, as well as being reminded of their rights to withdraw and anonymity. Both coach and CYP participants were recruited using a multi step process, including different stages of seeking consent. The first stage involved a verbal briefing about the aims of the research and being given a consent form to take away. After a "cooling off" period participants were free to volunteer, at which point they will be asked to sign the consent form (Appendix 6). This process was used for a number of reasons. Firstly, I was aware of a potential power imbalance and did not participants to feel pressured to partake (Kvale, 2007). Secondly, while coach and CYP participants of 16 years and older, were considered old enough to be provide their own consent (BPS, 2014, p16), it felt important ethically to provide them with a structure which allowed them space to think and natural points to opt out. This process was supplemented by opportunities to ask questions across the months leading up to data collection when I was attending PunchNProgress.

3.8.2   Protection from Harm

Data collection was conducted at PunchNProgress to minimize inconvenience and stress. The Interview schedule was provided to charity staff to check if questions might act as emotional triggers. Potential participants were checked with charity staff to ensure they were in an appropriate position to take part in research. I conducted all the interviews and brought my experience working with vulnerable children and

young people and, as a TEP ensured I prioritised participants wellbeing throughout (HCPC, 2015). It was noted that participants may have been gang members or affiliates and may have also been experiencing SEMH issues. Accordingly, I ensured that all communications were conducted through a professional UCL email address, or at the charity headquarters.

3.8.3   Anonymity, Confidentiality and Data Protection

After signing a consent form participants were given a code reference. This code was applied to all data collected from them. The physical consent form was kept in a locked drawer in a separate building to the computer used to store and code data. During the writing phase, the participant codes were matched with a pseudonym to facilitate reading and comprehension.

Audio data was collected and stored on an encrypted hard drive, on a password protected laptop. As such participants remained anonymous throughout the research process. Participants were told throughout the main research that they have the right to access their data and withdraw it from the study.

For any internal reports provided to PunchNProgress, data will be presented in themes so opinions will not be attributable to specific participants. In external reporting, PunchNProgress will not be named. As such, participants will receive another layer of protection for their anonymity.

3.8.4   Power

Power dynamics are important to consider in research (Kvale, 2007). Participants may have considered themselves a different socio-economic status to me, or less formally educated. And, this may have created a power imbalance which meant that they took part unwillingly, spoke about topics they did not want to or gave answers that they felt I wanted to hear.

As a TEP I have experience working with diverse groups and I tried to ensure that participants felt comfortable, whenever I met them and during the data collection process. According to the principles laid out in Lincoln (2009) I attempted to create some balance in the reciprocity of being a participant. This was concluded to be successful due to the 100% volunteer rate of pilot participants to take part in the main research. The main research built on this in the following ways:

- I attended the charity for 11 months prior to data collection in order to build rapport and trust with staff and CYP.
- The data collection process was adapted to utilise interviews based on participant feedback.
- I applied the use of *repeating back* and *clarifying* participants' statements during data collection, in order to embody ontological authenticity (Merten, 2010, p18).

3.9   Rationale for Approach to Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis is: "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p6). It was chosen for this research because it is a flexible research tool, compatible with a Constructivist ontology and could facilitate a rich and detailed analysis of the data.

Grounded theory was discounted as a method for this research. Charmaz (2006) describes grounded theory as a set of methods that "consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves" (p2). It was concluded that to use a research method which aimed to produce a theoretical model - like grounded theory - may be problematic due to the limited research base for BAAI. This study was required to refer to the literature base for IE and sports interventions, so I did not think it would be appropriate to adopt the aim to develop a theoretical model.

I also considered the use of narrative and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). IPA is an approach to qualitative research concerned with exploring and understanding 'lived experience' (Smith, 2004). This seemed to be consistent with the ontology and epistemology used for this research. However, IPA is generally used with small homogenous samples (Smith 2004; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). However, the sample of 16 people presented a diverse sample (ages, life experiences etc) including both CYP and coaches.

3.9.1   Inductive Thematic Analysis

There are different ways to approach a thematic analysis, with three main approaches to the development of codes: theory driven code development, prior research-driven code development and inductive data-driven code development (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). The research base is underdeveloped in

relation to BAAI, so inductive coding was considered the most appropriate choice because it allowed for the development of data-driven themes where decisions about themes were influenced by the data (Blank, 2004).

3.9.2   Process of Analysis

In order to best answer the research question which focussed on the experience of CYP, the data was analysed as one group, across the CYP and coaches. I had used Braun and Clarke's (2006) 6 phases to thematic analysis in previous research and found it easy to follow and able of producing useful themes. However, in this study I also referred to Saldana's (2009) description of first and second cycle coding, which helped provide a clear guide for the coding process outlined in Braun and Clarke (2006). In accordance with an inductive approach the coding of data was semantic and involved two stages. The first cycle of 'descriptive coding', where codes aimed to capture the meaning of participants words in the transcript (See 8.7). The second cycle of 'focussed coding' allowed me to combine codes which were interpreted to describe the same thing. Lastly, the data was arranged into themes in accordance with the steps described by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data

This process started with listening to the audio of interviews. Due to a medical issue, I commissioned transcripts to be written for the interviews, with erms, pauses and indications of inaudible material (see Appendix 7). This allowed for quotes to be read within context and for the possibility of review of transcripts in the future

Due to not having written the transcripts, it was important to check that they accurately represented the audio data from the interviews. As such, I read a random selection of transcripts alongside listening to the audio recordings.

Figure 3.3 Transcript extract with codes

Interview transcript (Peter)	Initial notes / first cycle codes
I came in, or 2007, late 2007, but I came in just early 2008, through a guy you must have saw out there called [Name]. He was actually my youth offender worker. I had time, and he told me about PunchNProgress. **And this time, you know, being on the streets from the school age, you know, getting kicked out of school,** *all this*	YOT-recommended-PunchNProgress ***Excluded-from-School***

kind of thing, you know, a lot of psychological thing happening in my life at that time, you know, **I just needed somewhere to go, to relax, to be able to you know, just let off some steam really.**	Mental-Health-Needs *Let-Off-Steam*
[Researcher] That's interesting, OK.	
The, you know, the, how can I say, in terms of just sense of belonging, you know. **I got kind of tired, you know, when you just have like a single, erm, mother, coming from a single parent's home, you know, you don't have really like a father figure sometimes,** so it was good from my point of view, up to this day, *it's always good to have a, a community of people you can go to, kinda help.* So yeah, started 2008, started to come here, and um, um, yeah, started off with boxing, and **I saw boxing was, er, a very peaceful relaxing type of thing.**	*Didn't-feel-sense-of-belonging* *Difficult-Family-Situation* Community-Atmosphere **Release-stress**

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes in the Data

Coding was conducted in Nvivo (version 11). The first cycle was intended to be 'complete, semantic coding' where codes described the reported experience of participants by summarising the topic of the content (Saldana, 2009, p70). As such, *descriptive coding* was used to develop a "basic vocabulary" of the data (Turner, 1994) by identifying candidate codes (see Figure 3.3).

The second cycle coding involved *focused coding* to test if candidate codes from the first cycle, could be reordered or subsumed (Boyatzis, 1998). In practise this was a step towards theming but it remained distinct. In that, codes were defined as "capturing one idea" and themes were defined as "a meaningfully organized concept involving different elements". As such, *focused coding* involved testing if any candidate codes were describing the same idea and whether they could be streamlined. In order to minimize the chance of forcing codes into preconceived concepts, Nvivo was used to provide a simple organisation of codes to check categories and subcategories of meaning (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). For an example of a fully coded transcript see Appendix 7.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes

At this point, I considered if there were any relationships between codes, which could merit them being arranged into an overarching, meaningful theme. Figure 3.4 presents this process, showing how transcript extracts were coded, grouped into sub themes and then arranged into a theme. For this phase in Braun and Clarke's (2006) process, I had to decide what could be considered a theme. Instead of using frequency or quantity of codes, I attempted to present themes which were of relevance to the research question. For example, participant description of psychological issues among their friends could be coded as *Mental Health Needs*; and experiences of violent crime and criminality could be coded as *A Difficult Life.* These two codes were arranged in in a sub theme of *Experiencing Difficulty*. Sub themes were also created to describe participant descriptions of PunchNProgress providing an escape (from their difficulties) and also providing positive moments, which were then arranged under a theme of PunchNProgress providing respite for CYP.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the importance of reviewing themes. I engaged in this process cyclically. Where, I reviewed themes in relation to the raw data, miscellaneous themes and codes and attempted to clarify if more appropriate arrangements of codes could be made.

I acknowledge that the process of arranging themes was a subjective one (Schwandt, 2000). This made it important to ensure that I was challenged on the analysis I had conducted. This took the form of reflection using my research diary, presenting findings to other applied psychologists and the use of supervision. Each of these methods provided a different way to review themes. My research diary allowed me to check themes against notes which had been taken during interviews, to ensure meanings had not been lost or skewed. Presenting to psychologists and discussing in supervision meant I could check the rationale behind themes and codes. But, also that I was required to explain and justify findings to an audience with no attachment to boxing and less knowledge about the sport, which meant that I was able to spot leaps of logic or assumptions I had made in the analysis process

Figure 3.4 Arranging quotes and codes into a theme

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Extract from Peter's transcript
Oasis of Respite	Experience Difficulty	Mental Health Needs	…"I think from my side it's mainly based on the psychological thing for young people"
		A Difficult Life	*"Yeah, you know, was just a bad state, I keep getting arrested, keep, you know, had a friend who went to jail, friends that was near death…"*
	Provides an Escape	Escape Reality	*"In terms of like, you know, just, you know, let's say for example you've been going through a day of stress, you know, for me for example it's, I love hitting the bags, so I'll just escape to the gym and I'll just, you know, practice my combination with a bag,"*
		Focus On Something Else	*"So it's just not only like, just hitting something, you know, and just, you know, like yeah, wearing gum shields and wearing wraps, you know, there's other elements which, you know, like yeah, which I think helps the body and helps the mind, for me, cause at that time you just, I just try to focus on my mind cause it was just scattered reality…"*
		Come to Relax	*"I feel when I'm in the gym it's just me, and I feel my oneness, so to say, you know. Just me and the gym, help me relax"*

	Provides Positive Moments		
		Feel Good In The Gym	*"I feel like, I feel harmonised, everything just like balanced for me, you know, I feel really good, I feel really like, how can I say, like, like let's just say like someone just meditating, tranquil, that's the word…"*

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

At this stage, themes were further refined and considered in relation to the research question. At this point, themes seemed to group into two distinct narratives and so were separated into two findings chapters. The first chapter presents themes which described the process of coaching a CYP's developmental journey through BAAI. The second chapter presents themes which related to the factors which contributed to CYP experiencing benefits through participating in boxing training. At the start of each of these chapters a table presents the subthemes and themes which relate to this particular answer of the research question (Table 4.1 and Table 5.1).

At the time of writing, I had completed two member checking sessions with staff and CYP at PunchNProgress. While this process was not complete it did provide some assurances in relation to confirmability which will be outlined in the discussion section.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the Constructivist lens used to design the qualitative methodology for this exploratory study. The sample was recruited at PunchNProgress, a charity providing BAAI in an outer London borough. Data collection was conducted using semi structured interviews with CYP and coaches in order to explore the experience of taking part in boxing BAAI. The interview schedule was tested during a pilot at PunchNProgress which helped to identify areas which CYP thought it would be useful to explore, in relation to the experience of BAAI. Data was analysed using thematic analysis and themes were organised into two findings chapters: the coaching of a developmental journey and the processes which contributed to benefits for CYP

4 Findings: Coaching a Developmental Journey

4.1 Chapter Overview

Participants described how coaches facilitated their development at PunchNProgress. Sub themes from the data were arranged into four themes, which described the following stages in the developmental journey: capturing the interest of CYP, providing them with an open atmosphere, building a deeper level of trust and then demonstrating a long term vision for their improvement. In relation to the research question: *What is the experience of children and young people taking part in BAAI?* These themes provided insight into how CYP were engaged and coached along a developmental journey at PunchNProgress. This chapter will present the themes and sub themes outlined in Table 4.1 (for a table including associated codes, see Appendix 8).

Table 4.1 Themes for Coaching a Developmental Journey

Theme	*Sub theme*
Capture Interest	Boxing Is Appealing
	Gain Initial Respect
Open Atmosphere	Non Judgement
	Integration Period
Build Deeper Trust	Family Feel
	Rigidity
	Demonstrate High Expectations
Long Term Vision	Aspirations
	Boxing as an Analogy

4.2   Capture Interest

At PunchNProgress, boxing training was described to capture the interest of the CYP. This was explained to occur in two main ways. The first was through the activity itself being engaging for CYP. The second was through CYP developing an initial level of respect for coaches. Through this respect, coaches were described to pique CYP's interest. Coaches were reported to gain respect for a range of reasons, including: technical prowess and athletic achievements in boxing and starting out in comparable life circumstances to the CYP at PunchNProgress.

4.2.1   Boxing is Appealing

Coaches were aware that boxing training was appealing to CYP. Coach Lee described that he was glad that they had it as a tool to engage CYP:

> I *think what's good about [PunchNProgress] is that we have the martial arts itself is a good tool to engage them* (Coach Lee)

For CYP, the appeal of boxing depended on their life experience. Yansey described how boxing was attractive as an option to lose weight:

> *So … The thing is, I came here because I wanted to get more fit... my first three years here in the UK, I've literally gained a huge amount of weight* (Yansey)

Whereas, Ibz reported that boxing was something which he was watching on the internet before he joined PunchNProgress:

> *"I actually liked the sport, 'cause I was just watching it on, I was watching it on YouTube and stuff like that so I was thinking maybe I'll try this for fitness and stuff like that"* (Ibz)

For Ibz, boxing was an entertaining activity which excited him enough to want to experiment with training. This supported Lee's perspective, that boxing held an intrigue which would motivate CYP to visit PunchNProgress. Az experienced a different form of appeal with boxing; after his first session he explained that he had a

new purpose, and felt motivated to make lifestyle changes in order to prioritise future boxing training:

> *"It's like you've found your purpose behind it like. Like this is your purpose now"* (Az)

Overall, it seemed that boxing was attractive to CYP for different reasons, depending on how it fit into their previous life experiences (chronosystem). Coaches acknowledged this aspect of boxing training as a strength of PunchNProgress, because it meant that they could capture the interest of CYP.

4.2.2   Gain Initial Respect

As well as boxing being appealing, coaches captured the interest of CYP by possessing qualities which inspired respect early on in the experience of visiting PunchNProgress. This initial respect was gained in a number of ways: due to achievements as a boxer, having learnt boxing at PunchNProgress themselves or having similar life experiences to the CYP. Coach Lee reported that CYP respected coaches who had achieved success as competitive boxers:

> *"...a lot of them wanna compete as well, and they're looking at coaches like OK, you've been there, like you maybe competed or you done this and you done that".* (Coach Lee)

When viewed in the context of CYP arriving at PunchNProgress excited to learn boxing, meeting coaches who had achieved objective measures of success (e.g. area champion, national champion) through this new activity seemed to gain CYP's respect. The boxing achievements of coaches was also interpreted as adding to the appeal of boxing, through demonstrating the possibility of future success through learning the sport.

Shahid explained another aspect of how coaches gained respect from the CYP attending PunchNProgress. As well as prior boxing experience, some of the coaches had learnt to box for the first time at PunchNProgress, and were perceived to have built themselves up from a similar position as the CYP:

> *"Erm, some of them are either previous boxers or a lot of them used to come here, so, like when they were younger, so slowly built them self up"* (Shahid)

By working with boxing coaches who had learnt to box at PunchNProgress, CYP were provided with an example of a future trajectory. I also interpreted this as inspiring respect in Shahid because coaches had a similar starting point to him. Where, they had a shared understanding: Shahid knew the effort that coaches had put in to progress and coaches knew the challenges that he might be facing.

The coaches at PunchNProgress reported an understanding of the requirement to gain the CYP's respect, as a first step to building a trusting relationship:

> *"So if a young person walks into the gym, my job as a coach is to first create a bond to the point where there's trust. And nobody's going to trust me if they don't respect me..."* (Coach Carl)

The combination of prior boxing experience, similar life experiences to the CYP and having learnt to box at PunchNProgress, meant that coaches were given an initial level of respect by CYP. The coaches acknowledged that gaining this respect was an important stage of the developmental process. When Coach Carl explained that he needed to earn CYP's respect before he could expect their trust, I interpreted him as describing this to be different to other professionals in the CYP's life. The fact that PunchNProgress had coaches who could inspire this respect - and that boxing was an appealing sport - meant that it could capture CYP's interest long enough for them to experience other positives. This seemed to be the start of a developmental journey.

4.3   Open Atmosphere

At PunchNProgress, participants described that the atmosphere was an important part of the intervention. They noted that they felt like people did not judge newcomers, regardless of their life circumstances or history. This helped CYP feel willing to stay long enough to take part in boxing training and start to develop relationships. Participants also described the integration process which new arrivals went through: where they slowly lowered their guard and began to trust those around them. This length of this process was described to vary across individuals, but crucially, both coaches and CYP reported that it was important to let new arrivals

integrate on their terms, without pressure. Overall, this open atmosphere meant that CYP were more likely to continue attending PunchNProgress.

4.3.1   Non Judgement

Coaches at PunchNProgress facilitated an open and non judgemental atmosphere. CYP described how they noticed this when they arrived:

> "*people are really cool and relaxed and humbly welcome you*" (Peter)

> "*So it's a place where, that's what I'm saying, it's a place where no matter where you're from, everybody gets along and everybody is one, you know what I mean*" (Jawden)

Noticing the atmosphere was reported to be important in different ways. Peter described a lack of ego and feeling welcomed. Whereas, Jawden emphasised that it did not seem to matter where people were from, that they were accepted into PunchNProgress. Participants described how this atmosphere allows CYP to open up, even if they arrived with a guarded mentality:

> "*I think they actually enjoy that, how can I say, they let down their guard, you know, cause a lot of people come with their guard up, you know...*" (Peter)

> "*Yeah, just like people before used to be like... I see them driving around in the street like being bad, but now people are more like interactive, yeah... they become more open.*" (Shahid)

PunchNProgress appeared to provide a contrast to CYP's daily lives, where they felt they had to maintain a guarded mentality. The lack of judgement felt upon arrival and the observation of the acceptance that others had been offered, encouraged CYP to feel safe enough to lower their guard.

Coach Carl explained that remaining non-judgemental was a technique he used to build relationships with CYP:

"The quickest way to build trust with someone is to let them be themselves and to respect them for who they are. You do that with anyone, they're gonna trust you. And that means being non-judgemental and having no sense of bias". (Coach Carl)

Staff acknowledged that CYP may receive judgement or bias from other adults and so, by letting them be themselves and respecting them, they would develop trust in return. Coach Carl elaborated on this:

"So where they might go to other places in school and they're constantly being told off by the teacher, constantly being expelled, constantly at threat of, of being ostracised, right, in the gym, in the boxing gym there's a lower threat of being ostracised" (Coach Carl).

This increased sense of freedom and lack of judgement from staff was described to be important to the CYP because it made them feel as if they were not being forced to interact in a certain way:

"...I just realised the people, the people here, the staff here, you know, the mentors here, they're, like everything's relaxed, you're not forced to do anything, anything you don't want to do..." (Jawden).

The importance of this open atmosphere was described by Jawden to feel like he was free to engage with activities on his own terms.

Overall, it seemed that for CYP they were used to having "their guard up" in daily life. Entering an environment which did not judge them, allowed CYP to feel safe enough to be more open and to then reciprocate this non-judgemental approach. This formed another phase to the developmental journey. Where, CYP arrive, have their interest captured by the boxing and the coaches and are then shown that they will be treated without judgement.

4.3.2   Integration Period

According to coaches and CYP, new arrivals to PunchNProgress required some time to integrate into the community. Participants described the importance of allowing

individuals to integrate at their own pace. This involved a number of processes: allowing them the freedom to to integrate at their own speed, showing them increased levels of understanding and sensitivity and then observing them to commit more to PunchNProgress over time.

Kate reported that new people had to be accepted into the community:

> *I feel like you can't really explain, you need to experience it yourself like, it's very hard to put it, if I say it is a family, to be accepted in a family, there's like a process, but even that process is quite quick (Kate)*

This process involved newcomers becoming aware of the expectation that people were treated without judgement and then, over time, feeling able to return this to other people. Andy explained that existing members of PunchNProgress modelled openness to new arrivals and that sometimes it may take time for newcomers to feel comfortable being open themselves:

> *"So yeah, it's just about kind of seeing people just opening up and feeling that, cause they're, as I said it's a family unit here so in the beginning maybe when they're unfamiliar with people they're not going to be as forthcoming" (Andy)*

This highlighted the reciprocal nature of the integration process. Where, new arrivals were allowed to engage on their own terms and integrate at their own pace. But, that they eventually returned the gesture of openness, contributing to the family unit.

Coaches were aware of the importance of facilitating CYP's integration, and the investment which each new participant may require. Coach Carl explained that coaches were prepared to give CYP unconditional love and receive a negative response at first. This highlighted the containment which CYP were offered by staff in order to acclimatise to PunchNProgress; where coaches would absorb negative treatment and help newcomers understand other ways of engaging with this new environment:

> *Because if you show unconditional love you're gonna get hurt and you have to be able to handle that pain. So these kids are gonna, these young kids are gonna kick and scream and they're not gonna want to listen to begin with...*

(Coach Carl)

Coach Sugar acknowledged that while new arrivals may take some time to integrate, they often remain a part of the community for a long time:

> "*We have young people that, erm, that still come since we opened in 2007, that are still active members here, or because they've gone past the age range here they're now volunteering, or they're members of staff. So I think when we capture people we capture them for life...*" (Coach Sugar)

Coach Sugar offered an insight into how PunchNProgress created an environment which included coaches who had previously learnt to box there, and would capture the interest of future attendees (see 4.2.2). Where, CYP feel invested in the organisation and so feel motivated to volunteer or work for it. This involvement starts with the attraction and retention of CYP and the integration period seems to be an important part of helping individuals learn that they can lower their guard at PunchNProgress.

Overall, the coaches were aware of the importance of creating an open and non judgemental atmosphere in order to maximise the chances of a CYP staying at PunchNProgress. Participants described an integration period, during which, CYP may need to be shown increased levels of sensitivity and support. After being given time to open up, new comers were reported to reciprocate the openness and become part of the community. This was described to be part of what helps to retain CYP and to inspire them to interact with PunchNProgress as a volunteer or staff member.

4.4   Build Deeper Trust

The next phase in the developmental journey involved coaches building a deeper level of trust with CYP. This happened after newcomers arrived, had their interest captured, passed through the integration period and been supported to open up. This deeper level of trust was reported to be facilitated by a number of factors. The first was the family atmosphere of PunchNProgress. Where, once integrated, CYP formed close relationships with staff and other CYP. The second was a rigidity around expectations for training routines. And lastly, coaches seemed to use strong relationships and rigid training to provide a secure foundation to push CYP to meet

their high expectations. Once CYP had been through a cycle of being pushed to meet a coach's high expectations, and then seeing they could meet them, this facilitated the development of a deeper level of trust between them.

4.4.1   Family-Feel

Over time, the open and non-judgemental atmosphere created by the coaches at PunchNProgress facilitated CYP creating close relationships. When asked what kept him coming back, Az replied:

> *"It is the family feel. It is like the people around you feel they are all striving for the same thing, like in training and like, I dunno, like, once you come and then you accept the values and get it in your heart, you can't leave"* (Az)

This illustrated the developmental journey CYP go through at PunchNProgress. Az articulated how CYP who have been retained through the open atmosphere accept the values and then started to appreciate the cohesion of the group.

> *"Because, [PunchNProgress] is not only a boxing it is more like a family".* (Kate)

Kate supported this idea by promoting the family features of PunchNProgress above the boxing training. Andy articulated surprise at the environment:

> *"I don't know, how I kind of envisioned how people would be here, but it's totally different, like I said, it's like a real family environment here"* (Andy)

This family feeling meant that CYP had a stable foundation for coaches to push CYP to meet high expectations in training. Participants described how the rigidity of training routines helped make CYP feel that they were treated equally and contributed to the development of trust.

4.4.2   Rigidity

Coaches at PunchNProgress appeared to combine permissiveness around integration with rigidity of routine. As well as creating an open, non judgemental

atmosphere, coaches simultaneously provide clear structures with rigid boundaries. This seemed to demonstrate an egalitarian approach to boxing, where every CYP was expected to complete the same training.

Coach Sugar described the root of this structure in his own martial art training:

> "*I'm very organised and I believe that through my martial arts days that if I come in late, I know that I'm doing like 500 press-ups or something... it doesn't matter the excuse, traffic, your cat dying, it doesn't matter, you're doing them. But that's a lesson, I didn't hold a grudge if I was late, I knew if I was going in that room late, I knew that I was doing 500 press-ups...*" (Coach Sugar)

For him, the rigidity of routines offered a safe structure which had predictable, immovable expectations. And, he felt that it was important to pass a similar experience on to CYP at PunchNProgress.

Nancy described the feeling in the training sessions, which was noticeably different to when coaches were not training CYP:

> "*The boxing coaches? They're very tough [laughs] they're very tough. I think with them it's, when you're in the sessions you can see they're very serious, they're very motivated...*" (Nancy)

Coach Kirsten explained the importance of this rigidity in training sessions in relation to discipline:

> "*So I think the coaches do have like a key role, like one of the most key roles... that relationship that you have with your coach is so, it's so special cause there's so much discipline involved*" (Coach Kirsten)

Coach Kirsten described that part of what made the coaching relationship special was that the CYP could expect the coach to hold them to account, with rigid expectations.

For Coach Lee, the rigidity and difficulty of sessions was important enough to defend

against external criticism:

> *"...sometimes staff are complaining, saying our sessions are too hard and whatnot, but I say that's what creates champions, like you have to, they have to be tough. Because life is tough, it's not easy..."* (Coach Lee)

Coaches explained that boxing training performed multiple functions. Above, Coach Lee reported that boxing was an important tool for engaging CYP (see 4.2.1). However, he also described the importance of the training itself as a transformative process which should not be diluted in its intensity. This was related to the notion of staff coaching a developmental process, where boxing training could be used in different ways, depending on the needs of the CYP.

It appeared that the CYP experienced the difficulty and rigidity of sessions as egalitarian, where everyone was expected to complete the same activities. Kate stated:

> *"What I have learnt is equality.* [Researcher: 'what do you mean by equality?'] *"...for example when I got here, ...obviously I was new and there was no baby steps, especially the cardio, we are all at the same level, if someone doesn't do the workout we are all doing it again"*

This related to Az's idea that CYP are working towards the same things at PunchNProgress, where coaches facilitated cohesion through applying rigid expectations about the training. Jawden supported this, explaining that by everyone completing exercises together, it made them feel bonded:

> *"...that respect just comes, you know what I mean, it just, it just comes with it and when everybody's pushing, pushing each other, when everybody's sweating and taking that last breath when everybody's gasping for air, like everybody wants water, like [laughs] it's a sense that you're all in this together, you know what I mean." (Jawden)*

The security provided by the family feel at PunchNProgress, combined with the rigidity of rules and routines, seemed to provide a secure foundation which coaches could use to expose CYP to high expectations.

4.4.3   High-Expectations

The coaches exhibited high expectations of the CYP they trained. They appeared to build on the trust they had developed to create an atmosphere whereby the CYP responded well to them pushing them to do difficult things. Coach Kirsten reflected on her own coaching relationship and described how trust enabled her to follow all coaching instructions because she knew they were focussed on helping her progress:

> "... *you'll do anything that your coach tells you cause you know that your coach is pushing your forwards to a positive place".* (Coach Kirsten)

Peter supported this perspective by illustrating how coaches can ask a CYP to complete an activity they think is beyond their capability, and then the CYP surpasses their own expectations:

> "*You know when the coach is like 'try this', and a lot of people were like 'oh, no, I can't do it'. 'No no, come on, try it', and [laughs] they see themselves trying to do it and they actually do it..."* (Peter)

This highlights an important dynamic in the development of trust, where coaches used what trust they had earned to push CYP to surpass their expectations. In doing this, coaches could initiate a virtuous cycle, where CYP would follow coaching instructions and then receive positive reinforcement, becoming more likely to strive to meet high expectations in the future.

Yansey explained that the coaches knew when to ask him for more effort:

> "...*they kind of push you, even if I'm like, I am fully exhausted, they're like 'no water for you, you need to finish this."* (Yansey)

A coach's understanding of when to push a CYP and when to let them get water, seemed to develop an intimate bond between them. Jawden described the way that his body felt like it automatically followed his coach's instructions, even when he is tired:

"... when I'm running I'm going, I'm literally sprinting and I'm tired and [my coach] is shouting last ten seconds, keep sprinting, like it's not me anymore, do you know what I mean..." (Jawden)

This sentiment was supported by Coach Kirsten:

"...your coach is the person that's pushing you to go through that, and once you get there you know that you can overcome any mental barrier" (Coach Kirsten).

The dynamic described by Jawden and Coach Kirsten appeared to be an example of a well developed coach-CYP relationship. Where, a CYP follows the instruction of a coach past the point of intentional compliance. This non-conscious interaction would seem to be the result of a CYP working with a coach over time and having been repeatedly encouraged past what they through was possible.

Coach Lee described the process of training as a battle, which the coaches support the CYP to continue fighting:

"... so it's kind of like when you're training in here you're fighting a battle with yourself... where maybe if I had a session I thought about giving up seven times, but was building the resilience to push through." (Coach Lee)

This description adds another layer to the development of trust. Where, coaches support a CYP to battle with their own limitations during training and as a result become an ally, more generally.

Overall, participants described that coaches created an atmosphere for CYP to feel safe and able to stay and train. They then started to build a trusting relationship with CYP due to an openness and lack of judgement combined technical boxing expertise. This foundation was then leveraged by coaches to push CYP harder in training sessions. Once participants were pushed by coaches to meet their high expectations, and saw that they could, they started to develop a deeper trust.

Vignette: boxing training, trust and secondary attachments

Jawden described how his childhood involved domestic violence, murder, imprisoned family members and leaving relatives when moving countries. It would be fair to assume that the sum of these moments would have influenced his Internal Working Model (Bowlby, 1982) and could have left him feeling less able to trust adults or peers. However, he described close, meaningful relationships with his coaches and other CYP at PunchNProgress and it was notable that BAAI seemed to be providing his main source of meaningful relationships. I interpreted the building of deep trust as part of the developmental journey to relate to attachment theory. Participants described forming secondary attachments through boxing training and these seemed to provide a counter to negative life experiences. For Jawden, despite his childhood experiences, he was able to form close, meaningful attachments with a range of individuals over a period of months.

4.5   Long Term Vision

As well as facilitating an atmosphere, pushing CYP in their training and building trust, coaches reported having a longer term vision for how they wanted to help CYP. This was described through coaches' aspirations for CYP and the way they used boxing as an analogy, to relate training to life.

4.5.1   Aspirations

Coaches were described to hold varied, high expectations for the CYP they worked with. Participants reported aspirations across boxing, education, work and social change. Nancy explained that she joined PunchNProgress in order to lose weight. But, that her boxing coach saw her effort in training and offered her the chance to fight in the next year:

> "*I didn't really think I was going to be told I was gonna be in the ring, or somebody's gonna believe in me to be in the ring. He was like... 'I wanna see you in the ring next season'*" (Nancy)

Nancy described this aspiration as supportive, demonstrating the coach's belief in her. This built on previous examples of coaching staff being sensitive to CYP's needs and understanding when to push them. But, instead of being pushed physically, Nancy described being challenged to meet a longer term aspiration. However, in both aspects of the developmental journey, trust is required in order for coaches to be received positively. As Coach Kirsten described, individuals need to know that their coach is 'pushing them to a positive place' (see 4.4.3), otherwise being faced with taking a boxing fight might seem intimidating to a CYP.

Coaches were reported to have aspirations for CYP outside of boxing. Coach Sugar explained that the end goal of PunchNProgress is that *"they can help with employability to then get a job, or to go into higher education".* He elaborated that *"the process might take years"* but that:

> *"...some of our ex young people have their own business because of it, gaining their sporting qualifications, being personal trainers, running different things"* (Coach Sugar)

This articulated the end goal of the developmental journey: once CYP had been attracted, retained and bonded with, then coaches aimed to support them with their lives in the long term.

Coach Lee thought that PunchNProgress should increase the upper age limit of the people it worked with:

> *"Yeah, I feel like maybe up until the age of between 25 and 30, I can't give you exact, I feel like that's where mostly like, a lot of things are like learned and experienced as well"* (Coach Lee)

This related to Coach Sugar's comments about supporting CYP in the long term. Coach Lee had taken part in BAAI when he was younger and he described that PunchNProgress could perform a bigger role in supporting CYP with the transition to adulthood. Interestingly, Coach Lee volunteered at PunchNProgress, after taking part in BAAI and before getting a job there, which may have been an informal way to continue benefiting from the community there.

Participants reported that coaching could be a tool for social change. Coach Sugar described a ripple effect starting with the CYP he worked with:

> *"If those people then help ten people become better people, those ten people then help ten people become better people, that's a ripple effect, that's a big ripple effect and it has a massive impact on society"* (Coach Sugar)

It seemed notable that coaches did not just view their work as training boxing. On reflection, I felt that this aspiration could be seen in the approach that PunchNProgress had for creating their community. Where, non judgement and a

family feel was encouraged. Participants supported the existence of a ripple effect. Jawden explained that "*he treats people differently now*"

> "*Like I said, I treat people differently now, you know what I mean, I treat a lot more people with a lot more respect and I treat people how I would like to be treated*" *(Jawden)*

Kate described how she takes the mindset she learned at PunchNProgress and tries to apply with people in her daily life:

> "*Um, I mean, erm, you, you, what you learn here, you take it outside, so the way you treat people here I think you take it, though it's not exactly the same cause obviously they haven't been here, but you know, you learn from that circle and you take it out, I think that's the important bit*" *(Kate)*

This highlighted the delicate balance which coaches had to strike. Where, they might want to improve society by working with CYP who could then help others, but they had to express this at the right time and in the right way. Coach Carl elaborated on this tension between the wish to create long term change and the life circumstance of a CYP:

> "*It's step by step, it's a step by step, no young person's going to walk into a gym with a long term view...So now, now they* [the coach] *might start projecting their wishes and their desires onto the young person and putting pressure on them*" (Coach Carl)

Overall, the coaches had high expectations for what can be achieved through boxing training. They described how their role required long term commitment in order to support CYP through big positive life changes. They also understood that CYP might not be ready to make changes and were aware that they needed to sensitive to the timing of when to demand more.

4.5.2   Using Boxing as an Analogy

Participants described how boxing was used as an analogy to think about how to live life outside of PunchNProgress. Coach Carl explained that boxing can provide a

blueprint for overcoming challenges, through the difficult training process:

> *"So if we look at the tip of the iceberg we can say that boxing is a metaphor for life in the sense that there's a blueprint for how to overcome challenges" (Coach Carl)*

This seemed to occur with bidirectionality, where boxing was related to life and life was related to boxing. For example, Peter explained that coaches would give life advice using boxing analogies:

> *"And you know, the coaches will always try to relate something to do with life, to do with boxing, so like OK, yeah, exactly, so like oh, if, um ... If, er, you're sparring with a guy, are you just gonna let him be jabbing you? No, you're gonna move your head, you know, cause you wanna dodge the punch, you know, stuff like that" (Peter)*

And he also explained how coaches would also explain how boxing relates to life:

> *"And OK, so in your college, if you're doing an essay for example and it's getting stressful, are you gonna just give up or you're gonna do a rubbish essay? No, you're gonna take time out, you know, speak to people which can kind of help you, and then come back and attack it and smash it, and stuff like that, you know, just like, just ah, go for it..." (Peter)*

This was an example of coaches using boxing to explore areas of the CYP lives and to compare alternative courses of action. Coach Sugar explained that this is an intentional element of boxing training. Where coaches are thinking about how to include life lessons into training sessions:

> *"So yes I'm coaching technical skill, but I'm also coaching these life skills that come along with it, so when you're talking about discipline, respect and things like this, and from a young age I was taught to turn up on time, you know, in martial arts class...If there's a negative behaviour that's happened and we, we kind of identify that, we've built on it, and I might use some kind of metaphor for them to understand..." (Coach Sugar)*

These quotes highlight that adopting the metaphor of boxing, while teaching boxing, allowed coaches to discuss difficult topics with CYP through the techniques they were training.

Coach Lee explained that when he was younger, participating in BAAI at PunchNProgress, he remembered coaches using sessions to deliver messages about life:

> *"it's more like an informal speech... so let's say in the middle of the session like he will just start talking, and he will say something like, you know when everyone's tired" (Coach Lee)*

This suggested that using boxing as an analogy has been a consistent feature of the developmental journey at PunchNProgress because Coach Lee experienced it when he was participating in BAAI (4 years prior).

Peter explained how he wanted coaches to do them more because of the impact that they could have on the community:

> *"I think the more we do this, like after a session, you know, a coach gives just a little five, ten minute speech... you know, cause a lot of young people come in here, and...it doesn't impact everyone but at least one, two, three people can gain from it" (Peter)*

Using boxing as an analogy provided coaches with a vehicle to influence the life choices of CYP outside of PunchNProgress. Peter's quotes support the concept of the ripple effect described by Coach Sugar, where one person can influence others, who then start to live differently.

Overall, it seems that coaches held a long term vision for the CYP they worked with. This included having aspirations for their future and also using boxing as an analogy to help them live better lives, outside of PunchNProgress.

4.6   Chapter Summary

This chapter presented data for themes which described CYP's experience of being coached through a developmental journey at PunchNProgress. Participants

described a process which was facilitated by the coaching staff at PunchNProgress. The developmental process was organised into four themes to describe phases reported by participants. The journey started with capturing the interest of CYP through the appeal of boxing and the coaches. CYP were retained through the experience of an open atmosphere and being allowed to integrate on their own terms, Next, CYP built a deeper level of trust with coaches and peers. This provided the foundation for the last phase, which involved coaches articulating their aspirations for CYP and using boxing as an analogy to relate training to life outside of PunchNProgress.

5   Findings: Factors Contributing to Benefits

5.1   Chapter Overview

Participants described processes which seemed to contribute to them experiencing benefits as a result of participating in BAAI. Sub themes from the data were organised into four themes, which described benefits outlined by participants. These included: respite from difficulties, catharsis, increased perception of control and an improved sense of self efficacy. In relation to the research question of: *What is the experience of children and young people taking part in BAAI?* These themes provided an insight into how processes at PunchNProgress contributed to individuals experiencing benefits. This chapter will present the themes and sub themes outlined in Table 5.1 (for a table including associated codes, see Appendix 8).

Table 5.1 Themes of Factors Contributing to Benefits

Theme	Sub theme
Oasis of Respite	Experience Difficulty
	Provides An Escape
	Provides Positive Moments
Catharsis	Release Negative Emotions
	Better For Training

Increased Perception of Control	Athletic Improvement With Effort
	Technical Improvement Over Time
Improved Self Efficacy	Choosing Difficulty Empowers
	Improved Confidence
	Can Rely On Self

5.2 Oasis of Respite

As detailed previously, participants described the non-judgemental atmosphere of PunchNProgress and reported how this facilitated them integrating into the community and developing relationships (see 4.3). Participants also explained that boxing training provided an oasis from their problems. This involved describing the difficulties in their individual context; outlining how PunchNProgress offered an escape, and, in some cases, provided positive moments to counter their difficulties.

5.2.1 Experience Difficulty

The coaches described how the demographic they work with were experiencing a range of difficult life experiences. And, that this may be coupled with a lack of support network and a reliance on illegal activities to make money. Coach Sugar explained that some of the CYP he works with are still at risk of the negative consequences of their context:

> *"The young people that I coach, some of them have come from gang activity, erm, are still in danger of being involved in gang activity, one of them's been stabbed twice [sighs] another one's been shot at, another one was selling drugs..." (Coach Sugar)*

This was expanded on by Coach Lee who explained that while PunchNProgress worked with vulnerable CYP, the demographic was mixed, with a range of people, including those "*from university... from work*" and concluded that all young people have the potential to be vulnerable to negative life experiences:

> *"Like... [sighs]...like every single young person, like anything can happen at any point in their life, so just because someone is like on the streets or whatever...that doesn't mean that they need it more than another young person" (Coach Lee)*

The CYP at PunchNProgress reported a range of difficult life situations. Three of the participants who took part in this study described a relative being murdered:

> *"Yeah. Personally I've got a cousin, well I had a cousin who got murdered in gang-related, and knowing that, erm, I've got another cousin who's just recently been put in prison..." (Nancy)*

Nancy's experience was similar to Jawden and Peter who also reported bereavement due to gang related murders. These narratives highlighted the combination of risk factors that many of the participants lived with.

Kate, Az, Andy all described poor mental health as being an issue in their community and that a lot of the young men did not feel able to talk about their needs or difficulties:

> *"I know a lot of us, especially young men, especially with depression or things that's going on in your household or in your life, a lot of men don't talk about a lot of the*[ir] *issues" (Andy)*

Az reflected on how he used to use self medication as a coping mechanism:

> *"I would wake up and smoke a zoot* [cannabis cigarette]*, it was just normal. And, then like, I started going through depression and stuff. And then it was just crazy and then I was on rock bottom" (Az)*

The feeling in the community amongst young men was that they could not talk about their mental health and this lead to worse mental health and using illegal activities to cope. This highlighted how useful the open atmosphere and family feeling at PunchNProgress would have been for CYP, who arrived without appropriate strategies for regulating their emotions.

Jawden described a long, complicated history involving prison, domestic violence and gun crime:

> "...if I was with my mum I used to see like her boyfriend beat her up, you know what I'm saying, so like almost in a way like constant violence, when I was with my dad I used to see like guns, like dad got deported when I was about...seven, eight, and then I lost my dad when I was about ten" (Jawden)

During this research Jawden was living across a number of houses, sleeping on the sofas of friends and cousins. For him, PunchNProgress provided respite from this situation, as well as way to create positive experiences.

5.2.2 Provides An Escape

Participants explained that PunchNProgress could serve as an escape from their difficult contexts. They outlined different ways in which it could perform this function, allowing them to escape reality, focus on other things and take time out.

> "...there's a reason people go here, to maybe escape their reality or improve their situation and stuff, so, um, yeah, there's a purpose here for people." (Andy)

Yansey described how he was intentionally using boxing to provide an immersive experience, away from the stressors in his life. He provided a detailed perspective on how this was a biological reaction:

> "So anyway from my perspective sports enhances hormones, erm, makes your body happier in general, and cause you're...let's say like mentally, while I'm doing boxing because there's no kind of distractions, there's only one activity, so thoughts in my head are blocked cause I'm focused on one thing" (Yansey)

The idea that boxing could support CYP by encouraging them to focus on one thing was supported by Nancy. She explained that focussing on boxing allowed CYP to leave their negative emotions at the door:

> "once you come to Fight for Peace or once you come to the ring, erm, to the

… room where the sessions are being taken place, it's like everything, everything you're feeling, anger, sadness, whatever, you just leave that outside, and you just focus on the boxing" (Nancy)

The ability to leave negative emotions outside offered CYP a diversion from rumination as well as a change in physical location. When considering the scope of difficulties CYP faced at PunchNProgress, being able to take a break from stressors and avoid rumination could provide a useful form of self regulation. It was also noted that participants reported how young men found it hard to discuss mental health needs or to access support. But, the action of attending boxing training did not seem to hold any stigma. When compared to Az's method of self medicating cannabis, boxing provided a socially acceptable coping strategy, which did not pose any legal implications. Peter described the how boxing impacted his mental state:

...the gym, help me relax, it helps me concentrate, you know, er, I feel like, I feel harmonised, everything just like balanced for me, you know...it's a form of meditation for me..." (Peter)

I noted the comparison of boxing to meditation and the detail of how BAAI provided perceived harmony and balance. This added another dimension to the respite of boxing training, where PunchNProgress offered a physical refuge, an emotional break and also a psychological reset.

5.2.3 Provides Positive Moments

As Peter explained, boxing training offered positive mental states as well as a break from negative ones. This aspect of BAAI was described by a number of participants, Kate reported that she had been in London for over a year before attending PunchNProgress and had not been enjoying herself. Since, taking part in BAAI this has improved:

"So since, I have been here, let's say that my eyes are open like, I love, I just love being in London, while I just used to be like, whenever I got holiday I just need to bounce, let me go back home [laughs] So I will definitely stay in London just because of PunchNProgress" (Kate)

Kate experienced positive social experiences at PunchNProgress and it enhanced the quality of her life in London. Nancy supported this:

> *"It kind of makes you kind of more certain and kind of makes you more alive as a person I feel." (Nancy)*

For CYP to be able to counter balance negative experiences with positive ones is an important benefit for BAAI to be able to provide. Nancy elaborated that the positive feeling boxing training provided her with, persevered even after she had left PunchNProgress:

> *"And even when you leave boxing it takes a while for that, that, erm, oh, I forgot to do this when I go home, or I was in trouble two days ago, or I need to plan this for a colleague, you know, you just completely forget and it takes some more, it takes longer for that pain or whatever you're going through to come back after a session of boxing. Or that's what I experience anyway" (Nancy)*

This illustrated another dimension of CYP's respite experience: where resources were transferable across contexts, from PunchNProgress back into daily life. This supported coaches' belief that BAAI can have a ripple effect, where CYP are left able to support others outside of the intervention. But, as well as taking PunchNProgress' values into other areas of their life, they seemed to be provided with recharged emotional resources.

Overall, PunchNProgress was described to be providing CYP with an oasis from the difficulties of their lives. This respite occurred on multiple levels: social, physical, emotional and psychological. As well as providing a break, BAAI provided attendees with positive moments which had a restorative effect on them, allowing them to leave feeling better than they arrived.

5.3 Catharsis

As well as allowing participants to escape their difficulties, boxing was also described as facilitating catharsis. This was reported in two broad ways: releasing negative emotions and also boxing making individuals feel better.

5.3.1 Release Negative Emotions

Kate detailed how her life context made her stressed, to the point that she was having physical reactions and that she found boxing was the best way to release those emotions:

> *"I was so stressed... like, you know when you've got the stress and it becomes like physical, like I get pimples everywhere, I don't sleep anymore, I don't eat properly... So you needed something to release all that stress, to really release all that anger and boxing is the best..." (Kate)*

This was supported by Andy who explained that, for him, the physical benefits of boxing were secondary to the psychological experience:

> *"it's a lot deeper than that for me personally, developing muscles is nice, yeah, it's cool to have a nice physique, but for me it's the kind of mental release" (Andy)*

There was also a sense that using boxing as way to release negative emotions was a strategy discussed among the participants' peers:

> *"...cause a lot of people say that boxing is a way to release anger, it's a way to release pain..." (Nancy)*

This related to the descriptions of CYP experiencing mental health issues and not feeling able to discuss their needs with their peers (see 5.2.1) where boxing provided an emotional regulation strategy which was socially acceptable. The need for CYP to release negative emotions was acknowledged by Coach Carl. He explained that without boxing as an option, some CYP may be using violence in other forums to achieve this effect:

> *"I feel like for so many young people street violence is more of an outlet of that, you know, emotional charge." (Coach Carl)*

This linked to the regulation strategies described by Andy and Az, which lead CYP into negative situations. It also showed the importance of providing an intervention which could be accessed without stigma, where the alternative is risk that individuals

will release negative emotions on each other.

5.3.2 Better For Training

The other way in which participants described boxing providing a cathartic experience, was in noticing that they felt better after training. This description covered comparing their affect before and after training, outlining an enduring feeling of positivity and identifying an increase in happiness over time.

> *"I know within my day if I'm feeling a bit low or whatever, and I come boxing I feel there's a difference in how I enter and how I leave, I feel... just like, erm, just positive" (Andy)*

Andy elaborated on this, reporting how, for him, boxing was something which could be used over time to increase happiness:

> *"it's something you use daily to kind of be happier, be physically content with yourself and be mentally fitter as well" (Andy)*

Az alluded to the mechanics of feeling better as a result of training, describing how the intensity of the exercise becomes enjoyable:

> And then, once you start to enjoy it it's like a buzz, sort of thing, and for me, the best thing about boxing is sweating it out (Az)

This observation supported Kate and Nancy's experiences of boxing providing positive moments (See 5.2.3). PunchNProgress facilitated individuals feeling better through positive social experiences and providing a break from difficult life experiences. But, also through the physical act of training.

Overall, participants at PunchNProgress explained how boxing provided them with a cathartic experience, both in allowing them them to reduce negative feelings and also noticing an increase in positive contrast in their emotions afterwards. It seemed that PunchNProgress was allowing CYP to safely express negative emotions and leave in a more positive state.

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5.4 Increased Perception of Control

Participants reported that PunchNProgress facilitated them developing an increased perception of control in relation to: athletic performance and technical boxing improvement. Some participants also explained how they applied this new mindset more generally.

5.4.1 Athletic Improvement With Effort

Participants described how, over time, they saw improvements in their boxing ability. Shahid reported that he saw progress when he kept coming and this was contrasted with his previous lazy attitude:

> *"So before I used to be lazy and I used to be like a bit troubled and this, like so, I, when I kept on coming I slowly saw improvements" (Shahid)*

Jawden expanded on this process in more detail articulating how, as CYP train more and push harder, they learn that they are capable of achieving greater things:

> *"...the more you do something and the more you like push beyond your limits and something like that, you, you learn new, you learn new things and you're able to do things you never thought you could." (Jawden)*

This appeared to articulate the process which coaches facilitated as part of the developmental journey. Where, coaching staff used the trust they had built with CYP to encourage them to push past their physical limits (see 4.4.3). This provided a bonding experience between coaches and CYP. But, also provided CYP with evidence that increased effort could lead to increased achievement. Andy supported this idea, explaining that boxing fosters the idea that individuals are 'in charge' and able to achieve their goals:

> *"Erm, and you can kind of just, kind of just push away what's kind of deterring you from kind of going to your goals, and kind of just realising that I'm in charge here, which I think boxing kind of just kind of ignites that kind of thought process..." (Andy)*

Coach Lee explained that coaches aimed to create the conditions where a CYP can learn that there is a link between effort and athletic progress:

"...the amount of work I'm gonna put in, that's how, that's how good I'm gonna perform in the competition...in the ring or whatever. So basically it's about like the more effort I'm putting into what I'm doing the more I'm gonna gain" (Coach Lee)

CYP described that once they experienced this change in mindset they were able to apply it to other areas of their life. Kate provided a long term perspective in terms of working hard for future results. But, also that she realised that she was working hard for herself.

"...Whatever exercise you do, not only with the exercise but whatever I am doing is for me. Like if, I am working hard today, today I will see the result, maybe not the same time, but like the result is for me, it is not for anyone else..." (Kate)

The idea that results come from within you, was articulated by Az, who explained that nobody else was able to give you the changes you wanted to see:

"And, it comes from within yourself. No one is going to come and knock on your door and say hey mate, here is your cardio" (Az)

Participants described boxing as a process which taught them effort could lead to results. This was explained in positive and negative terms (e.g. 'if I put in effort I will get results' and 'if I do not put in effort then I will not get results'). CYP initially noticed the relationship between athletic ability and effort but then started to extrapolate this to other areas of their life.

5.4.2   Technical Improvement Over Time

As well athletic improvement being framed in terms of effort expended, Jawden described a similar process relating to boxing technique in fight situations. Where, through repetitive drilling, he saw his body start to respond automatically to situations in the boxing ring:

"But then there's... a reflex side of boxing, and what I mean by that is there's a constant, constant drilling and constant repetition of techniques and skill, so

there's constant punches, same punch literally I'm throwing hundreds of times a day...training for hundreds of literally hours within the year, and then after a while when you're in that ring, someone's throwing a punch, you're just slipping it, you're slipping it, slipping it, you're throwing one back, like literally your body's just moving instinctively, you know what I'm saying."
(Jawden)

This demonstrated that boxing training could provide multiple opportunities to notice the virtuous cycle between effort and outcomes. In describing technical improvements over time, Jawden was highlighting the fluency gained by repetitive practice. Whereas, the athletic improvements outlined above came after pushing past physical limitations.

Overall, participants reported that boxing training at PunchNProgress provided a process which allowed CYP to learn that they were able to achieve change with effort. This learning was also described in a broader sense in terms of doing things outside of the gym.

5.5   Improved Self Efficacy

Participants described how boxing provided them with an improved sense of self efficacy. They explained how actively choosing to do something difficult made them feel empowered, that they experienced improved levels of confidence and that they learnt they could rely on themselves.

5.5.1   Choosing Difficulty Empowers

Many of the participants had difficult life circumstances (see 5.2.1). They explained that actively choosing to do something difficult, like boxing training, made them feel empowered. Coach Carl explained that choosing to box could provide a signal to CYP that they had enough personal resources, because they were taking on a challenge, and that this helped make them feel more empowered:

> "*This is a choice to go and fight and compete. So it gives you a certain level of empowerment from the start because you chose to go with that sport, you already feel strong enough to say, you know what, I'm gonna take that challenge, so because it's a choice it gives you that level of control" (Coach*

Carl)

This was supported by Kate who said:

> *"Like, 100% like I know that if I have finished the session I am invincible. Whatever comes to me I can do it. Because, whatever I have been doing it is harder..." (Kate)*

It was interesting to note how this approach was described as a coping mechanism by Kate. Where, she felt able to cope better with life's difficulties because she has been choosing to participate in something harder. Jawden elaborated on this phenomenon:

> (on not living with his parents and sleeping on relative's sofas) *"...I'm still getting off that uncomfortable sofa, I'm putting myself in another uncomfortable position, which is training. And when you're in that uncomfortable position, that's the place where you grow the most..." (Jawden)*

Jawden highlighted two points, one around personal growth and another on mindset. He was using BAAI as of securing space to work on personal growth. He was able to leave one uncomfortable situation and enter another, which was primarily focussed on improving himself. However, he also identified a mindset of viewing uncomfortable situations as a way to improve oneself. Which related to sentiments expressed by coaching staff at PunchNProgress, who describe life 'as a fight' and 'attacking difficulties' as ways to encourage proactive approaches to difficulties (see 4.4.2).

5.5.2   Improved Confidence

Participants reported that boxing training improved their confidence. This was described in relation to persevering through difficult training and also in relation to feeling more able to defend themselves physically.

Kate discussed bringing her cousin to PunchNProgress, who had recently recovered from surgery. She explained that she thought it would be a good idea, because she had personally experienced feeling more confident after persevering through a

difficult session:

> *"I was like yeah. I couldn't breathe but I am still here so, trust me, this little bit of exercise is not going to kill you. So, after he felt invincible and that when he told me that I was very happy. That if I can do this I can do everything now". (Kate)*

Completing a difficult training session provided Kate's cousin with the sense that his perseverance demonstrated a broader self efficacy, which he could now apply to other activities. Jawden explained this phenomenon from a longer term perspective. For him, through training 6 days per week, he has learnt that he can sustain exercising at such a high volume. This means that, despite waking up sore, he has confidence in his ability to complete the training sessions

> *"Like for me to wake up every morning and my body's sore, literally every morning, Monday to, Monday to Saturday, wake up and come and train, there has to be something in my head that I'm thinking yeah, I can do, I can do this today" (Jawden)*

Jawden also reported how this confidence spread to other areas of his life:

> *"...when it comes to talking to people now, like, I'm able to always get my point across, I'm able to walk around with such, with such like confidence that I'm assured..." (Jawden)*

It was interesting to note Jawden describe his increased confidence in talking to people. Which, in comparison to his belief that he can persevere through a week of training seemed like a new development, due to BAAI.

Participants also described how boxing increased their confidence because they felt more able to physically protect themselves.

> *"…the skills that you learn here can even take that to...your general life and just kind of be physically, um, more empowered in yourself, having more assurance within yourself...just being, being more physically assertive, having more confidence" (Andy)*

This physical confidence was explained to help reduce the likelihood of physical confrontation:

> *"Yeah, erm, boxing is a very good sport because it gives you a lot of confidence. So for example, and also self-defence, so for example if like someone had said to me 'do you wanna fight', I'd probably like slowly back down" (Shahid)*

Shahid illustrated an important benefit of BAAI, which was that CYP may feel more able to avoid violent confrontations because of being more physically competent. In that, they do not feel they have to prove themselves because of dedicating time to developing boxing skills.

5.5.3 Can Rely On Self

Participants explained that boxing training provided a process through which they could learn about themselves and discover that they could rely on themselves:

> *So once you just kind of like defeat that, that, I don't know, that voice in your head or maybe like that kind of voice of doubt in your head or something, you kind of use that to your advantage, you realise that, that wow, like I'm a lot stronger than I thought I was. (Andy)*

For participants entering BAAI with a broad range of difficult life experiences and possible mental health needs, the ability to challenge negative thought cycles could be very useful. Jawden, reported that, the more he trained, the more he learnt about himself:

> *"...you have to find something deep down, and the only person that's going to find deep down is yourself, and the further you go into yourself the more, the more you begin to learn and, it sounds weird, like how can you learn something about yourself, but you do. (Jawden)*

Coach Kirsten talked about the psychological demands of sparring in front of others:

> *"that you can deal with something as difficult as getting into a ring with somebody else with a lot of people watching, like that is an unbelievable*

amount of mental strength and resilience, and keeping calm in that situation, like that is the next level" (Coach Kirsten)

This related to the attributes coaches would be looking to see a CYP develop before allowing them to spar in front of a crowd. But, also the skills an individual would see evidence for, after having completed a sparring session with people watching. This highlighted one of the processes provided by boxing training which might be contributing to CYP learning that they could rely on themselves.

Az explained that he learnt boxing and life were similar because in both he was not allowed to give up:

> *"Like, when you box and you are up to that thing where you can't breathe and you feel like you can't do no more, when you push past that point, which I am still trying to do, I mean then you can be more disciplined and dedication and motivation and put it into life as well. 'Coz in boxing you can't give up and in life you can't give up, you know what I mean?"* (Az)

This seemed to relate to the high expectations that coaches expressed at PunchNProgress. It also showed how Az learnt that he could rely on himself to not give up at activities, through pushing through physical fatigue in BAAI.

Overall, participants reported that boxing provided them with a process which increased their self efficacy. They described this in three main ways: feeling empowered through choosing to experience difficulty, feeling improved confidence and learning that they can rely on themselves to overcome adversity.

5.6   Chapter Summary

Chapter Five presented data which described CYP's descriptions of the processes which contributed to them experiencing benefits through BAAI. The processes involved psychological, physical and environmental elements and illustrated the breadth and depth of the experiences CYP received at PunchNProgress. The perceived benefits reported by participants included: respite from difficulties, releasing negative emotions, increased perception of control and improved self efficacy. These themes, along with those from Chapter Four will be discussed below.

6 Discussion

6.1 Chapter Overview

This research explored the use of BAAI at PunchNProgress with CYP. Interview data was collected from CYP and coaches to explore the experience of CYP taking part in BAAI. The findings described the process of engaging and coaching CYP through a developmental journey, and also the factors which contributed to benefits being experienced by attendees at PunchNProgress.

This discussion will examine the areas outlined in Chapter Four and Five in relation to how they fit with the research base. This research used a novel ecological model which described a social, process based understanding of resilience (see 2.7). This model was used in the discussion to contextualize the CYP's experience of boxing training, where sub themes were presented in relation to ecological systems. To my knowledge this is the first time that BAAI has been analysed in terms of a CYP's ecosystem. I hoped that this perspective would be useful for researchers and applied psychologists alike.

Through researching the experiences of CYP, I wanted to create a useful starting point for other researchers to further explore boxing training in relation to its application and impact. Accordingly, the strengths and weaknesses of this research are discussed and some future research directions are described. This section concludes with some suggestions for local authority and EP practice.

For this study, the research question was:

What is the experience of children and young people taking part in BAAI?

6.2 Coaching a Developmental Journey

During the literature review, there did not seem to be an understanding of how BAAI might engage or coach CYP. This section discusses the 4 step process which participants described.

6.2.1 Capture Interest

The first stage in the process of coaching a CYP's developmental journey was capturing their interest. This appeared to be achieved in two ways: participants described boxing as appealing (e.g. exciting, good exercise, weight loss) but also explained that the coaches were part of the draw.

Previous research outlined how sport might be attractive for engaging CYP, referring to it as a "hook" (Green, 2008; Laureus, 2011, Chamberlain, 2013). However, it did not identify coaches as part of this "hook". However, this research found that the life experiences, athletic prowess and boxing success of coaches were part of the attraction of the intervention.

The argument that CYP will engage with IE depending on their history and predispositions is also made by previous research (Harrop & Turpin, 2013; Bornstein, 2012). This understanding was framed in the theoretical framework, by the inclusion of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, where development in a context will be influenced by a CYP's chronosystem. This could help expand the understanding of what comprises a "hook" for CYP in relation to sporting intervention. Where, coaches will also be attractive to CYP if they demonstrate appropriate shared history and can offer the potential of future possibilities.

6.2.2 Open Atmosphere

The second stage in developmental journey was facilitating an open atmosphere. This was achieved by coaches operating without judging new arrivals and allowing CYP to integrate at their own pace.

Research outlined that IE may benefit from a lack of formal structure because the CYP they will be working with may have had a negative experience of formal education, which is exemplified by structure (Coalter, 2005; Harrop & Turpin, 2013). A key facilitator of CYP feeling able to integrate into PunchNProgress was coaches not seeming to judge them upon arrival. This could contribute a new perspective on the merits of the structure at an IE intervention: it may not be a lack of structure which facilitates CYP interacting with IE, it could be the ability to engage on their own terms. In support of this argument, the development of social bonds at PunchNProgress did seem to be catalysed by CYP receiving signs that they could trust the context (e.g. unforced integration and non judgement). The development of

these social bonds then appeared to positively correlate with desire to spend time and effort participating in BAAI (Anderson, Feldman, and Minstrell, 2014; Hart & Meuller, 2013; Hirschi, 1969).

6.2.3 Build Deeper Trust

The third stage in the coaching of the developmental process was building a deeper level of trust with CYP. This was described by participants as occurring in relation to combination of PunchNProgress' family feel, the rigidity in training routines and high expectations.

Previous research was split on the merits of rigidity and discipline as aspects of sports interventions. Goodnow (2010) argued that formal structures might prevent engagement and The Walker Research Group (2016) highlighted rigid discipline as an important aspect of using boxing with vulnerable children. This research contributes to this debate by providing insight into a cyclical process described by participants.

Participants were motivated to meet high expectations due to interpreting rigidity and high expectations as being applied equally and fairly. This positive interpretation was interpreted to occur due to the preexisting experience of the open atmosphere and family feeling at the intervention. Coaches emphasised the rigidity of routine and high expectations after they judge a CYP to have developed bonds with other participants and to have built relational trust with staff members (Anderson et al, 2014; Hart & Meuller, 2013).

The process at PunchNProgress contrasts with formal education, which may not have the time or capacity to develop a feeling of trust or safety in CYP, before expecting them to conform to structures and routines. In taking time to develop these protective factors like secondary attachments, BAAI may be providing similar benefits to those attributed to gang involvement (Barbieri et al, 2016; Fraley & Waller, 1998). In addition, Brown et al, (2017) argued that environments which were perceived as caring could develop intrinsic motivation to participate more effectively. This research elaborated on this viewpoint by providing examples of actions which were experienced as building trust between CYP and staff. During BAAI, coaches have more power than CYP due to being older, having boxing experience and being responsible for teaching boxing sessions (Kvale,2007). However, they seemed to

offset this by providing CYP with gestures of personal regard, respect and integrity which cumulatively started to develop relational trust (Anderson et al, 2014).

This research identified that CYP integrated and participated better in BAAI if they had a trusting foundation. Other IE interventions may be able to test this idea in their own context by ensuring that the development journey includes a phase which involves the exchange of power and building or relational trust before the introduction of rigidity and high expectations.

6.2.4   Long Term Vision

The fourth stage in the developmental journey is coaches expressing a long term vision for the CYP they worked with. This related to school, career success, boxing titles or morality and coaches used boxing as an analogy to help guide CYP towards these outcomes.

These findings supported research which described that coaches are able to influence pro-social behaviours beyond the sporting context (Parrott & Duggan, 2009). Coaches at PunchNProgress used rhetoric around "developing champions for life" in the descriptions of aspirations for CYP which supports Naylor & Yeager's (2013) assertion that moving past "what we do" towards "who we are" is an effective technique for IE contexts aiming to develop CYP. It is interesting to note that this idea of creating preferred narratives or alternative stories is also seen in the therapeutic practice of applied psychologists and it may be useful to explore this cross over further (Carr, 1998, p486).

Coalter (2010) described sporting interventions as falling into two categories: Sport Plus and Plus Sport. However, PunchNProgress did not seem to fall into either of these categories where participants did not draw a distinction between improvement in boxing technique and improvement in life outcomes. And, as is shown through coaches using boxing as an analogy, they were viewed as interlinked. In relation to developing the research around BAAI coaching, it could be useful to use Coalter's terminology to design future interview schedules to clarify whether boxing technique and life outcomes interlinked, or if one can predict the other?

One criticism of IE and sport interventions, is that it is not clear how applicable impact or learning may be to other contexts (e.g. outside of the gym). Coaches at

PunchNProgress used boxing as an analogy as a way to facilitate CYP taking lessons outside of the boxing gym, to other areas of their lives. Which was an interesting example of using boxing personal development.

Figure 6.1 Phases in Coaching the Developmental Journey

Capture Interest
Attracting CYP with boxing and coaches

Open Atmosphere
Retention of CYP at PunchNProgress through non judgement and openness

Build Deeper Trust
Creating a trusting foundation and leveraging this to push CYP hard to progress

Long Term Vision
Articulating aspirations for long term success and using boxing as an analogy to teach more than technique
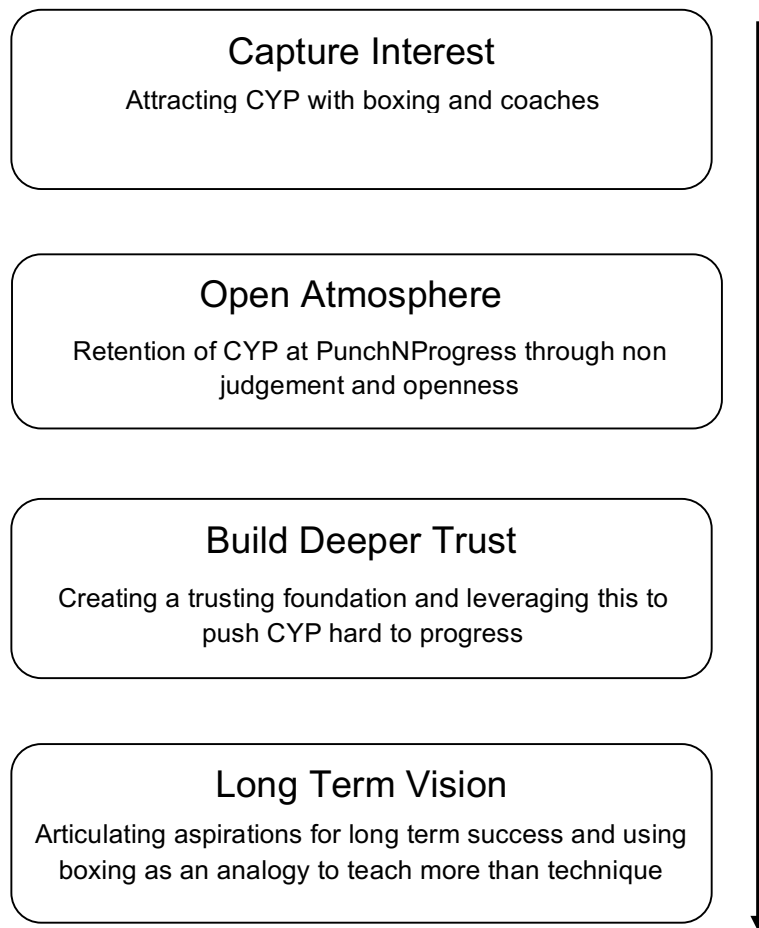
Overall, participants described four phases to the coaching of a CYP's developmental journey: CYP's interest was captured, attunement was developed through a non judgemental atmosphere, then trust and attachments were developed and this was used by coaches to articulate aspirations for the CYP and to use boxing as an analogy to relate training to their lives (see Figure 6.1). This process provided the opportunity for the development of protective factors at different levels around the CYP. It also provided a graduated approach for preparing CYP for adulthood by ensuring the participants were ready to learn skills and develop mindset changes (CoP, 2015).

6.3   Factors Contributing to Benefits

6.3.1   Oasis of Respite

Participants described that CYP at PunchNProgress had a range of difficulties in their lives and that boxing training allowed them an escape and also provided them with positive moments. The experience of BAAI providing respite contrasted with popular descriptions of boxing, which detail a narrative of preventing children 'hanging around on the streets and getting in to trouble' (TAPPGB, 2015); and research into sport which argues that a main benefit is providing a 'diversionary activities' to reduce anti social behaviour (Coalter, 2005; Chamberlain, 2013).

The experience of PunchNProgress providing respite and positive moments for CYP can be understood through the language of risk factors and protective factors. For the CYP at PunchNProgress who were experiencing difficult life circumstances they could be seen to possess risk factors for negative life outcomes (Barbieri et al, 2016; Gill et al, 2017; DfE, 2016). In order to attempt to mitigate the effect of these potential risk factors, applied psychologists would argue that it is important to develop protective factors to "tilt the balance" towards positive life outcomes (Gilligan, 2009, p9). I interpreted the processes that CYP identified above as emotional regulation strategies. Where, choosing to take time out from difficult life situations provided space to self soothe by 'focussing on something else' (see 5.2.2). This research provides an addition to the research base, by arguing that participants experienced social, psychological and physical respite through BAAI and were not just partaking in a diversionary activity.

PunchNProgress was also experienced to provide positive moments, which I linked to the concept of 'ordinary magic', where small positive experiences can accumulate to provide large positive benefits (Masten, 2015). Applied psychologists could view these positive moments as relating to processes recommended on the Resilience Framework, like 'having a laugh', 'remembering that tomorrow is another day' and providing opportunities for 'play and leisure' (Hart & Blincow, 2012). As such, BAAI did not just seem to offer an escape from negativity, it also provided CYP with positive experiences.

6.3.2 Catharsis

As well as providing an oasis from problems, participants reported that boxing training at PunchNProgress provided them with an opportunity to release negative emotions and that they often felt better after training. These findings contradict arguments that boxing can lead to an increase in anger and aggressive behaviour (Binder, 2007). This difference may be due to operationalization of boxing. Where, Endreson & Olweus (2005) did not control the type of boxing training across participants and Bushman (2002) operationalized aggressive sport by having participants hit a punch bag, which contrasts with the coach delivered sessions and social elements provided by PunchNProgress.

The lack of consensus in research around the merits/demerits of using 'aggressive' sports to reduce negative emotions may also be due to the cultural relativity of coping strategies (Ungar, 2008). In this research, CYP were able to explain their experiences of BAAI and this helped develop an understanding of how certain activities were considered useful by participants. It is possible that previous research into boxing may have considered activities maladaptive without exploring their place in the lives of participants. It was interesting to note that Walker Research Group (2016) also described that boxing could help release negative emotions through interviewing CYP. I interpreted these elements as supporting the choice to collect data using interviews.

It seemed that BAAI facilitated CYP to emotionally regulate through releasing negative emotions and leading to an improvement in affect after training. It would be useful for future research to clarify the ability of boxing training to support emotional regulation by adopting an ecological model of resilience and exploring CYP's experiences of boxing training in other settings.

6.3.3 Increased Perception of Control

Participants described how they saw athletic improvement with effort and technical improvement over time, in relation to their boxing training. This experience appeared to create a virtuous cycle which provided evidence of participants' ability to control aspects of their lives. This started out as a change in perceived control around boxing training, but was generalised by participants to other areas of their lives (e.g. school, college, work). This supports research which described sport as a way to teach skills and a mechanism for personal development (Amour & Sandford, 2013).

It also provided an example of how perceived benefits developed through IE can be applied to other contexts (Hein et al, 2015)

I interpreted the CYP's description around perception of control as relating to the research base for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). The process of CYP's passing through a virtuous cycle based on using evidence to increase their internal locus of control is comparable to the way behaviour experiments and evidence are used by psychologists to reshape cognitions in an individual (Beck, 2011; Stallard, 2008). Participants described BAAI as using behaviour (boxing training) to change thoughts (perceived locus of control in boxing training) and change feelings/emotions (enjoyment of training) which then lead to an increased desire to train, restarting the virtuous cycle. This interpretation may be of use to educational psychologists who are looking for creative ways to apply CBT principles with CYP. Where, the use of BAAI or sport could provide a novel vehicle for psycho education, through the analysis evidence for cognitions via technical / physical changes in relation to effort (Briers, 2009; Squires, 2010).

6.3.4   Improved Self Efficacy

Participants reported improved self efficacy through boxing training at PunchNProgress. This was described in relation to: feeling empowered due to choosing to engage in difficult training, feeling improved levels of confidence and feeling that they could rely on themselves. This seemed to support Bandura's (2010) application of personal self efficacy to an education context, which described how self-directed mastery activities can strengthen and generalise personal efficacy. The experience of CYP, where the choice to participate in difficult activities contributed to feeling empowered.

One major criticism of IE and the idea of developing skills through sports is the lack of clarity around the ability to transfer benefits out of context (Amour & Sandford, 2013, Naylor & Yeager, 2013). However, this research highlighted the transferability of participant's increased self efficacy through their descriptions of bring able to "rely on themselves". This suggests that BAAI may be able to facilitate CYP to become more self sufficient, across their ecosystem.

Upon reflection, this finding may have been uncovered due to the use of a social understanding of resilience (Ungar, 2008). For example, choosing to train boxing

because it is hard may seem strange to someone from a more privileged background, lacking context. However, in this exploratory research, participants' experiences were explored, as well as their behaviour. And, this provided useful insight into the choice to participate in difficult boxing training actually being a coping strategy for making other difficulties in their life appear more manageable.

Overall, this section aimed to provide an overview of some of the factors which were reported to contribute to the benefits CYP experienced. This section discussed the ability of BAAI to provide an oasis from everyday difficulties, to provide an emotional regulatory function, to facilitate increased perception of controllability and self efficacy. In relation to these areas, there appeared to be some useful contributions to the research base and also some useful insights for applied psychologists and educational professionals.

6.4   The Ecology of Participants' Experiences at PunchNProgress

After analysing the participant data, I decided it would be useful to use an ecological model of resilience to conceptualise participant's experiences. As such, the literature review presented a theoretical framework which synthesised Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) Bioecological Model with a social, process based understanding of resilience as described by Ungar (2008). Chapters Four and Five presented findings in relation to participant's experience of taking part in BAAI, the process for engaging and coaching a developmental journey and the factors which contributed to benefits. Participants described processes which fitted into their ecosystem in different ways, where different aspects of BAAI involved different individual, social, attitudinal or historical components. To represent this breadth, sub themes are arrayed in Figure 6.2 to visualize how they related to a CYP's ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). I found it interesting to note that an intervention which seemed simple in its application (a room, some boxing bags and a coach) was described to fit into a CYP's ecosystem in so many ways. During the construction of the table, I observed that themes crossed multiple ecological systems. So, in order to avoid losing the detail around the breadth of the intervention, sub themes were ordered in Figure 6.2.

In order to illustrate how Figure 6.2 was constructed, three examples of themes being broken down into sub themes and matched to an ecological system are included. Sub themes *Boxing Is Appealing* and *Gain Initial Respect* comprise the *Capture Interest* theme. *Boxing Is Appealing* was identified to fit in the Chronosystem

because a CYP would involve past experience to make that decision. For example, Ibz described how watching boxing videos in the past lead to him finding PunchNProgress interesting. *Gain Initial Respect* was placed at the Individual level because it occurred at the level of the CYP. This was interpreted in contrast to the subtheme *Family Feel*, which formed part of the *Build Deeper Trust* theme, and was interpreted to fit into the microsystem, because of the greater involvement of friends and coaches.

Figure 6.2 Sub themes presented in relation to a CYP's ecosystem

Individual Level	Microsystem	Macrosystem	Chronosystem
Gain Initial Respect	Integration Period	Aspirations	Boxing is Appealing
Experience Difficulty	Family Feel	Non Judgemental	Technical Improvement Over Time
Provides Positive-Moments	Rigidity	Demonstrate High Expectations	
Release Negative Emotions	Boxing as an Analogy		
Better For Training	Provides An Escape		
Athletic Improvement With Effort			
Choosing Difficulty Empowers			
Improved Confidence			
Can Rely On Self			

Sub themes *Non-judgemental* and *Integration Period* comprise the *Open Atmosphere* theme. Non-judgemental was identified to fit in the Macrosystem due to it relating to cultural attitudes at PunchNProgress. Integration-period was placed in the Microsystem because of the interaction with training partners. Sub themes *Family Feel*, *Rigidity* and *High Expectations* comprise the *Build Deeper Trust* theme. *Family Feel* was placed in the Microsytem because of the involvement of training partners and coaches. *Rigidity* was linked to the Microsystem due to relating to training routines at PunchNProgress. *High Expectations* was related to the Macrosystem because of embodying a cultural attitude.

Considering how best to understand the resources which BAAI may have given CYP required a way to conceptualise psychological, physical, social, attitudinal and chronological changes in one place. In order to discuss these findings in relation to

the theoretical framework, I returned to the adapted table from section 2.7. This table presented the processes suggested by The Resilience Framework, ordered according to the systems of the Bioecological Model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Hart & Blincow, 2012). As a tool used by applied psychologists, I adapted it initially in an attempt to show how resilience might be conceptualised in an ecological model. Here, it will be used in relation to the participant data to illustrate the breadth of support BAAI provided to CYP's resilience at PunchNProgress, where shaded cells in Figure 6.3 represented processes described by subthemes in this research. As part of this process, sub themes were matched with the Resilience Framework recommendations that they satisfied. The Resilience Framework is used by psychologists to generate options for developing protective factors around a child, I hoped that by cross referencing these recommendations with the sub themes they corresponded to, it would clearly show the breadth of positive experiences of participants, in relation to BAAI.

Vignette: understanding the range and relevance of processes in Jawden's ecosystem

Jawden reported how boxing training provided him with a broad range of protective processes across his ecosystem. He explained his increased fitness, boxing technique and an altered narrative about his life being focussed on growth and not disadvantage (individual level). He described how he had developed close relationships with coaches and peers (microsystem) and had become part of a culture which developed 'champions for life' and also wanted to be part of a 'ripple effect' where he could demonstrate values to his friends outside of PunchNProgress (macrosystem). When Jawden described his experiences of gang involvement and losing friends to murder, the ecological model allowed us to understand the protective processes in his life alongside the risk factors presented by his history and context.

It also provided us with the granularity to understand the individual nature of Jawden's experience of BAAI and how this might differ from the adults and professionals in his life. For example, when he reported that he "wants to be a world champion" and "doesn't care about material possessions like his friends" we could use this to inform our understanding of what adaptive processes and wellbeing mean to him.

Overall, the ecological model of resilience facilitated the conceptualisation of the range and relevance of the different proximal processes experienced by Jawden at PunchNProgress.

Overall, I believe that the ecological lens allowed for a useful understanding of participants' experiences of BAAI in relation to how processes fitted into their ecosystems. As a piece of exploratory research, I hoped that this discussion would provide some stimulation for the research area and the beginnings of an understanding of the process of engaging and working with CYP using boxing training. It is also possible that the use of ecological models may be useful for other research into BAAI and IE more broadly.

Figure 6.3 Protective processes from the Resilience Framework achieved through BAAI

Individual Level	Microsystem	Macrosystem	Chronosystem
Help CYP to know themself	Somewhere for the CYP to belong	Understand boundaries and keeping within them	Predict a good experience of something / someone new
	Have a laugh		
Being brave	Fostering interests		
Being safe	Tap into good influences	Helping CYP to understand their responsibilities and obligations	
Putting on rose tinted glasses	Keep relationships going		
Calming down and self soothing	The more healthy relationships the better		Focus on good times/places
Exercise and fresh air	Make friends and mix with other CYP	Being free from prejudice and discrimination	
Highlight achievements	Get together people the CYP can rely on		
Develop life skills	Responsibilities/ obligations		
Help the CYP to take responsibility for themself	Solving problems		
	Helping CYP understand other peoples' feelings		
Foster their talents	Make school / college life work as well as possible	Help CYP understand their place in the world	Remember tomorrow is another day
Play and leisure	Engage mentors for CYP		
Instil a sense of hope	Lean on others when necessary	Help CYP used tried and tested solutions to problems	
Enough money to live	Access to transport		Help CYP make sense of where they are from

6.5 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

There is some debate about how best to judge qualitative research. For example, it is not clear whether concepts like reliability and validity should be applied (Cresswell, 2012). Qualitative research is more flexible than quantitative research and so should be assessed for quality and worth using a different process (Yardley 2000). Couglan et al (2007) outline the most common criteria for assessing qualitative research as:

credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (p743).

The reported experience of BAAI at PunchNProgress was likely influenced by a number of contextual factors, such as: the skills of the interviewer, the people present at PunchNProgress, the receptiveness and the contribution of the participants etc. This corresponds with a constructionist perspective which acknowledged the ideas that individuals create meaning between themselves (Burr, 2015). As such, the data collected may have differed if completed on different days, with different participants.

6.5.1   Credibility

In this research credibility is contributed to by: prolonged engagement, a clear audit trail (research diary, sample transcript, code tables) and some triangulation of data sources (Ryan, Coughlan & Cronin, 2007).

6.5.2   Dependability

This involves giving readers enough information to determine how dependable the research and researcher are. This can be seen through demonstrating commitment and rigour and reflecting on reactivity.

Commitment and Rigour

In terms of commitment, this was shown through the researcher role undertaken across 18 months. As part of this process I spent six months at PunchNProgress before collecting data, getting to know the systems, staff and CYP. This allowed me to understand the fluidity of the setting and to use the existing informal systems to recruit participants and schedule interviews. It also influenced the data which was collected and will be discussed in relation to reactivity, respondent bias and confirmability.

Rigour refers to the completeness of the data collection and analysis. There seem to be a variety of frameworks for deciding on sample size. In terms of this research, the sample size was considered adequate according to Guest, Bunce & Johnson's (2006) findings on data saturation and code definitions after 12 interviews (p74). Data collection involved some triangulation in order to gain different perspectives on the experience of CYP at PunchNProgress.

The data was analysed using thematic analysis, which is considered a solid qualitative method as long as certain criteria are met (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I provided a detailed account of my analysis process, in order to clearly demarcate the scope and allow readers to understand how themes were created. As mentioned above, I accept that it would be possible to collect different data from PunchNProgress. It is also possible that another psychologist would be able to create different themes using the same data. However, I believe that this is part of the qualitative analysis process and themes were checked through reflection, presentations and supervision

Reactivity

Reactivity refers to the way in which a researcher might affect participants and their behaviour. On one of the initial visits to the setting a YP asked me if I was worked for a funding organisation and described how funders often sent staff in for a day to take photos and collect quotes. I interpreted this statement as describing an unequal power dynamic which might mean that CYP were less likely to trust me. Accordingly, I decided it would be important to have a period of time before data collection to build rapport and trust. This time seemed to have the desired impact, with participants reflecting after interviews that they felt comfortable providing intimate information about their lives. For example, both Andy and Peter remarked that they did not normally detail personal details about their lives in interviews, but that they felt able to, due to having seen me visit multiple times. Equally, Jawden explained that the CYP had "noticed me around" and that this had contributed to his decision to take part in the research. In this research, I have related to the issue of reactivity in two main ways. I have tried to be transparent about the procedure, so readers can decide on the degree to which I may have impacted PunchNProgress or the participants. I also adapted the data collection process to include interviews with coaches and consider that this triangulation allowed me to reflect on whether either group was being influenced by me.

Respondent bias

Respondent bias was considered in relation to power dynamics in the interview (Kvale, 2007). Initially I was concerned that participants may be unwilling to provide accurate data due to a lack of trust; participants may have considered themselves a different socio-economic status to me, or less formally educated, and this may have created a power imbalance. It is also possible that the CYP would have considered

me an authority figure due to the age difference and my title of 'psychologist'. Both of these factors may have lead to participants feeling less able to be open and honest during the interview (BPS, 2014). Upon reflection, participants did openly share aspects of their lives which were not positive (e.g using drugs, getting arrested etc). This made me feel reassured that there was an honest balance in their answers. Considering what may have facilitated this openness, the multi step recruitment process may have reduced the impact of power dynamics relating to recruitment by allowing participants multiple points to opt out. I also reassured participants of their anonymity and the anonymity of their data throughout the process, and this could have also reduced the impact of power on their responses.

6.5.3   Confirmability

Confirmability relates to demonstrating the link between findings and data. This is partially linked to commitment and rigour. It also relates to researcher bias, which is the prior knowledge and preconceptions that I may have brought to the research process, which may have influenced my work, or relation to the participants. As a researcher who has experience in boxing it is possible that I had preconceptions about BAAI. Reflecting on my personal rationale for this research, it was clear that I had some concerns about the merits of BAAI in relation to the demands of training that may lead to physical harm of CYP. As a result, it was important for me to ensure that I used processes to facilitate reflexivity in this area. For example, discussing my previous experience of boxing, reflecting on my previous work with children who have been excluded and discussing the ethos of PunchNProgress with psychologist colleagues. In addition, during the interview process, I tried to remain aware of areas which might trigger some bias in me, so that I avoided leading questions, responses or cues.

At the time of writing I had facilitated two member checking sessions. While this process was still ongoing it did provide an initial check for researcher bias. During these sessions themes were printed onto A3 paper and participants' thoughts were written onto post-it notes. A common point of interest was the theme Build Deeper Trust, where the links the data identified between rigidity, meeting high expectations and building trust was identified to be particularly useful. In these sessions there did not seem to be any discrepancies between the themes which I had arranged from the data and the experience of individuals at PunchNProgress, which provided me with some assurances around the level of confirmability.

6.5.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to whether findings can be applied outside of the context of the study situation. The transferability is limited by the sample size and representativeness. While an adequate number of interviews were completed, they were all collected from a single organisation. It has to be acknowledged that BAAI will vary across settings.

The sample did not include an equal number of coaches and CYP. This was intentional, to keep the focus on the experience on CYP. However, it is possible that alternative codes may have been identified if the proportion of coaches was higher.

The sample included 3 women which meant that their views were underrepresented in the data. While this highlights a potential direction for future research, it also broadly matches the lack of female representation in school exclusion populations and alternative provisions, with IPPR placing the disparity at 3:1 (Gill et al, 2017). This may indicate that female views require some magnification in these areas, in order to influence interventions for exclusion and gang involvement. Based in a diverse, London borough, the population of PunchNProgress will not be representative of alternative provisions, PRUs or schools outside of London.

6.6 Recommendations

In order to highlight the utility of this thesis, recommendations inspired by the findings of this research are outlined below for EPs, the design of IE interventions and for practitioners working in an IE setting.

6.6.1 Recommendations for EPs

EPs may find themselves supporting CYP to transition between educational settings or interventions. Discussion in 6.2. suggested that it may be useful to facilitate the development of relational trust between CYP and staff in new settings by creating a non judgemental atmosphere. EPs could contribute to this transition by drawing upon the evidence base for transitional objects/space to help reduce anxiety upon arrival (Young, 1994); and attachment principles, to maximize the chances of CYP developing relationships with new staff (Fraley & Waller, 1998). This may improve the likelihood of a positive placement and reduce the anxiety experienced by CYP

during the process.

EPs can provide therapeutic services for Tier 2 mental health needs and support schools with their work at Tier 1 (DfH & DfE, 2017). Signposting CYP to take part in BAAI may provide an option for preventing mental health issues, by providing protective factors such as respite, emotional regulation and self efficacy. Boxing training may also provide a vehicle for the application of CBT principles when working with CYP. For example, using evidence and behaviour experiments to change thought patterns used by CYP (see 6.3.3). This could allow EPs to deliver CBT approaches using a physical process, with less reliance on a pen and paper format.

EPs could provide a traded offer to sports interventions in order to develop staff understanding of the psychological theories which underpin their work. This would mean that staff retain the knowledge to apply techniques appropriately but also retain the freedom to work with CYP intuitively, as and when needs arise.

In supporting CYP's transition to adulthood, EPs could use organisations providing IE to help develop skills outside of formal education and the workplace. When working with YP who are above the age of 18 it is possible that they will not be in training or employment and so IE could provide a forum for them to develop skills which are applicable to other areas of their lives. As such, EPs would benefit from increasing their knowledge of IE options in their LAs and also to develop their understanding of the processes underpinning IE. This would allow them to better signpost IE options for CYP and to monitor the development of protective factors, over time.

Table 6.1 Recommendations for EPs

Area of Focus	Recommendation from Findings	Outcome
Integration Supporting CYP to integrate into a new setting.	Facilitate a non-judgemental atmosphere in interventions. Support the successful integration of CYP to new settings by drawing on the evidence base for transitional objects/spaces and attachment principles.	Increase the likelihood of a positive placement for CYP. Reduce the anxiety experienced by CYP during transition.

Boxing as a therapeutic tool Students may benefit from using sport as a tool to achieve therapeutic benefits.	EPs could explore signposting CYP with Tier 1 mental health needs to interventions which provide boxing training. EPs could also consider using sports as a framework for achieving therapeutic benefits with CBT or narrative therapy.	Reduction of Tier 1 mental health needs for CYP. Increased options for the use of CBT and narrative techniques with CYP who have Tier 2 mental health needs.
Using Sport as an Analogy Supporting interventions to use sport as a vehicle for teaching skills.	EPs could provide a traded offer to develop staff understanding of psychological theories.	Coaches are able to flexibly apply psychological techniques with CYP.
Using Informal Education as a resource Supporting CYP by facilitating their use of organisations providing IE.	EPs to build their knowledge of the 'local offer' of IE organisations. Signpost informal education options for CYP who may experiencing a high level of risk factors.	EPs have a better understanding of IE options for CYP in their community. Increased development of protective factors around the CYP.

6.6.2   Recommendations for Informal Education Interventions

When designing an IE intervention, it could be useful to develop a framework for understanding the entrance and exit criteria. Coaches had an understanding of when a CYP might be ready to be worked with in relation to a long term vision. However, it was not clear how a coach might prioritise their focus on a particular CYP or how coaches decided when an individual might have benefited for a shift in focus.

Carers may benefit from the ability of sport as a form of IE to provide respite. Organisations providing sport as a form of IE could consider applying to be added to the 'local offer' of LAs, as an option for carers and young carers. This could facilitate this group exploring the possibility of benefitting from the social, physical and psychological aspects of respite.

Table 6.2 Recommendations for Interventions

Area of Focus	Recommendation from Findings	Outcome
Exit Criteria A clear definition for when a child should be included in BAAI and prioritised within it.	To ensure that LAs have an understanding of when a child might benefit from being included in BAAI. And, also when a CYP may have developed enough benefits to no longer be a priority within the intervention, or be eligible for inclusion in another intervention (e.g. training coaches).	A clearer understanding of which CYP are priorities within a cohort of IE attendees.
Offering Respite Sports interventions could provide carers and young carers with a respite opportunity.	IE interventions could consider extending their service to individuals who are carers.	Carers may experience the benefit of social, physical and psychological respite.

6.6.3 Recommendations for Practitioners

For practitioners working at an IE intervention the development of trust was a key aspect of being able to work with CYP on a deeper level. Participants experienced the ability to integrate on their own terms as a token of trust from staff, which encouraged them to start to trust coaches back. The replication of this practice may support the development of attunement and trust for CYP at other IE interventions.

At PunchNProgress the demographic was majority male which could be seen in the sample for this study. Gill et al (2017) highlights that females are generally underrepresented in alternative provision populations. Accordingly, it may be useful for practitioners to reflect on whether their provision is meeting the needs of female participants.

Table 6.3 Recommendations for Practitioners

Area of Focus	Recommendation from Findings	Outcome
Building Trust CYP experienced meaningful relationships with coaches due to high levels of trust.	Facilitate a non-judgmental atmosphere. Allow CYP to integrate at their own speed.	An increased state of attunement and experience of trust for CYP attending IE interventions.

Females outside of formal education Female CYP are underrepresented in alternative provision populations.	To explore a child centred process for gathering the views of females who attend informal education settings. With the aim of advocating for how systems could be adapted to best meet their needs,	Interventions which are more equitable in their provision.

6.7   Future Research Directions

There are many possible directions for research into BAAI and its implementation. Yardley (2000) outlines how qualitative research can benefit from a cumulative process, whereby different research questions and methodology manage to illuminate different aspects of phenomena. As such, it was useful to consider the directions future research could take.

There is very little psychological research into boxing or BAAI. This exploratory study discussed the coaching process at a single charity and described the factors which contributed to CYP experiencing benefits. It would be appropriate to explore how these findings change if participants were included from across the UK, attending different forms of BAAI.

This research highlighted the need for clarification about the interaction between boxing training and life outcomes. Where, Coalter (2005) describes sport based interventions as falling into Sport Plus or Plus Sport categories where interventions either prioritise sporting or personal development. This contrasted with the process identified at PunchNProgress and it could be useful to explore this using case studies, to better understand if there is a direction to the benefits gained (e.g. technical then personal) or if they are interlinked and can improve in parallel. This could then help interventions to design the optimal process for CYP to experience.

There is also some question around using boxing as catharsis. Research is mixed on the effect of using an "aggressive" sport to mediate anger and aggression. It would be useful to include measures of anger and aggression alongside reports from individuals around the CYP (e.g. family, friends, teachers). This would allow for insight into behaviour changes as well as perceived or reported levels of anger / aggression. It seems important to clarify how best to support CYP to safely express their emotions. It would also be useful for professionals to better understand the

potential benefits and drawbacks of BAAI, outside of popular narratives about 'channelling anger'. Future research into catharsis and boxing could develop understanding in this area through using interviews to explore CYPs' experiences of releasing negative emotions through training. Harwood et al (2017) argued that more research was needed into the processes behind a potential reduction in aggressive externalization through martial arts. As such, it could also be useful to interview individuals around CYP to triangulate data on behaviour change as well as perceived behavioural and emotional change.

The CYP's experience of catharsis may mean that BAAI could have a therapeutic benefit - however it is not clear what process is occurring behind this description because the interview schedules did not include questions in this area. It could be productive to explore whether BAAI impacted CYP through their awareness or understanding of their emotions, or by changing their emotional state (Nelis, Quoidbach, Mikolajczak & Hansenne, 2009). There are also questions around whether reported improvements in affect and mental health were due to changing physiological feelings through exercise, or whether BAAI provided a forum to experiment with alternative emotional regulation strategies (Laborde, et al, 2016). This would help clarify whether boxing training could be useful to applied psychologists as a form of psycho education or as a therapeutic tool.

This research discussed controllability and efficacy separately. However, it is possible that what participants described as 'improved confidence' could have been put in terms of improved perceived controllability and perceived self efficacy: where participants felt able to control more aspects of their lives and also felt better able to achieve things (Ajzen, 2002; Bandura, 2010). It could be useful for future research to clarify the link between controllability, self efficacy and confidence in relation to boxing training. The participants seemed clear that they developed these protective factors through boxing training. However, it is not clear if there is a relationship between these factors, if their development is sequential or complementary or if certain activities are more likely to facilitate a specific protective factor.

This study did not explore the female experience of BAAI. Coach Kirsten described how she believed that the intervention was experienced as alienating by some of the female CYP's. There did not appear to be any differences between the data from male and female participants in this study. However, the interview schedule was not explicitly designed to explore the differences in experience between across

demographic groups. Due to the majority of populations in alternative provision being comprised of males, it is possible that female perspectives are neglected. It would be useful for EPs and practitioners to better understand the female experience of BAAI. It may be that female participants might benefit from an alternative coaching process. Or, that coaches already adapt their approach to facilitate an alternative developmental journey for female CYP.

6.8 Summary of Findings

Participants described the engagement and coaching process which took place at PunchNProgress. Initially, CYP had their interest piqued by boxing as a sport and the life experience of the coaches. The coaches facilitated an open, non judgemental atmosphere which allowed CYP to feel able to stay at PunchNProgress. Over time, through a combination of rigid systems and a family feel, CYP integrated into PunchNProgress. Coaches then leveraged this secure foundation to push CYP to meet high expectations. Once this dynamic had been created, coaches described aspirations for CYPs' futures and used boxing as an analogy to deliver useful life lessons for outside of PunchNProgress.

Participants also detailed factors and processes through which they developed benefits at PunchNProgress. This involved experiencing a respite from difficult life experiences and - in some cases - receiving positive experiences as a counter balance. BAAI facilitated a cathartic release of negative emotions for CYP and an improvement of affect after training sessions. Boxing training also provided participants with an increased perception of control in their lives. This was developed through receiving evidence of how effort could result in athletic and technical improvements. Participants described how this process allowed them to feel more control in their lives outside of PunchNProgress.

Lastly, BAAI was perceived to improve CYP's self efficacy. This was achieved through participants choosing to take part in difficult boxing training as a contrast to their lives placing them in difficult situations. Boxing training also improved participant's confidence through requiring them to persevere through difficult training sessions and also providing them with skills which meant they were more able to defend themselves. Lastly, boxing training taught participants that they could rely on themselves to overcome adversity.

6.9   Conclusions

This research aimed to contribute to the field of Educational Psychology and the literature around using sports and boxing as an intervention. In conclusion, there were a number of elements which could be useful for researchers, psychologists and practitioners. The first was the use of an ecological model which incorporated risk and protective factors to conceptualise BAAI (see 2.7). This provided a tool which helped to describe the history and experiences a CYP brought to the intervention and also to understand how boxing training fitted into their life. This model could be useful for researchers focussing on other forms of IE

Also, in exploring the experience of CYP taking part in BAAI, this study was able to outline the process coaching a developmental journey at PunchNProgress, and described the factors which contributed to CYP receiving benefits from BAAI. This meant that this study was able to make recommendations which could help guide professional practice. This research was relevant to EP practice in terms of understanding how BAAI may benefit CYP. It also illuminated some of the ways boxing could be used therapeutically. The discussion provided useful insight into how EPs can help facilitate the integration of CYP into new settings and interventions. This research also complemented governmental guidelines around the need to support CYP with their mental health and the developing vision for preventative, early intervention mental health care (DfE, 2016; DfH & DfE, 2017).

In summary, this study was undertaken to contribute to the literature for using boxing as an intervention. In relation to the findings and discussion, it seemed that this study could also contribute to the research base for using boxing as a therapeutic tool, or generally using sports as an intervention. If LAs are looking for ways to support schools to engage in preventative mental health activities, then this research also provided an insight into the practicalities of using BAAI to facilitate protective factors in CYP.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Systematic Searches

Database	Keywords	Documents sourced	Exclusions/Refinements	Relevant Articles	Date
Web of Science	Boxing	1339	within Social Sciences	9	23/09/16
Web of Science	Boxing	471	2016> within Sport Science, Psychiatry, and Educational Research	0	12/04/18
Web of Science	Martial arts	79	>1975, within Social Sciences	2	11/01/17
Web of Science	Martial arts	71	>2017, within Social Sciences	0	12/04/18
ERIC	Boxing	77	N/A	4	13/01/17
ERIC	Boxing	5	>2017	0	12/04/18
ERIC	Martial arts	100	N/A	1	13/01/17
ERIC	Martial arts	5	>2017	2	12/04/18
APAPsychNET	Boxing	10	N/A	0	06/01/17

APAPsychNET	Martial Arts	8	N/A	1	06/01/17
Web of Science	Gang involvement	333	>1975	12	06/01/17
Web of Science	Gang involvement UK	4	>1975	2	06/01/17
Web of Science	Sport educational intervention	264	>1975	6	27/03/17
Web of Science	Sport educational intervention	101	> 2016	3	12/04/18
Web of Science	Sport emotional regulation	104	>1975	7	27/03/17
Web of Science	Sport emotional regulation	37	>2016	4	12/04/18
Web of Science	Informal Education	5706	N/A	N/A	04/04/17
Web of Science	Informal Education UK	155	N/A	6	04/04/17
Web of Science	Informal Education mental health	196	N/A	1	04/04/17
Web of Science	Informal Education School Exclusion	24	N/A	0	04/04/17
Web of Science	Informal Education Gang involvement	0	N/A	N/A	04/04/17
ERIC	Gang involvement	200	N/A	0	04/04/17

ERIC	Sport educational intervention	139	N/A	11	04/04/17
ERIC	Sport educational intervention	16	>2017	2	12/04/18
ERIC	Sport emotional regulation	9	N/A	2	04/04/17
ERIC	Sport emotional regulation	0	>2017	N/A	12/04/18
ERIC	Informal Education	12929	N/A	N/A	04/04/17
ERIC	Informal Education	599	>2017, UK	2	04/04/17
ERIC	"Informal education" uk	54	N/A	9	04/04/17
ERIC	Informal Education mental health	10493	N/A	N/A	04/04/17
ERIC	"Informal Education" mental health	6	N/A	0	04/04/17
ERIC	Informal Education mental health	343	>2016	0	04/04/17
ERIC	"Informal Education" School Exclusion	9	N/A	3	04/04/17
ERIC	Informal Education Gang involvement	0	N/A	N/A	04/04/17

ERIC	Informal Education Gang	8	N/A	0	04/04/17
APA PsychNET	Boxing	10	>2017	0	12/04/18
APA PsychNET	Martial Arts	10	>2017	0	12/04/18
APA PsychNET	Sport educational intervention	117	N/A	2	12/04/18
APA PsychNET	Sport Emotional Regulation	23	N/A	1	12/04/18
Web of Science	Resilience Education	736	>1998, within Educational Research and Psychology Research	18	13/04/18

8.2   Appendix 2: Pilot Focus Group Schedule

Provisional Schedule for Pilot Focus Groups

Introduction
- Who am I?
- What kinds of questions will be asked?
- Timings
- Right to withdraw

Logistics
- *How long have you been coming?*
- *How often do people come here?*
    - *Is there a big variation?*
- *What stuff do people do here?*
    - *Different elements. Break it down.*
    - *How common is this combination of activities?*

Why here?
- *Why did you first get involved here?*
- *What things which keep you coming back*
- *Which aspects of [Charity Name] do you like the most?*
- *Have you done anything similar to this before?*
    - *If so, what/when?*
    - *Can you compare them for me?*
- *What would it take to replicate [Charity Name] somewhere else?*
    - *Which bits are most important?*

What is the CYP perspective of the impact?
- *Tell me a bit about what you hope to get out of coming here?*
- *Tell me a bit about the impact you think this is having on you?*
- *Explain to me, do you notice any changes in the other young people around you?*
- *What would your friends say has been the biggest change in you since you've been coming?*
- *What changes might your friends have not noticed?*
- *What changes might your family have noticed?*
- *What bits of what you do here do you think are most impactful?*
    - *Well, what are the different parts to what you do here?*
        - *Of those parts, which do you think are most impactful?*

Questions around application to other areas
- *How helpful this is for your everyday life?*
- *Which areas in life do you think get impacted by [name]?*
    - *How do you know?*
- *Which bits of what you do at [Charity Name] are the easiest to apply in other areas of your life?*

- *Are there any parts of what you do at [Charity Name] which are hard to apply in other areas?*

Questions to support question development
- *If I was asking questions to find out about how this place has impacted someone, what should I ask?*
- *How might your friends describe what you do here?*
- *Are there any areas of [Charity Name]'s work you are curious to ask other people about?*
- *If you were doing this research what would you want to ask?*

Outro
- Debrief
- Right to withdraw data
- Any questions?
- Give UCL email address in case of further questions

8.3 Appendix 3: Pilot Interview Schedule

Provisional Schedule for Pilot Interviews

Introduction
- Who am I?
- What kinds of questions will be asked?
- Timings
- Right to withdraw

Logistics
- *How long have you been coming?*
- *How often do you come here?*
- *What do you do here?*
  - *Probe to establish the full range of activities.*
  - *How common is this combination of activities?*

Why here?
- *Why did you first get involved here?*
- *Describe to me the things which keep you coming back*
- *What aspects of [Charity Name] do you like the most?*
- *Have you done anything similar to this before?*
  - *If so, what/when?*
  - *Can you compare them for me?*
- *What it would take to replicate [Charity Name] somewhere else?*
  - *Which bits are most important?*

What is the CYP perspective of the impact?
- *Tell me a bit about what you hope to get out of coming here?*
- *Tell me a bit about the impact you think this is having on you?*
- *Explain to me, do you notice any changes in the other young people around you?*
- *What would your friends say has been the biggest change in you since you've been coming?*
- *What changes might your family have noticed?*
- *What bits of what you do here do you think are most impactful?*
  - *Well, what are the different parts to what you do here?*
    - *Of those parts, which do you think are most impactful?*

Questions around application to other areas
- *Explain how helpful this is for your everyday life?*
  - *Probe: Can you tell me a bit about the areas in your life which you think have been impacted by [Charity Name]?*
  - *When did you notice?*
  - *How did you notice?*
- *Which bits of what you do at [Charity Name] are the easiest to apply in other areas of your life?*

- *Are there any parts of what you do at [Charity Name] which are hard to apply in other areas?*

Questions to support question development
- *If I was asking questions to find out about how this place has impacted someone, what should I ask?*
- *How might your friends describe what you do here?*
- *Are there any areas of [Charity Name]'s work you are curious to ask other people about?*
- *If you were doing this research what would you want to ask?*

Outro
- Debrief
- Right to withdraw data
- Any questions?
- Give UCL email address in case of further questions

8.4   Appendix 4: Main Study Coach Interview Schedule

Main Research: Interview Schedule [coach]

Introduction
- Who am I?
- What kinds of questions will be asked?
- Timings
- Right to withdraw

Logistics
- *How long do most people come here?*
- *How often do most people come here?*
- *What do you do here?*
    - *Probe to establish the full range of activities.*
    - *How common is this combination of activities?*

Why here?
- *Why did you first get involved here?*
- *What aspects of [Charity Name] do you like the most?*
- *Have you done anything similar to this before?*
    - *If so, what/when?*
    - *Can you compare them for me?*
- *What it would take to replicate [Charity Name] somewhere else?*
    - *Which bits are most important?*

What is the CYP experience of boxing as an intervention?
- *Tell me a bit about the impact you think the boxing has on CYP?*
- *Of what you have done here, what seems most important?*
- *Explain to me, do you notice any changes in the young people around you?*
- *[If mention impact] What bits of what you do here do you think are most impactful?*
- *[If mention impact] How do you think changes are achieved?*

Boxing as a sport
- *Describe to me how boxing fits into what you do here?*
- *How do you think boxing compares to other sports?*
- *[If mentioned impact above] How much of the impact you have described could be achieved through other sports?*

Questions around application to other areas
- *Explain how helpful boxing is for CYP's everyday life?*
    - *Probe: Can you tell me a bit about the areas in their lives which you think have been impacted by [Charity Name]?*
        - *[Probe] So, there are different areas of your life, for example: family, friends, school, work> Do you think that what you do here has an affect on any of these areas, for the CYP?*
            - *[Probe] When did you notice?*
            - *[Probe] How did you notice?*

- *[If mentioned impact above] Of the benefits you have described, how do you see them applying to life?*
- *Are there any parts of what you do at [Charity Name] which you think CYP find it hard to apply in other areas?*

Coaches
- *Can you tell me a bit about your experience of working as one of the boxing coaches?*
  - *Could you talk about how the coaches fit into [Charity Name]?*
  - *Explain what CYP find most useful about what the coaches do at [Charity Name]*
  - *Is there anything you wish you could do more of?*

About you
- *Are you involved in any education, training or employment at the moment?*
  - *If so, could you break it all down for me?*
- *Can you tell me about your experience of education at school [when you were younger] ?*
- *If we were to rewind a few years, what would you have been like?*
  - *What would you have been doing? What would you have been thinking?*
- *On the website of [Charity Name] it mentions their aim is to tackle gang involvement, reduce school exclusion and improve emotional and mental health, do you know what proportion of CYP at [Charity Name] connects with these areas?*

Outro
- Debrief
- Right to withdraw data
- Any questions?
- Give UCL email address in case of further questions
- Arrange time to check themes

8.5 Appendix 5: Main Study CYP Interview Schedule

Main Research: Interview Schedule [participant]

Introduction
- Who am I?
- What kinds of questions will be asked?
- Timings
- Right to withdraw

Logistics
- *How long have you been coming?*
- *How often do you come here?*
- *What do you do here?*
    - *Probe to establish the full range of activities.*
    - *How common is this combination of activities?*

Why here?
- *Why did you first get involved here?*
- *Describe to me the things which keep you coming back*
- *What aspects of [Charity Name] do you like the most?*
- *Have you done anything similar to this before?*
    - *If so, what/when?*
    - *Can you compare them for me?*
- *What it would take to replicate [Charity Name] somewhere else?*
    - *Which bits are most important?*

What is the CYP experience of boxing as an intervention?
- *Tell me a bit about the impact you think this is having on you?*
- *Of what you have done here, what seems most important?*
- *Explain to me, do you notice any changes in the other young people around you?*
- *What would your friends say has been the biggest change in you since you've been coming?*
- *[If mention impact] What bits of what you do here do you think are most impactful?*
- *[If mention impact] How do you think these changes are achieved?*

Boxing as a sport
- *Describe to me how boxing fits into what you do here?*
- *How do you think boxing compares to other sports?*
- *[If mentioned impact above] How much of the impact you have described could be achieved through other sports?*

Questions around application to other areas
- *Explain how helpful this is for your everyday life?*
    - *Probe: Can you tell me a bit about the areas in your life which you think have been impacted by [Charity Name]?*

- - ■ *[Probe] So, there are different areas of your life, for example: family, friends, school, work> Do you think that what you do here has an affect on any of these areas?*
        - ● *[Probe] When did you notice?*
        - ● *[Probe] How did you notice?*
  - ● *[If mentioned impact above] Of the benefits you have described, how do you see them applying to life?*
  - ● *Are there any parts of what you do at [Charity Name] which are hard to apply in other areas?*

Coaches
- ● *Can you tell me a bit about your experience of working with the boxing coaches?*
    - ○ *Could you talk about how the coaches fit into [Charity Name]?*
    - ○ *Explain what you find most useful about what the coaches do at [Charity Name]*
    - ○ *Is there anything you wish they did more of?*

About you
- ● *Are you involved in any education, training or employment at the moment?*
    - ○ *If so, could you break it all down for me?*
- ● *Can you tell me about your experience of education at school [when you were younger] ?*
- ● *If we were to rewind a few years, what would you have been like?*
    - ○ *What would you have been doing? What would you have been thinking?*
- ● *On the website of [Charity Name] it mentions their aim is to tackle gang involvement, reduce school exclusion and improve emotional and mental health, do you know anyone at [Charity Name] who connects with these areas?*
    - ○ *Do you have any personal experience of these issues?*

Closure
- ● Debrief
- ● Right to withdraw data
- ● Any questions?
- ● Give UCL email address in case of further questions
- ● Arrange time to check themes

8.6   Appendix 6: CYP Consent Form

Institute of Education

UCL

Hello...

My name is Jo Taylor and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at UCL Institute of Education. I am interested in ways we can support people to develop positive wellbeing and deal with difficulties which happen in their life.

You may have met me already as part of your boxing training.

This is the consent form for my study.

What is the study?
So, at the moment you are taking part in boxing training. I am interested in the things we can learn about boxing training and how it can contribute to positive wellbeing for young people.

As part of this, I will be carrying out some interviews to try to learn as much as possible about young people's experience of boxing training as an intervention. These interviews will be 1-1, in a quiet space at the charity.

We will talk about your experience of your boxing training and it will be quite a broad, general conversation. We will meet at the centre, at a time which would suit everyone.

The 1-1 interview will last for a maximum of one hour.

What I will do:
I will be speaking to lots of young people. After I have carried out enough interviews, I will type up the conversations into anonymous documents (no names or identifying aspects). I will look for themes across all the conversations and then write this up as an academic report for my thesis.

Your details as well as anything you say will be kept confidential and you will remain anonymous in the final report and any other writings. In order for me to be able to review and feedback your views views accurately, I will audio record our focus group discussion, as well as take notes. Audio recordings will be destroyed on completion of the research.

If you decide between now and April that you don't want your views to form part of this research, just let me know and I will destroy your data and won't use anything you have told me in the final report.

If you want to participate please sign the consent form below

If you have any questions you can email me on: jo.taylor.15@ucl.ac.uk

Consent Form

Research Project: Boxing training as an intervention

Researcher: Jo Taylor (Trainee Education Psychologist - UCL Institute of Education)

- I am aware that when we meet our discussion will be audio recorded and notes taken of our discussion
- I have been informed of my right to withdraw at any point
- I have been informed of my right to withdraw my data from the study
- I understand that any information I give will be treated as confidential and anonymous
- Any audio recordings I feature in will be destroyed after the completion of the research

Name_____

Date _____

Age _____

Signed _____

8.7   Appendix 7: Example of a Coded Transcript

...Copy because if you lose it, or if it doesn't record properly...

It's a back up.

Yeah. So I suppose the first thing to say is thank you man, cause obviously you're giving up your time and that's ...

That's all right, no worries.

I can't take that for granted, so I appreciate it. I'm looking for a clock, I can't see one, but I'll use my phone, and we'll probably take about half an hour max.

OK, that's OK.

And I suppose I've kind of talked a bit about who I am, I've talked a bit, I'm just looking at my checklist about the things we're gonna talk about, so we're gonna talk a bit about you, a bit about, erm, how you came to boxing, and then we're going to talk a bit about boxing.

Mm-hm.

It's important to say that at any point if you feel like you don't want to answer a question, you don't have to.

That's OK [laughs].

And you can also leave at any time. And it's important to say that cause obviously you know, you might feel uncomfortable or you might change your mind or whatever it is. And it's just like, I think it's just important to say that at the beginning of the conversation.

Of course, so the person...

Like you don't owe me anything, you can leave, do you know what I mean. So it's important to say that too. So I suppose the first thing is to ... ask how long you've been coming here.

All right. Um ... Been coming here for ... Just over eight years now. I mean, um...

Eight years.

When we first kind of started I was one of the main people that was part of PunchNProgress, in 2008 I came in, or 2007, late 2007, but I came in just early 2008, through a guy you must have saw out there called [Name]. He was actually my youth

YOT-
recommende

offender worker. I had time, and he told me about PunchNProgress. And this time, you know, being on the streets from the school age, you know, getting kicked out of school, all this kind of thing, you know, a lot of psychological thing happening in my life at that time, you know, I just needed somewhere to go, to relax, to be able to you know, just let off some steam really. Started with gym and I felt that the gym wasn't really creating the, you know...

That's interesting, OK.

The, you know, the, how can I say, in terms of just sense of belonging, you know. I got kind of tired, you know, when you just have like a single, erm, mother, coming from a single parents home, you know, you don't have really like a father figure sometimes, so it was good from my point of view, up to this day, it's always good to have a, a community of people you can go to, kinda help. So yeah, started 2008, started to come here, and um, um, yeah, started off with boxing, and I saw boxing was, er, a very peaceful relaxing type of thing.

You've said so much already I want to, I want to try and explore, I feel like you...

I'll slow down, yeah [laughs].

You've opened up so many areas that I reckon it'd be interesting to talk about. You said that, you said something interesting about you tried gym but you didn't really think there was a sense of community there...

Yeah, cause in terms of, I mean for me I think it's PunchNProgress, cause you can go to any boxing gym and maybe you could be like the same outcome, just like going to a gym. But coming to a place like PunchNProgress, what it actually did, I mean for young people at that time which were suffering from a lot of like, you know, psychological thing, let's say homeless, education, unemployment, I mean PunchNProgress did give a sense of belonging for quite a lot of us.

How did it do that? What do you think it was?

I mean in terms of, when you do walk in, I mean the way that people's welcoming, I mean, from a... For so many people who come from like a background of let's say the jail or the streets, trying to change your life, you know, it's always good to come to a place where you feel welcome and you feel like you have a sense of belonging, that people are really cool and relaxed and humbly welcome you. It kind of changes this thing within your head, like, you know, maybe there are some good people out there, you know, and there are people who are willing to help me if I, you know, apply myself as well. And, erm, I think that's what PunchNProgress did. And the vibrance of course of the place, I think that's what made it important. When you walk into a place and the vibration is good, I mean you pick up on that and ... From what I see from a lot of people who was on the street, which I was trying to convert to come in here, once they see the vibe, they actually, I see they stay more. Because they enjoy how people are welcoming, people are speaking, open, you know, there wasn't nothing fake, nothing like, I'm gonna say people are being hostile, you know, trying

A-Difficult-Life

Release-Stress

Community-Atmosphere

A-Difficult-Life

Community-Atmosphere

Non-Judgemental-Atmosphere

Collaborative-Feeling

Takes-Time-To-Integrate

Takes-Time-To-Open-Up

to, so I think they actually enjoy that, how can I say, they let down their guard, you know, cause a lot of people come with their guard up, you know, they don't really want to let too much out, they don't want too much people to know. So I do understand that, you know, but they're just amazing when they come into here, everything will just relaxed, easy, people that wasn't smiling, you know, will smile at people, and it just gave a sense of ease for them, and then ... People's coming out of their shell as time goes by. I think yeah, the vibration is really, vibrant places always, always the, the main thing.

And I, so because you've opened up so many amazing topics, I'm gonna, I'm gonna come to them, I've got them written down, but just a few more of the basics [5:00], so how often do you come?

I come, like I try and come, if I can come every day I come every day. But I will come let's say three times a week, yeah, three times a week at least.

And um, you mentioned boxing, erm, can you talk to me about the boxing that you do here?

Yeah, erm, well instead of just, as something to keep fit and um, before I know, I got into, done a bit, a few bouts, you know, done a bit of competition and stuff, as I say I enjoyed it, so erm, it's something I'm just looking into exploit a bit more. From PunchNProgress I got the chance to do like a level one qualification in non-contact boxing, which gave me an opportunity to work in gyms as well, I got to do my level two fitness instructor as well, so it did create, you know, some powerful ways and ways for me to, you know, excel and you know, achieve my thing because of the boxing. And I just love it cause of the discipline really, you know, it helped me in terms of my everyday life, you know, the same application I apply in my training I try to take that out and apply it in my everyday life as well.

Boxing-Is-Exciting

Aspiration

Relate-Development-To-Boxing

Mm-hm. And that's, that's a theme we'll talk about a little later, the idea of whether it's possible to kind of apply stuff from boxing to everyday life.

Absolutely, definitely.

I suppose you, one of the other things that you mentioned at the beginning was the place your life was at before you came here.

Yeah, yeah.

It'd be interesting to hear a bit about your memories of that time and where you were at.

Yeah, it was just, man, I mean, I know just for a lot of young guys, from the age of [sighs] 17, 18 at that time I remember talking, 2007, 2006, you know, really tough time, you know, for a lot of us and you know, young guys do a lot of stabbing, you know, and in London the stabbing rate was high, especially in [borough name] where I live, you know, just, you know, it was really high, and, erm, they were just like, you know, they were just really

A-Difficult-Life

down for a lot of young guys in terms of no, no support, not a lot of support in terms of, and I think that's why I actually, I was really interested when you told me you were going to do this cause I think from my side it's mainly based on the psychological thing for young people. There's not so much of what's there, what's not there, but I mean if you can work with them in terms of the psyche first, I think everything kind of just falls in place, you know. Yeah, you know, was just a bad state, I keep getting arrested, keep, you know, had a friend who went to jail, friends that was near death, you know, it was just like, you know, so many things were just going wrong, you know, like he wasn't interested in school, he wasn't interested in education, you know, he just wanted to like, you know. I think what, I think we needed something or we needed a form of community which could lead us through a path, but I wasn't getting that, so through the frustration he was like OK, just go and misbehave, sort of thing, you know. And yeah, there wasn't a place at that time, like PunchNProgress when, you know, people can come and relax themselves, it was a lot of doing rubbish on the street or vandalising and stuff like that. Yeah, that was really about it during that time, it was just, yeah, it was quite a bad time for a lot of young people I would say, 2006, 2007, you know, a lot of stuff was happening, a lot of young guys was rolling around the street with knife, you know, some were there for protection, you know not like they really want to, some of them just for, just for the, how can I say, the reputation, and yeah, just really was, well a very very bad time for a lot of young people. Including myself at that time. Yeah.

I hear you. Thank you, I mean obviously talking about that kind of stuff isn't always nice, but I appreciate you describing a bit. I suppose something, something I've got down here which I think is quite interesting to ask people is have you, have you done anything like this before, before you came here?

To be honest, never, I've never did, to be honest I think that's what, I think that's what kind of changed my idea of, erm, like you know, ah, people are there that are willing to help, you know, once, you know, if you reach out far enough and you let your guard down a little bit, you know, you let them in, you know, they will transform your life or, you know, you just keep meeting people stages and stages, and like PunchNProgress, new people just keep coming which, you know, they're just transforming people you know, just speak a word or two which you gain something from, you apply to to your life, and you're like wow, I'm thankful, thankful for this guy you know, I'm lucky that I met him sort of thing, yeah, really what more can I say, yeah, I suppose yeah, yeah.

Right. And so I suppose, erm, we talked a bit about boxing and obviously that, that's kind of the focus of some of my questions. I'd be interested to know what kind of impact you think boxing is having or has had upon you.

I would say like just even the discipline alone and being able to commit to something and being able to see it through [10:00], I think it's all ... down to, I mean what I would say from the old boxing I did, boxing had retrained my psyche of things, in terms of, you know, the grinding, like of I can push myself when I'm in a gym like this, I'm 100% sure I could do the same thing when I'm outside, you know. In terms of if it's my college or, er, my uni work or something like that, you know, I try to apply the same kind of method I use, and ... Fascinating enough it was working for me, you know, and I did try and share that, erm,

experience and example with some people, and funnily enough it was working for them too [laughs] they were like, you know, wow, you know, there is something about this sort of thing, you know, cause, you know, coming to the gym late, you know, some of the coach, in terms of Thai boxing, the coach would be like 'why are you late, no, get down, 100 press ups', or, you know, so you're like no, OK, I don't want to come here late no more [laughter] I don't wanna do 100 press ups. And then after a while it just does seem like, even, you know, your college or your uni, it's not really good to turn up late to class, cause you know, you do miss a lot of things, then you're like oh, no, you know, just let me try be a bit more disciplined, and I think that's what boxing actually brings into some of the young people who were like offenders or something, they're more disciplined. I even see a lot of people with like, after let's say one year, two years gone past, you see the way they change their approach, just with life in general. The discipline does work in terms of boxing, it's not just coming in there are just punching each other's head off and, you know, it gives it that. You know, you release, you know, you feel good after a while, you know, you just...

Can you describe that a bit more, because we train but people that read this that might not actually know what that means. So when you said feel good, what did you mean?

In terms of like, you know, just, you know, let's say for example you've been going through a day of stress, you know, for me for example it's, I love hitting the bags, so I'll just escape to the gym and I'll just, you know, practice my combination with a bag, I feel when I'm in the gym it's just me, and I feel my oneness, so to say, you know. Just me and the gym, help me relax, it help me concentrate, you know, er, I feel like, I feel harmonised, everything just like balanced for me, you know, I feel really good, I feel really like, how can I say, like, like let's just say like someone just meditating, tranquil, that's the word, yeah, you know, it's just like, it's a form of meditation for me as well, you know, in a sense. So it's just not only like, just hitting something, you know, and just, you know, like yeah, wearing gum shields and wearing wraps, you know, there's other elements which, you know, like yeah, which I think helps the body and helps the mind, for me, cause at that time you just, I just try to focus on my mind cause it was just scattered realty, so I thought, you know ... This is, this is what I need. You know, and, yeah, it does work really.

That's, that's exciting, I mean it's, it's interesting to hear you talk about the effect that it's had on your mind. Erm ... Is that something that you would notice in a session, or is that something that you'd notice over time kind of through training, what, what, how, when did you first kind of notice it was affecting your mind like that?

The thing is ... I had a feeling it would, because er, before I actually tried to change my life around I was trying to like study, trying to read a few things so I was really interested like in Chinese philosophy before so I was trying to like, I'm not a Kung Fu guy but I love so many movies and all this stuff. So ... I was just watching the training and how they apply that to some of the students, like the masters and stuff, so I was thinking OK, if, if the master can apply this to the student and it can work for him like this, you know, I know that's just a movie, but let me try that in a real life reality with boxing, you know. And funnily enough the application was all the same, and it does work. And some of the coaches I speak to, and ... Through the sessions, yeah, I started to see a big difference, like oh yeah,

Coaches-Are-Serious

Teaches-More-Than-Boxing

Relate-Development-To-Boxing

Boxing-Is-Not-Fighting

Increased-Confidence

Escape-Reality

Come-To-Relax

Feel-Good-In-The-Gym

Focus-On-Something-Else

Feel-Good-In-The-Gym

Increased-Confidence

I'm feeling good, I'm feeling more confidence, you know, I can, I can stand on stage and give a presentation where like before I couldn't do stuff like that, you know. And a lot of people I've seen, like ... You know, in terms of presentation everyone panics, you know, I was panicked, I couldn't speak to a crowd for nothing, but you know, doing such sports gives you that confidence, cause I think you are more becoming aware of yourself, and you know ... Like your strengths should I say, and just like OK, I'm just not this flimsy guy, no, I can do this, you know, I can, I can throw a cross, I can throw an upper cut, I can throw, you know, they start to work with they can more than I can't. So yeah, from there, that, I think from there that's where the transforming starts to really happen. Cause when you start to work with the can, like yeah. You know when the coach is like 'try this', and a lot of people were like 'oh, no, I can't do it'. 'No no, come on, try it', and [laughs] they see themselves trying to do it and they actually do it. So ... it just shows like...

Believe-in-myself-now

Less-Doubt

Drilling-Paid-Off

Yeah.

And it's so funny, like, like something like boxing or martial arts [15:00], a combat sport can actually bring this out in people, it's just a really interesting for me really, yeah, that's that's...

Yeah, it is interesting, I, I completely agree. And do you think you've noticed any changes in the people around you through boxing, the people that were also doing the boxing?

Yeah, yeah, a lot of them were like, um, I mean I think a lot of them was ... was more happier [laughs] yeah, more joyful and, you know, being in an environment where everyone was working just as hard as each other, you know, they're gonna feel what the other person is feeling, even though the other person might be pushing more intensely than the other, but you know, everyone's on a different level but they understand, they, they congratulate each other, based on the level and the pace everyone is working at, and I think ... Yeah, I mean people, people are more, are more, how can I say, they're more grateful of, of being able to train with each other and being among each other really. Yeah.

Collaborative-Feeling

And what bits of boxing do you think are most impactful?

I would say, um, the groundwork, cause you learn a lot through the groundwork, you learn to push yourself and you learn it can be done.

Did-Not-Give-Up

So by groundwork, I just wanna make sure I understand, you mean like the conditioning side?

Yeah, like you know, before, before we start, always before we start a session we've got to do groundwork, which is the warmup, so let's say the skipping, the sit ups, the push ups, you know, let's say for like 40 minutes, you know, just to like warm you up, you know, to see what level of fitness you are, whatever, yeah, through the 40 minutes you learn a lot about yourself [laughs] you learn, yeah, you know, er, life is, is challenging but if you keep pushing you can achieve quite a few of them challenges, you can achieve, yeah, so them 40

Only-You-Can-Do-It

minutes is a test of time I call it, so I try not to miss it because, you know, even though I go out, I party, I come back, I wanna see what fitness level I am, so yeah, I enjoy it really.

Is there anything else in boxing that you think is particularly impactful?

Erm, the coaches I would say. It's always good to have good coaches cause they're like mentors as well, you know, they, they push you, they tell you you can do it, they, they make sure you try new things to, to raise your level, you know, to, to just push yourself so to know that ... You know, you're more than this, you're not just on this level, this is just a starting level. The coaches are really impactful I would say cause without the coaches ... It's always good to have good coaches, not just like any coach, you know. A coach is a coach is good, but to have good coaches have a big impact, and yeah, stuff like that.

Coaches-Mentor

Hard-Sessions

Push-And-Improve

Coaches-Are-Serious

You know what, I've got a whole section here about coaches, erm, because in the, in the pilot that I told you about that was something that kind of came out, was people talking about the coaches. Erm. Do you, how could you kind of explain for me how the coaches fit into the boxing, like how, what do they do, how do they help?

I mean coaches, one thing, erm, one thing I've seen with coaches cause I've been here over time, I think different coaches come with a different character, everyone have their own character. And ... some characters are mild, some characters are stronger, some characters are just so-so, some characters, you know, they just wanna come in and do their job and you know, but there's a lot of, there's been quite a lot of impactful ones, where like you know, they just not only coach, you know, they're really passionate about what they do. And I find that the ones that are more passionate, you get a lot more out of them. They give you a lot more to work with in terms of not only in the gym but outside the gym as well. So that's the, the differentiation.

Coaches-Are-Passionate

How do they help you outside of the gym?

In terms of like, you know, it's just like little things they say in the gym, you know, like, you know, and you can ... You can, you know, apply outside, like you know, erm, let's say for example we, after a session is finished, we having a general conversation, you know, just about life, you know. And you know, the coaches will always try to relate something to do with life, to do with boxing, so like OK, yeah, exactly, so like oh, if, um ... If, er, you're sparring with a guy, are you just gonna let him be jabbing you? No, you're gonna move your head, you know, cause you wanna dodge the punch, you know, stuff like that. And OK, so in your college, if you're doing an essay for example and it's getting stressful, are you gonna just give up or you're gonna do a rubbish essay? No, you're gonna take time out, you know, speak to people which can kind of help you, and then come back and attack it and smash it, and stuff like that, you know, just like, just ah, go for it, like you know, it's possible, do it. And I think things like that are really impactful. That's what makes me at this moment, um, I'm actually trying to do my qualification to be a boxing coach as well [20:00].

Teaches-More-Than-Boxing

Relates-Development-To-Boxing

Aspirations

Cool.

Because I'm trying to follow that path and I've seen the impact it had in my life and other people as well, and I feel I can, I can pay back the same thing as well. ==Ripple-Effect==

That's really exciting.

Yeah, yeah, so...

Well fingers crossed for that, cause that'd be cool.

Definitely, absolutely.

And so I suppose ... Some people might say that you could achieve these things through other sports...

Yeah.

That aren't boxing.

Of course

So what would you say to that?

Well ... One thing I would say is all different sport have different discipline and different way of going about their discipline. Boxing's a unique sport where, you know, it's been around for time, people are more familiar with it and I think it's more easier to use boxing because ... It's not as complicated as other sport to be really honest, cause you're using mainly the basics, two fists, two hands, you know, but it's, it's what comes behind using those basic elements, you know. I mean for me I just think boxing is one of the easiest way to start and, erm, I mean yeah, you can get your discipline from other sports, you know, I haven't really tried as much as other sport but I did try one or two things like judo, agility jigsaw and stuff like that. ==Boxing-Easy-To-Start==

That's interesting, you're still talking about martial arts, in my head I was thinking some people might say oh, football could help or you know, like rugby could help, basketball...

Well, I mean ... Could do, but you know, I think why boxing is so unique because you know, it gives you that, you know, it's a, OK, football for example. You're kicking a ball, you're passing about, of course there's other challenges, you gotta advance and tackle and stuff, but boxing, why ... why it's so impactful is cause you're thinking to yourself, like you know, I'm in a fight, you know, with life, you know, I'm trying to say, so trying to find out ways of how to dodge other little shots life is going to throw at you, hard to block, you know, that's my, in my mind, you know, and other people I've spoken to, that's how we see it. ==Life-Is-Hard==

==Relates-Development-To-Boxing==

That's interesting.

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And how to throw your shots to knock down, you know, where like in terms of football and other sports, I don't think it actually covers that spectrum kind of thing. I don't know, I might be wrong, I might be right, I don't know, but you know, but that's what I feel with boxing, you know, that's why I think it's more impactful.

Boxing-Is-Exciting

No, that's really interesting. Yeah, that's really useful as well. And I think, so we talked about this, um, a little bit earlier but I want to explore it a bit more...

OK.

The idea that, that what you've learned from boxing might be helpful in other parts of life, um, how, how could that be the case, like can you explain that to me?

Well just, you know, just being confident in general, you know. A lot of people came into here really ... How can I say, really low energy, but through the boxing session you see they've got high energy, you know, with time, they're more confident, they're more outspoken, you know. Other people come in here with like, just, you know, want to defend themselves, you know, in general. So it's something which of course the, it's not like, the like, you know, troublemakers but they just want to in future, you never know, and it's something that could apply in the outside life as well. And then other people come here just to get fit in general, you know, cause maybe it's making them feel a certain way outside their...

Improved-Confidence

Boxing-For-Defense

Good-Exercise

Yeah, I hear that.

You know, so they come to use the facility to achieve all these little other elements in their life, you know, to get confident, to feel fit, to know how to defend themselves, and yeah, realty, stuff like that, you know.

Blueprint-For-Life

Ok, thank you. Erm ... I'm just reading these questions, I think we talked, we talked a fair bit about different types of elements and how they've applied to other parts of your life. Erm, do you think there are any aspects of benefits that you get from boxing that are hard to apply to other areas of your life?

Mm ... Well, mm, that's hard to apply to other areas of my life? Mm [laughs] I can't really think at the moment.

I mean there don't have to have been, there might have been some, yeah.

Yeah, yeah, definitely, I agree, absolutely, there are some, but at this moment, the mind's a bit, you know [laughter] it's been busy all day, you know. But ah, wow, what can I say, that's hard to apply to areas of my life. Um ... I would say ... Mm ... Before it could have been ... How to accept defeat.

Mm, OK.

That was a thing for me before, I didn't really like to lose. I always [laughs] I always want to win, well just like everybody else, you know, cause I always like to have that winning mentality, I wanna win win win [25:00]. But when you do lose you learn a great lot from it as well, and it's not always like about losing, it's about taking part, and even though you lose you're still a winner cause you took part, and you learned something from it. So ... Yeah, I would say the winning part was something I find it hard to apply [laughs] into my everyday life, but yeah.

Learn-About-Self

Yeah. I hadn't thought, I hadn't thought of that before. I've got here kind of a checklist of some questions. So, it would be good to, kind of to get an idea of where you're at at the moment, cause obviously everyone I talk will kind of be at a slightly different place in their life, doing slightly different stuff.

Of course, yeah.

So ... are you involved in any education or work or anything like that?

Yeah, yeah, at the moment, I mean yeah, I mean I was studying before in the uni but I'm gonna go back in September and just complete my course that I'm doing. I'm working at the moment so I'm just working like a bit of freelance, I'm doing security and trying to work like in some gyms as well with my level two.

Go-To-Uni

You mentioned, yeah, yeah.

Yeah, so I'm just trying to build more experience as well so I can actually be in the real gym. Of course, yeah, I always wanna be, everything I'm doing with the gym is always to come back and give back from where I got from, so that's the way I see it.

Coaches-Are-Passionate

Well, it's really exciting hearing what you're saying about the idea of being a coach in the future.

Of course, yeah.

I hear that and I saw, I saw the way your energy changed when you talked about it as well.

Yeah, definitely. A lot of people say that as well [laughs] so wow, incredible. Oh, cool.

And, er, and actually we, you touched upon this but can you tell me a bit about your experience of education at school kind of before this, how was it?

Pft, it was, I mean this is what I meant, it was just not like, oh, I was the kinda guy where, like, the concentration was lacking, you know, and I think that was the main thing that I didn't, you know, during the younger age, you know, and it's something that I'm seeing, you know, just not only me cause like I was kind of being quite observant as well as I was coming to PunchNProgress, and I was seeing like how my life was changing, so when I go back to the reality of my world and some of the friends I have and I see it was just similar,

same impact cause like, um, you know ... The concentration was not there, was lacking at school, wasn't really achieving the level we were supposed to achieve, the focus was just scattered, you know. It ... We didn't really care too much for, for in terms of like achievement and your ambition, your drive, was just like rubbish really, you didn't really, you know, it was like more or less someone possessed you, cast a spell on you type of thing, you know, you just wasn't really as conscious as you should be in terms of OK, where do I wanna go with life, this is what I wanna do, this is the ambition I have to do this, you know. So I mean for me now, this is what I have now, so like you know, I'm more ambitious, I wanna achieve this, I wanna do this, I wanna do that, I wanna do that, you know ... You know, with time coming to PunchNProgress cause like meeting up with people who are driven, meeting up with the coaches that are giving you good worth of encouragement, of course, you know, I mean this is why I always praise PunchNProgress very highly, because the way it's constructed itself and the people you manage to bring in, and you know, if any young people do come around the circle, you know, you have no choice cause the energy will impact on you, you know. It will influence you to try to do something better with yourself. And I think yeah, that's, now in the stage I am I'm loving it, I'm happy, I'm, you know, I'm I'm good now [laughs].

I hear that. On the website, it talks about, you know, tackling gang involvement…

Yeah.

Reducing exclusion, improving emotional and mental health…

Yeah.

Kind of, do you know people here that kind of connect with those areas?

Yes, I knew all these areas to talk about, new people from the time I've been here, in all this emotional, um, gang violence, you know, exclusion from school, stuff like that, cause, um, you know ... I, I do believe everything does start from there first before we actually do what we do, so I think it took me a long time to realise that, but you know, realising it now you're more conscious of your actions and what you do. And that's one of the reasons I wanna become a coach as well, cause I mean after a session, and I think it's something I wanted to actually [laughs] just reminded me of actually I wanted to speak to [name], so about something like, you know, I think the more we do this, like after a session, you know, a coach gives just a little five, ten minute speech about, you know, you know, cause a lot of young people come in here, and I do believe what you do say, you know, if it doesn't impact everyone but at least one, two, three people can gain from it. Erm, yeah, I mean people, [borough name] was really bad with gangs, you know. I did find outreach myself, trying to bring some gang members into here [30:00], erm, I mean PunchNProgress changed their life tremendously, some of them are not part of a gang no more, some of them are working, some of them are established, they have their own little businesses, some of them are, you know, at uni now. With exclusion wise, you know ... You know, coming here, let's say a kid of 13, 12 years old, and mixing with people like us, let's say we're in our, in our twenties, and they're seeing us going hard, hitting the bag hard, you know, they're like wow, this guy, and they come to you, 'oh, you hit so good, da da da da da', and

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then you know, you start asking them 'so what do you do', 'I come here, oh yeah I've been bad, da da da and then you're kind of like 'oh, no, don't do that, da da da da da', so they kind of listen to you cause they're seeing you hitting the bag so hard, they're like 'oh, this guy's a tough guy, he's a strong guy', so we kind of use that to kind of like channel the positive into them, kind of thing. That's what I kind of do anyway, cause I'm like hmm, if he's looking at me and he kind of likes what I'm doing and I don't even know him but let me see if I can try and, you know, give him a few words of encouragement and, but it's piece by piece, you know, with time, that, you know, you see them next time, 'are you doing', 'oh no, I'm doing that, oh no, I just got a job on', it just puts a smile on my face, I'm like wow, incredible, that's cool stuff really.

Community-Atmosphere

Ripple-Effect

Collaborative-Feeling

Yeah. I think that's a good place to end it, I feel like we've had a good amount of your time. Thank you.

Thank you, thank you.

8.8 Appendix 8: Themes, Sub Themes and Codes

Theme	Sub theme	Codes
Capture Interest	Boxing-Is-Appealing	Boxing-is-exciting, Boxing-Good-Exercise, Boxing-Used-To-Engage; Boxing-Easy-To-Start; Boxing-For-Defence
	Gain-Initial-Respect	Coach-Life-Experience, Coach-Boxing-Prowess, Coach Athleticism
Open Atmosphere	Non Judgement	Open-non-judgemental-atmosphere
	Integration Period	Apprehensive-About-Starting; Takes-Time-To-Build-Relationships; Takes-Time-To-Get-It; Takes-Time-To-Integrate; Takes-Time-To-Open-Up
Build Deeper Trust	Family Feel	Feels-Like-Family; Collaborative Feeling; Community-Atmosphere
	Rigidity	No-water-breaks; All-do-every-exercise; Everyone-Repeats-If-Mistakes; Coaches-are-serious;
	Demonstrate High Expectations	Hard-sessions; Life-is-hard; Training-Champions; Coaches-Are-Passionate
Long Term Vision	Aspirations	Aspiration; Go-To-Uni; Ripple-Effect; Blueprint-for-Life; Passing-On-Knowledge; Coaches-Mentor
	Boxing as an Analogy	Give-a-Speech; Teaches-More-Than-Boxing; Relate-development-to-boxing; Boxing-Is-Not-Fighting

Theme	Sub theme	Codes
Oasis of Respite	Experience Difficulty	Mental-Health-Needs; A-Difficult-Life, A-Lot-Going-On
	Provides An Escape	Escape-Reality; Forget-About-Everything; Focus-On-Something-Else; Time-Away-From-Troubles; Back-To-Reality-After
	Provides Positive Moments	Feel-Good-In-The-Gym; Come-To-Relax;

Catharsis	Release Negative Emotions	Release-Anger; Channel-Anger; Release-Stress; Release-Pain;
	Better For Training	Feel-Good-Training; Afterglow; Such-A-Release; Happier-Over-Time
Increased Perception of Control	Athletic Improvement With Effort	Push-And-Improve; Surpassed-Expectation; Get-Out-What-You-Put-In;
	Technical Improvement Over Time	React-Without-Thinking; Drilling-Paid-Off;
Improved Self Efficacy	Choosing Difficulty Empowers	Grow-From-Discomfort; I-Chose-Something-Hard
	Improved Confidence	Less-Doubt; Increased-Confidence; Believe-In-Myself-Now
	Can Rely On Self	Only-You-Can-Do-It; Didn't-Give-Up; Learn-About-Self

8.9 Appendix 9: Ethical Approval

Departmental use

If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, you may refer the application to the Research Ethics and Governance Administrator (via IOE.researchethics@ucl.ac.uk) so that it can be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration. A Research Ethics Committee Chair, ethics representatives in your department and the research ethics coordinator can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application should be referred to the Research Ethics Committee.

Reviewer 1	
Supervisor name	LR
Supervisor comments	All ethical issues have been addressed.
Supervisor signature	
Reviewer 2	
Advisory committee/course team member name	HU
Advisory committee/course team member comments	I agree with this application
Advisory committee/course team member signature	
Decision	26th July 2017
Date decision was made	
Decision	Approved ☒
	Referred back to applicant and supervisor ☐
	Referred to REC for review ☐
Recording	Recorded in the student information system ☐

Once completed and approved, please send this form and associated documents to the relevant programme administrator to record on the student information system and to securely store.

Further guidance on ethical issues can be found on the IOE website at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/research-ethics-committee/ioe and www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk