

# Evaluation Report

## Surf Action Family Relationships and Community Integration Project 2017



An evaluation of Surf Action's Family Relationships  
and Community Integration Project 2017 funded by  
the Royal British Legion

# Surf Action

Surf Action was established in Cornwall in 2009 and is a registered Charity (number 1140191). An award winning and pioneering project, Surf Action aims to promote and protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of serving and former serving members of the armed forces and the blue-light emergency services and their families who are living with physical and/or psychological difficulties as a result of their service and to assist them into making the transition into civilian life, in particular but not exclusively, by:

- Introducing them to surfing, high intensity water sports and involving them in peer group activities.
- Providing access to support, guidance, signposting and education.
- Providing access to information and peer support relationships for their families.
- Engaging them in various projects within communities.

By making use of the stunning coastal environment and offering holistic support which takes into account the practical, social and psychological difficulties which some service-users can experience, we do not seek to replicate the valuable work carried out by existing military and civilian organisations and charities, but to complement, signpost to, and work with them to fill the gaps identified by the service-users who come to us. PhD research recently carried out with Loughborough University has lent support to the Surf Action model and significantly extended previous knowledge on physical activity, military veterans and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) by highlighting how nature-based physical activity – encapsulated in the concept of the “Blue Gym” – can significantly promote well-being among military veterans and other service-users.

The integrated recovery approach which is encapsulated within the Surf Action ‘Joined-Up Recovery Model has been developed taking in to account the outcomes of numerous research papers including:

Rogers C, Mallinson T, Peppers D (2014), 'High-Intensity Sports for Post traumatic Stress Disorder and Depression: Feasibility Study of Ocean Therapy With Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom', American Journal of Occupational Therapy 68, 395-404.

Caddick, N., Smith, B., & Phoenix, C. (2015). The effects of surfing and the natural environment on the well-being of combat veterans. Qualitative Health Research, 25, 76-86.

Caddick N & Smith B (2014), 'The impact of sport and physical activity on the well-being of combat veterans; A systematic review.' Psychology of Sport and Exercise 15, 9-18.

Thomson Koon, J. Boddy, K. Stein, K. Whear, R. Barton, J. and Depledge, M.H. 2011. Does Participating in Physical Activity in Outdoor Natural Environments Have a Greater Effect on Physical and Mental Well-being than Physical Activity Indoors? A Systematic Review. Environmental Science and Technology DOI: 10.1021/es102947t

Since being founded Surf Action has also championed **social inclusion** and **cohesion** between the **military, veteran and civilian communities**. It has sought to help individuals, families and communities by providing educational information as a tool with which to empower them to make positive changes in their lives and communities.

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:** Surf Action promotes good mental health through strenuous physical activity, personal development, education and employment and empowers its service users to lead healthy, fulfilled and independent lives and to become valued and active members of their community.

**SURF ACTION is the only organisation providing evidence-based ocean therapy to support the mental health and wellbeing of serving military, veterans and their families in the UK.**



## Background to the project;

Service children and their families have unique needs; they face challenges that often go beyond the experience of most of civilian families and children. Increased school mobility and the cycle of deployment can bring social, emotional and academic challenges for those children with parents in the armed forces (Ofsted 2011). The Government also recognises that children may still need some support even after their parents have left the forces.

Our proposed 'Family Relationships and Community Integration Project' was designed to help support families through the emotional cycle of service life and deployment by using the proven physical and psychological health benefits of the blue gym concept by involving service and veteran families in surfing, surf lifesaving and other water-sports such as canoeing in the stunning coastal environment around us to help knit families closer together and boost community cohesion.

The project also addressed the Resilience (page 2) and Health and Wellbeing (page 4) Strands of the 'UK Armed Forces Families Strategy 2016-2020' as laid down by Lt Gen Andrew Gregory, Chief of Defence People in January 2016, which asked for engagement with and input from Service Charities (page 6). It should also help to address several of the significant problems highlighted in the 'UK Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey 2016' including some of those in Section 1 (Morale, Commitment and Engagement), Section 9 (Work/Life Balance), Section 11 (Health, Fitness and Welfare) and Section 13 (Family Life and Being Part of Society).

Our project offered the opportunity to those who engaged to experience the outdoor classroom environment and an exhilarating physical, emotional and social experience, which can act as the foundation for improvement in long-term health, wellbeing, lifestyle and family relationships.

We wanted to harness the research-endorsed physical and psychological health benefits of being regularly active in the ocean. These include:

- Improved Vitamin D levels from being active in sunlight
- Improved quality of sleep due to boosted Melatonin levels
- Improved core body strength
- Stronger muscles
- Improved balance
- Improved sense of self-worth
- Improved relaxation and mindfulness
- Being a respected part of a friendship group
- Feeling satisfaction and pride in their achievements
- Better social integration & reduced isolation
- Better able to discuss their situations with others
- Improved anger management
- An active lifestyle



- A reduction in the severity of the symptoms in some life-long health conditions such as cystic fibrosis by strengthening the lung function and the immune system, thus aiding the clearing of mucus and boosting the quality of life
- Helping some who are on the autistic spectrum by helping reduce sensory overload and interrupting obsessive-compulsive routines thus improving their quality of life
- A reduction in the severity of the symptoms in PTSD and a wide range of related mild to moderate depressive mental health conditions.
- Being in an atmosphere which is very different from that of the day-to-day life
- The opportunity to identify and concentrate on and develop one's own recovery path
- Being more receptive to learning new things
- Enhanced peer support relationships
- Enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem
- Learning from the experiences of others and offering their own experiences
- Improved physical and psychological resilience
- Learning about new adjustment strategies
- Learning about new coping skills and education within a group setting
- Learning about the benefits of, education, work and volunteering opportunities
- Improved family cohesion, relationships and understanding

We understand that strong family and community relationships help service personnel and families better cope with the short and long-term exigencies which military life often throws up. As international politics has become more unstable as the year progressed this support has become even more important.

Surf Action was already working on some interventions and proposed to further develop them by making a funding proposal to the Royal British Legion through their External Grants programme. This application was successful and the 6-month project commenced in April 2017.



## THE PROJECT

We undertook to run a series of 6 (2 each of) 'Surf Life Saving GB' (SLSGB), 'British Stand-Up Paddle-Boarding Association' (BSUPA) and 'British Canoe Union' (BCU) courses for service families from RNAS Culdrose and RAF St Mawgan and local armed forces community families. Each family activity course would require attendance for 1/2 a day/week for 8 weeks. The two SLSGB courses were to be run at Praa Sands (10 children on each) and the remaining 4 courses at the Southwest Lakes Trust activity centre at Stithians Lake (with 8 children per course). (aged between 7 and 16, 52 children in total).

Surf Action used its excellent connections with the local cluster schools and military establishments to advertise the courses and they were quickly filled. Several parents, including one in Bahrain, saw our advertising and booked places for their children whilst they were still overseas.

Central to the project was the importance of parents/guardians staying at the course location during the activity and preferably supporting their child in the water during the activity. It was emphasised to them at the outset that the course was not there as a form of child-minding service and that attendance at as many of the sessions as possible was very important for both themselves and their children if they were to get the maximum benefit. We recognised that this was a big commitment to ask for especially as schools run a lot of weekend team activities and most family commitments happen at weekend. We also explained that we would be gathering psychological data and that the quality of the data also relied on the frequency of attendance.

## Project aims

The aims of the project were;

- To harness the research-endorsed physical and psychological health benefits of being active in the ocean
- Through the surfing and SLSGB courses children would learn sea confidence, swimming in the sea, surfing, surf safety and board skills, learn about waves, the dangers of the ocean/beach and first aid.
- The focus would be on self-confidence in the sea and teamwork as well as discovering the fun of the surf and the beach environment.
- Those who wish to would be encouraged to join their local Surf Lifesaving clubs where they will be able to gain awards in surfing, surf and beach safety and have the option to compete at local and national level, if they want to.
- Parents would be encouraged to go into the water to support their youngsters and to enjoy quality family time together.
- The BCU courses would reinforce the lessons of the surfing and surf lifesaving by teaching additional skills/knowledge in: Respecting the environment, water safety, first aid, awareness, concern and respect for others, leadership and group skills and the importance of looking after their equipment and always following the safety rules.
- Those who wish will be assessed for the BCU 1-star Award and encouragement will be given to those who wish to join their local canoeing clubs to enhance their qualifications.

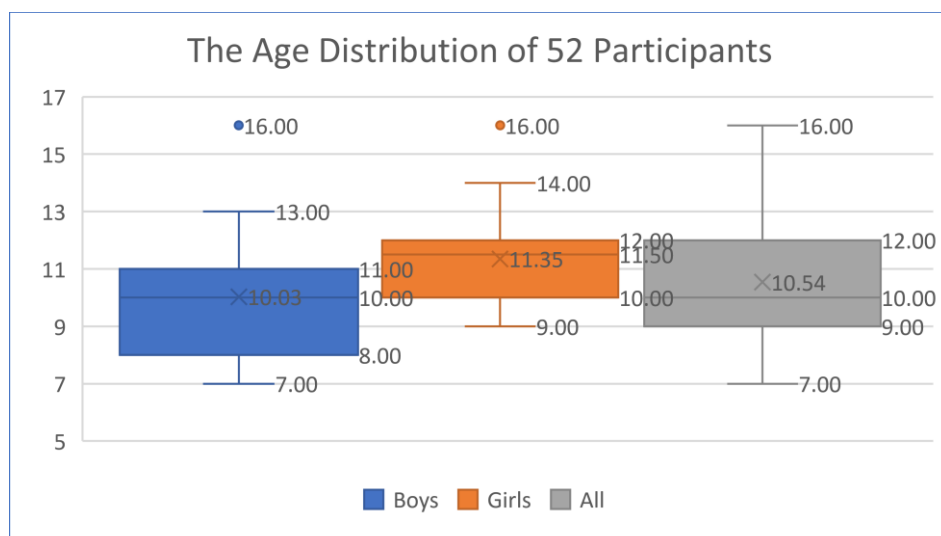
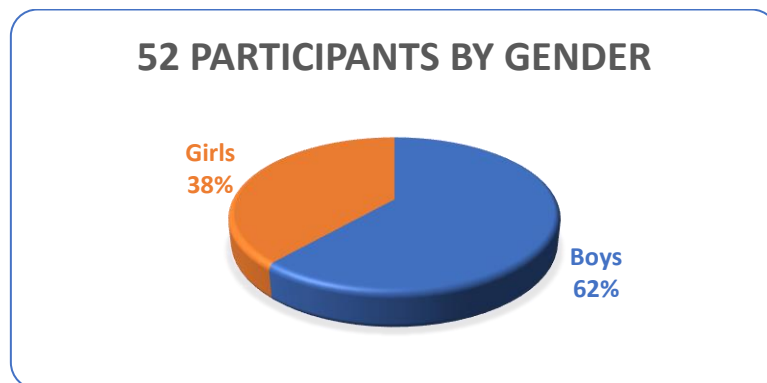
- The opportunity for attendees to network and have conversations with and learn from a wide range of armed forces community families and individuals.
- For families to have fun together by learning new skills and activities.
- The development of stronger friendships at the individual, family and community scale.
- More resilient individuals, families and communities better able to deal with the ups and downs of service life and the emotional cycle of deployment.

## Methodology

### 1. Participants

The project was comprehensively advertised through social media and the local military establishments and cluster schools. RNAS Culdrose put our courses onto weekly orders and thus they were seen on the tv screens across the station. The interest was immediate and the 52 places on the courses available were rapidly filled. Several parents, including one deployed in Bahrain, saw our advertising and booked places for their children whilst they were still overseas. This was good to see.

There were plenty of applications from both boys and girls so there was no need to gender manage the project. Several withdrew at the start due to recent sporting injuries but they were easily replaced from a reserve list.



The boys had a larger range of scores with a mean and median age of 10. The girls were generally slightly older with the youngest being 9 as opposed to 7 for the boys. On the whole there was a good balance of ages.

## **2. Client Ethnicity**

Due to the ethnic make-up of Cornwall all the clients were white. This is consistent with the demographic of the county as a whole in which 98.7% of the population define themselves as white (ONS 2008)

## **3. Activities**

Surf Action adapted its research backed, community-based, sports-oriented, fully risk assessed occupational therapy course (Ocean Therapy) which uses the high-intensity water-sports such as surfing and kayaking etc in an experiential, skills-based experience specifically adapted for military personnel and veterans seeking mental health services. Consistent with conceptualizations of the transformative nature of engagement in meaningful occupations and the dynamic influence of environment on a person's performance this course combines surfing performance, focused group processing, and social participation to create opportunities for veterans to examine ways in which their individual values, abilities, and experiences can support successful transition to civilian life.

By providing individual support in the water for each child, preferably from one or both of their parents, to help build confidence and by adding extra fun challenges and games in the water we hoped that it would have similar beneficial effects on the children as well as their parents. Parents who did not go into the water but who remained on the beach whilst their child was in the water then had the opportunity to chat to other parents from the civilian and military community for a couple of hours and to discuss a wide range of common issues etc in a very welcoming atmosphere and environment.

Six, eight-week, Ocean/Water Therapy Courses were run:

- The two SLSGB courses were run at Praa Sands (10 children on each)
- The remaining 4 courses were run at the Southwest Lakes Trust Activity Centre at Stithians Lake.

The courses were free to participants and all equipment such as wetsuits, boots, gloves and surf boards were provided by Surf Action. Fully trained surf and water-sports instructors and lifeguards attended at all times. The courses were run at weekends to make them as inclusive as possible.

The courses started on the first weekend of April 2017 with 2 courses running consecutively, one on the Saturday and one on the Sunday. They then ran back to back for 24 weeks.

## **4. Evaluation Measures**

An important part of the project was evaluating whether the sessions had a positive effect on the participants.

Psychological well-being is now largely accepted as covering two perspectives: (1) the subjective experience of happiness (affect) and life satisfaction (the hedonic perspective); and (2) positive psychological functioning, good relationships with others and self-realization (the eudaimonic



perspective). The latter includes the capacity for self-development, positive relations with others, autonomy, self-acceptance and competence. Therefore, we wanted to use an easy but psychometrically robust, validated wellbeing scale which would reflect both the hedonic and eudaimonic perspective.

For the adults, we asked them to complete a 'Wheel of Life' evaluation tool (based on the recognised 'Emotional Needs Audit' developed by J. Griffin & I. Tyrrell and adapted for use with veterans by Surf Action). The adults were also engaged in conversation by the Surf Action volunteers and qualitative data was gathered about what changes they had experienced as each course progressed.

For the children, a simpler scale was used. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) was funded by the Scottish Government National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Well-being, commissioned by NHS Health Scotland, developed by the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh, and is jointly owned by NHS Health Scotland. It is a positively worded 14 area scale measuring emotional and psychological wellbeing on a respondent 1-5 Likert Scale. The higher the score, the better the wellbeing of the individual.

We asked the children to complete the simple 14 question questionnaire that used this scale to measure their self-esteem, self-confidence, relationships and achievements. This was completed at weeks 1,4 and 8.

## **Results and Findings**

### **1. Attendance**

The overall attendance figure of 87.5% was good and this was indicative of how enjoyable the participants found their courses. Considering that courses were run through the late spring, summer and then well into the autumn with the attendant common problems such as bad weather, illness, school commitments and family holidays etc, this was most gratifying as was the fact that only one session of one course had to be cancelled due to the weather making it unsafe to go into the water. We would hope that this will encourage the youngsters to continue participating in healthy outdoor activities at weekends.

### **2. Participant WEMWBS Analysis & Results:**

The children's WEMWBS scores on initial engagement with their courses were used as the baseline for measurement (T1) and then the Mean score (between 1 and 5), Standard Deviation ( $\sigma$ ) and Variance ( $\sigma^2$ ) were calculated across each of the 14 audit categories and each child. Their final WEMWBS scores at week 8 were then taken in the 14 audit categories (T2) and an Intervention Mean score calculated in each category and for each child along with the  $\sigma$  and  $\sigma^2$ . The initial and intervention Mean,  $\sigma$  and  $\sigma^2$  allowed for the better interpretation of the data particularly in terms of compactness and consistency. All data was entered onto a Surf Action spreadsheet so both individual data and group data was preserved always. This also allowed the generation of the necessary analytical data diagrams.

Most of the statistical analysis requires the data to be normally distributed so the data was checked to ensure this. Kurtosis and Skew were measured across all the data. If the measured values fell between -2 and +2 this was accepted as a good indication of normality. The extensive use of box and whisker diagrams also allowed for visual indications of normality. Some of the analysis can also be highly susceptible to 'outliers' in the data so this was also checked. Where outliers were identified the effect of inclusion and exclusion was examined. It was determined that no outliers needed to be excluded. This was confirmed by scatter diagrams. Correlations were calculated using Pearson Coefficients of Determination and Correlation. This allowed the calculation of statistical significance.

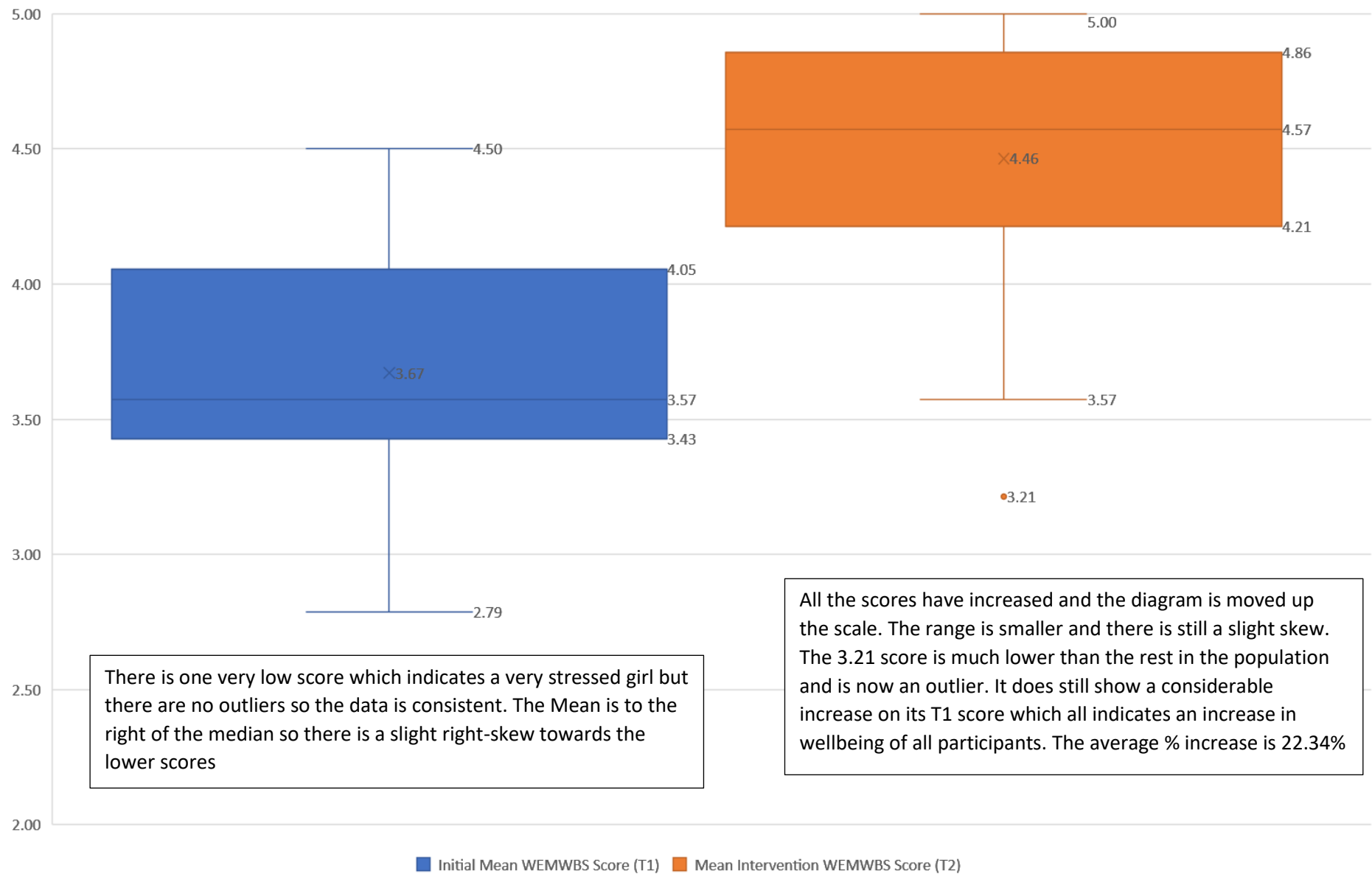


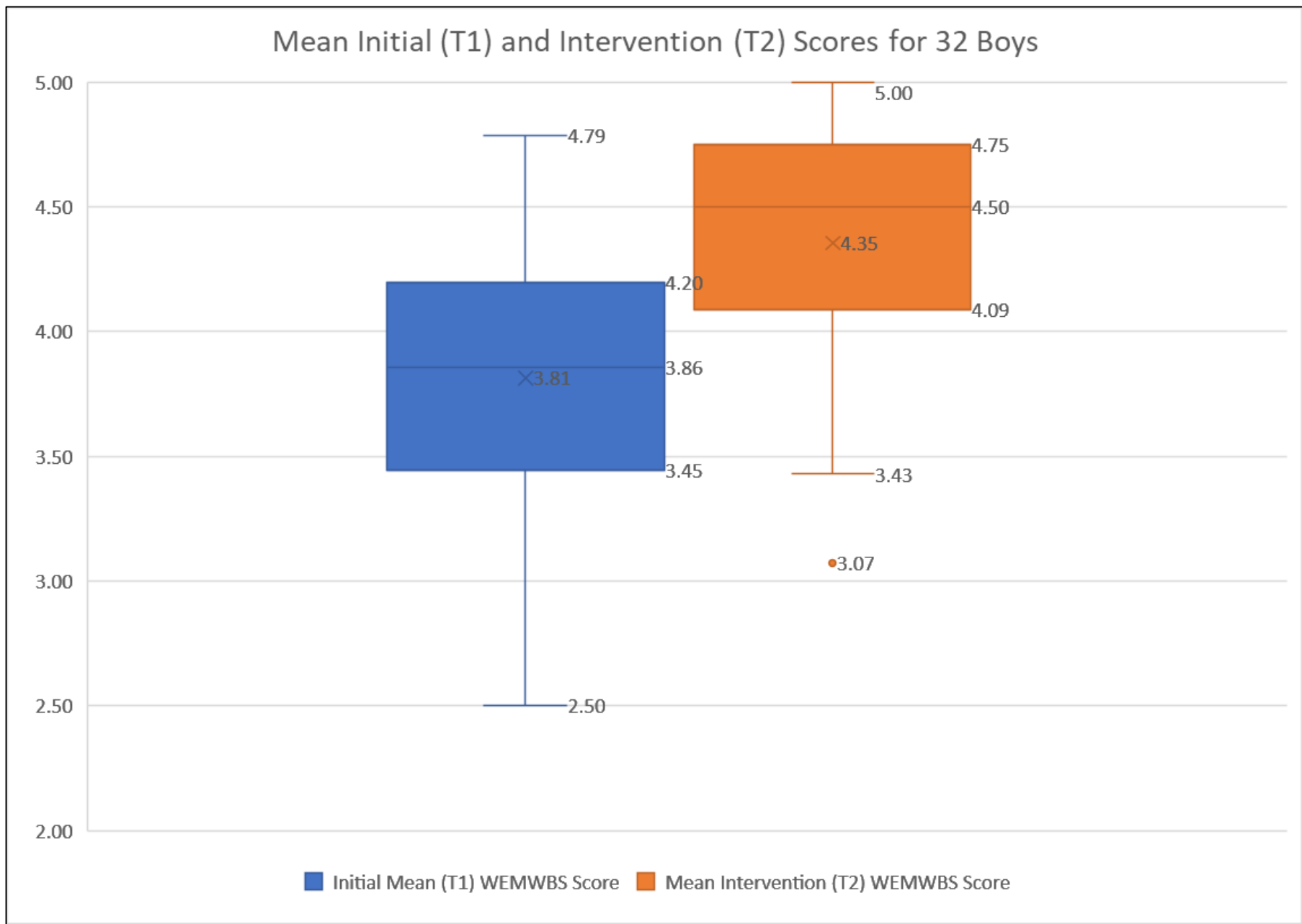
## **WEMWBS Analysis & Results:**

# Initial and Intervention Data for 52 Participants in 14 Audit Areas

Participants		Group Initial WEMWBS Scores																Group Intervention WEMWBS Scores																Total Initial WEMWBS Score	Total Intervention WEMWBS Score	% Change				
		I've been feeling optimistic about the future	I've been feeling useful	I've been feeling relaxed	I've been feeling interested in other people	I've had energy to spare	I've been dealing with problems well	I've been thinking clearly	I've been feeling good about myself	I've been feeling close to other people	I've been feeling confident	I've been able to make up my own minds about things	I've been feeling loved	I've been interested in new things	I've been feeling cheerful	Total Initial WEMWBS Score	Initial Mean WEMWBS Score	Initial Standard Deviation	Initial Variance	I've been feeling optimistic about the future	I've been feeling useful	I've been feeling relaxed	I've been feeling interested in other people	I've had energy to spare	I've been dealing with problems well	I've been thinking clearly	I've been feeling good about myself	I've been feeling close to other people	I've been feeling confident	I've been able to make up my own minds about things	I've been feeling loved	I've been interested in new things	I've been feeling cheerful				Total Intervention WEMWBS Score	Mean Intervention WEMWBS Score	Intervention Standard Deviation	Intervention Variance
1	12	2	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	48	3.43	0.65	0.42	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	50	3.57	0.51	0.26	48	50	4.17
2	12	4	5	3	2	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	63	4.50	0.94	0.88	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	68	4.86	0.36	0.13	63	68	7.94	
3	11	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	58	4.14	0.66	0.44	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	69	4.93	0.27	0.07	58	69	18.97	
4	13	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	48	3.43	0.51	0.26	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	65	4.64	0.50	0.25	48	65	35.42	
5	11	4	3	2	3	4	4	5	2	2	3	4	5	4	3	48	3.43	1.02	1.03	4	4	2	4	2	4	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	52	3.71	0.83	0.68	48	52	8.33	
6	12	4	4	4	1	4	4	4	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	58	4.14	1.10	1.21	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	68	4.86	0.36	0.13	58	68	17.24	
7	12	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	41	2.93	0.47	0.23	4	4	5	3	4	5	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	62	4.43	0.76	0.57	41	62	51.22	
8	14	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	46	3.29	0.47	0.22	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	63	4.50	0.52	0.27	46	63	36.96
9	12	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	5	56	4.00	0.55	0.31	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	69	4.93	0.27	0.07	56	69	23.21	
10	9	3	4	4	2	3	4	4	3	2	3	3	4	3	4	46	3.29	0.73	0.53	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	67	4.79	0.43	0.18	46	67	45.65	
11	12	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	55	3.93	0.27	0.07	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	64	4.57	0.51	0.26	55	64	16.36	
12	11	4	4	2	2	5	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	51	3.64	1.01	1.02	4	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	5	58	4.14	0.53	0.29	51	58	13.73	
13	12	1	2	3	1	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	3	39	2.79	1.05	1.10	3	4	4	2	4	3	3	2	3	3	5	3	3	45	3.21	0.80	0.64	39	45	15.38	
14	10	3	2	4	4	4	2	3	2	4	2	4	5	5	4	48	3.43	1.09	1.19	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	57	4.07	0.47	0.23	48	57	18.75	
15	10	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	3	54	3.86	0.53	0.29	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	68	4.86	0.36	0.13	54	68	25.93	
16	16	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	49	3.50	0.52	0.27	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	5	3	5	4	5	4	5	62	4.43	0.76	0.57	49	62	26.53
17	10	5	3	4	1	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	3	57	4.07	1.14	1.30	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	62	4.43	0.65	0.42	57	62	8.77	
18	9	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	55	3.93	0.62	0.38	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	70	5.00	0.00	0.00	55	70	27.27	
19	10	3	4	3	4	3	3	5	3	5	2	3	5	2	3	48	3.43	1.02	1.03	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	64	4.57	0.51	0.26	48	64	33.33
20	9	4	4	4	5	3	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	60	4.29	0.61	0.37	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	67	4.79	0.43	0.18	60	67	11.67	
21	11	3	4	1	2	5	3	2	2	2	3	4	5	4	3	43	3.07	1.21	1.46	4	4	4	3	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	53	3.79	0.58	0.34	43	53	23.26	
22	8	2	3	1	2	1	3	2	3	4	3	2	1	3	3	2	3.00	1.00	2.00	2	3	1	2	5	3	4	4	5	2	3	4	3	2	43	3.07	1.21	1.46	33	43	30.30
23	8	5	4	4	3	5	4	5	4	5	4	3	5	4	4	59	4.21	0.70	0.49	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	4	63	4.50	0.65	0.42	59	63	6.78
24	8	5	4	3	1	5	4	4	3	5	5	4	5	5	5	58	4.14	1.17	1.36	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	4	5	62	4.43	0.65	0.42	58	62	6.90
25	16	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	39	2.79	0.43	0.18	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	52	3.71	0.47	0.22	39	52	33.33	
26	10	3	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	46	3.29	0.61	0.37	3	3	4	1	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	51	3.64	0.93	0.86	46	51	10.87	
27	10	4	4	4	2	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	54	3.86	0.66	0.44	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	63	4.50	0.52	0.27	54	63	16.67	
28	16	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	5	57	4.07	0.62	0.38	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	65	4.64	0.50	0.25	57	65	14.04
29	11	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	66	4.71	0.47	0.22	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	69	4.93	0.27	0.07	66	69	4.55
30	9	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	63	4.50	0.52	0.27	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	67	4.79	0.43	0.18	63	67	6.35
31	10	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	4	4	49	3.50	0.65	0.42	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	52	3.71	0.47	0.22	49	52	6.12	
32	9	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	35	2.50	0.52	0.27	2	3	4	2	5	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	48	3.43	0.94	0.88	35	48	37.14
33	12	3	4	3	5	3	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	51	3.64	0.74	0.55	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	58	4.14	0.36	0.13	51	58	13.73	
34	7	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	44	3.14	0.77	0.59	5	4	3	5	5	4	4	5	3	5	4	1	5	58	4.14	1.17	1.36	44	58	31.82	
35	10	4	3	5	4	3	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	62	4.43	0.76	0.57	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	4												

Mean Initial (T1) and Intervention(T2) Scores for 20 Girls

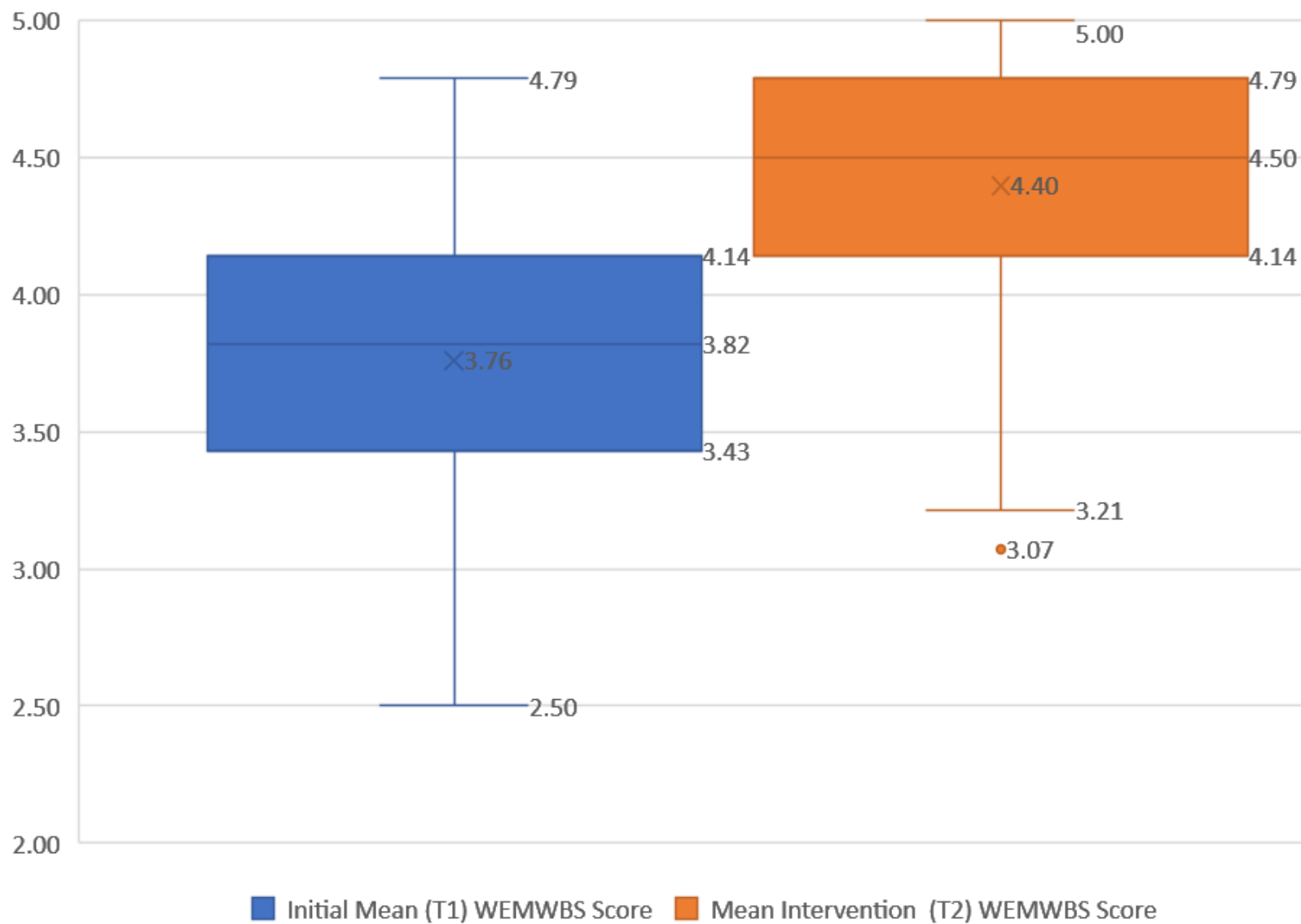




This clearly shows a significant increase in the wellbeing scores for the boys over the 8 weeks of their course. The average % score increase for the boys is 15.01%

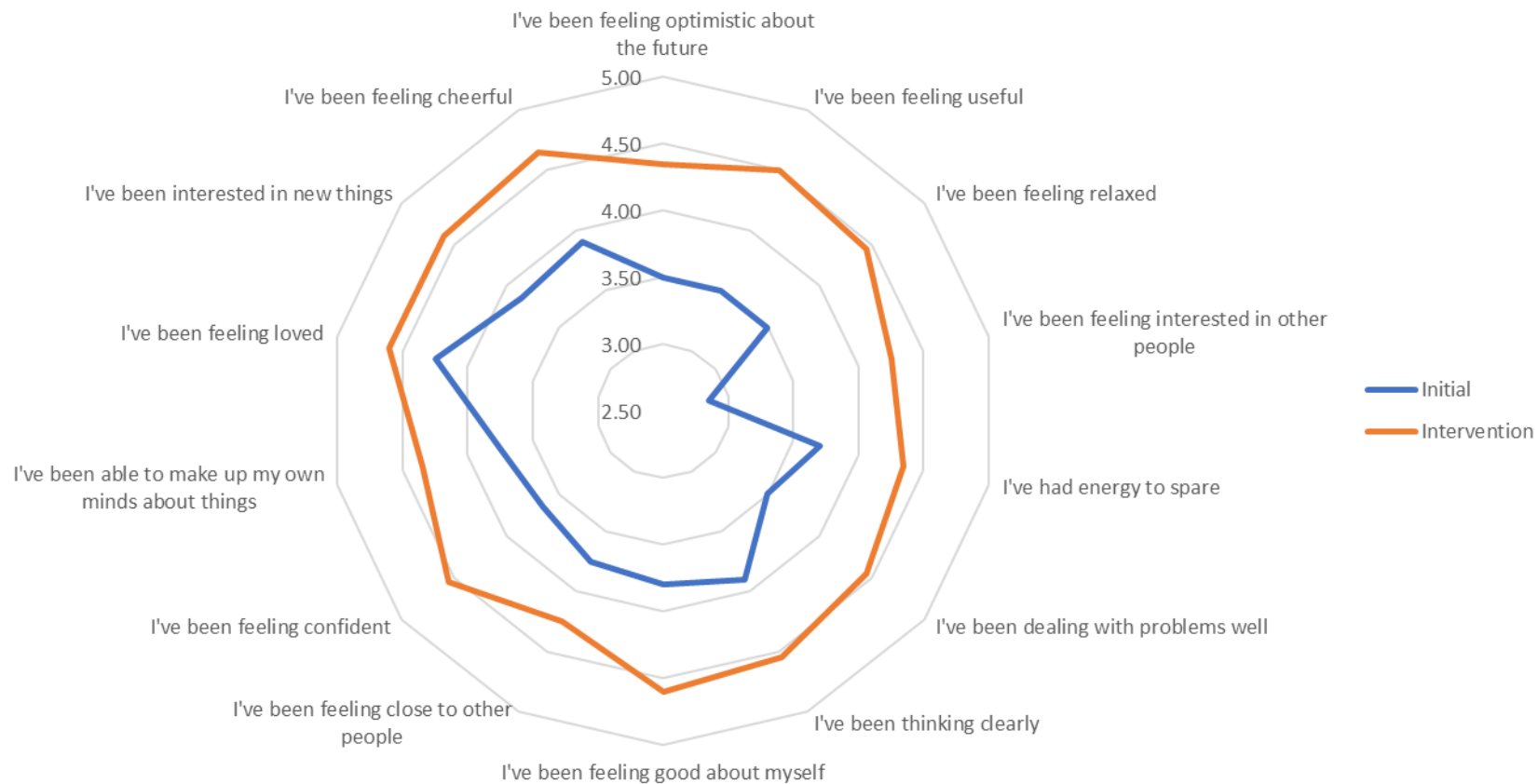


Mean Initial (T1) and Intervention (T2) Scores for 52 Participants



This clearly shows a significant increase in the wellbeing scores for the 52 participants over the 8 weeks of their course. The average % score increase is 17.83%

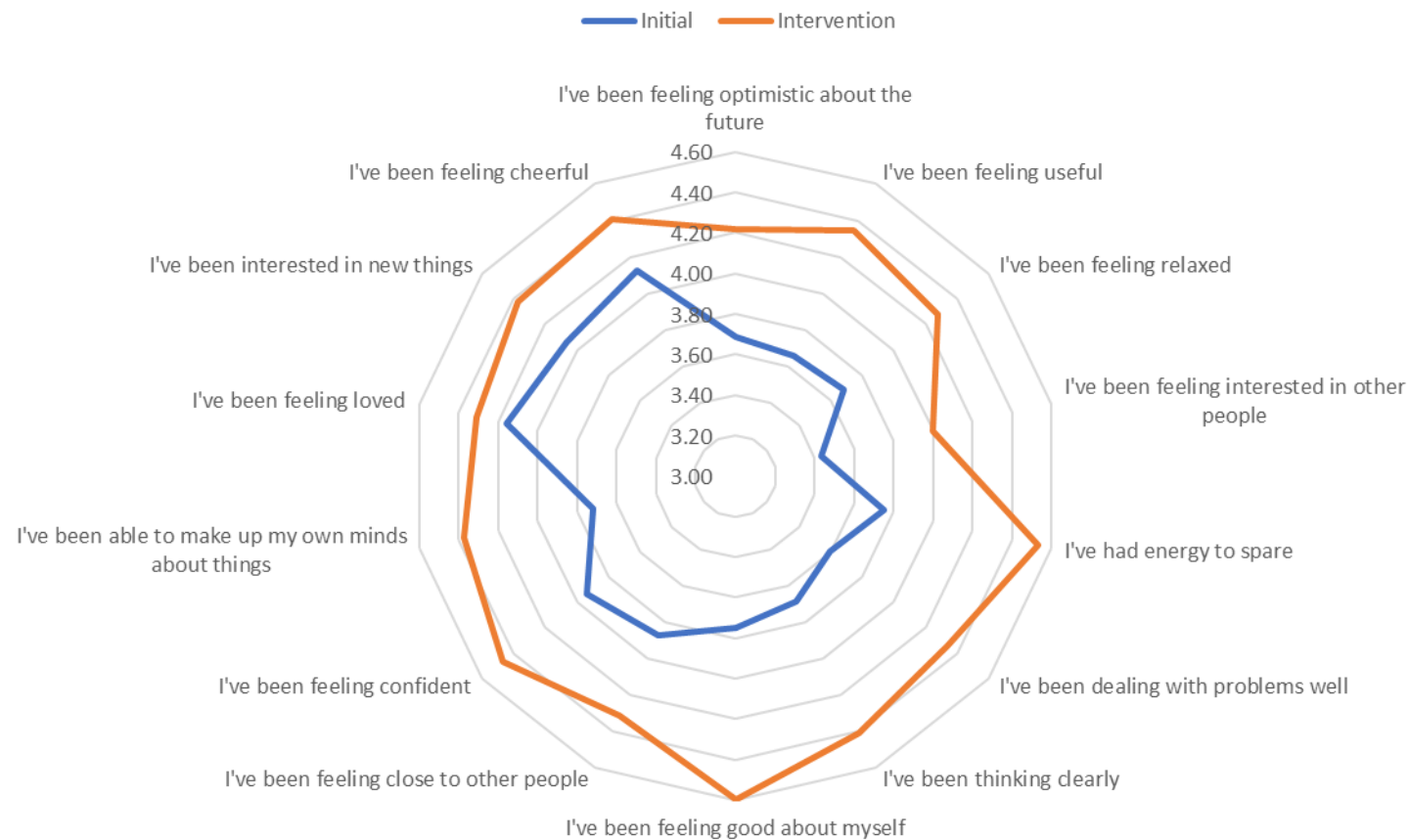
A Spiders Web Diagram Showing the Mean Initial and Intervention Scores for 20 Girls by Audit Area



The blue inner T1 score polygon is entirely contained within the orange T2 polygon which shows an increase in scores over all 14 audit areas. The size of the change in each audit area is shown by the distance apart between each polygon at that point.

This clearly shows an increase in the wellbeing scores for the girls

# A Spiders Web Diagram Showing the Mean Initial (T1) and Intervention (T2) Scores for 32 Boys in 14 Audit Areas



The blue inner T1 score polygon is entirely contained within the orange T2 polygon which shows an increase in scores over all 14 audit areas. The size of the change in each audit area is shown by the distance apart between each polygon at that point.

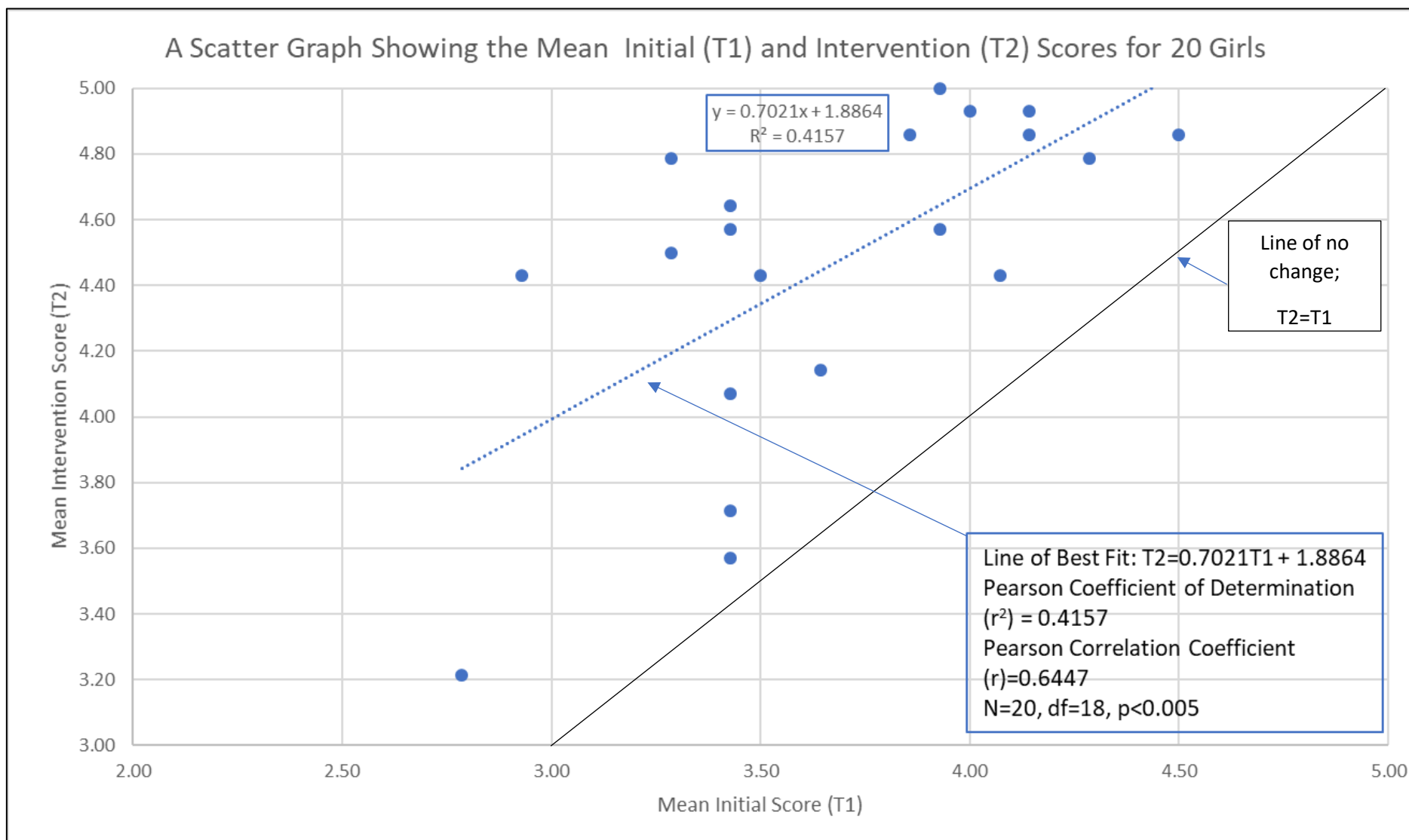
This clearly shows an increase in the wellbeing scores for the boys

A Spiders Web Diagram Showing the Mean Initial (T1) and Intervention (T2) Scores for 52 Participants in 14 Audit Areas



The blue inner T1 score polygon is entirely contained within the orange T2 polygon which shows an increase in scores over all 14 audit areas. The size of the change in each audit area is shown by the distance apart between each polygon at that point.

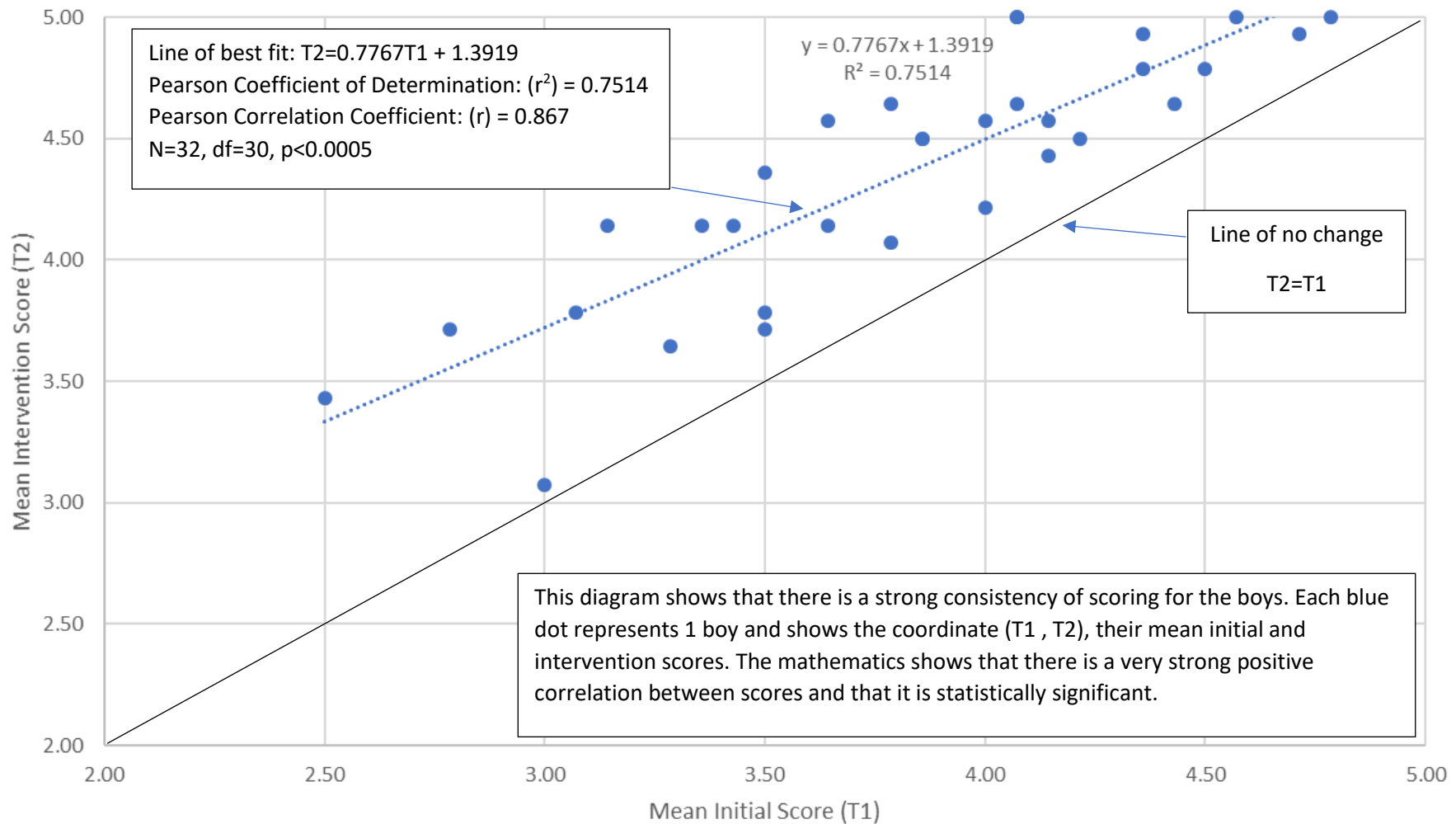
This clearly shows an increase in the wellbeing scores for the 52 participants



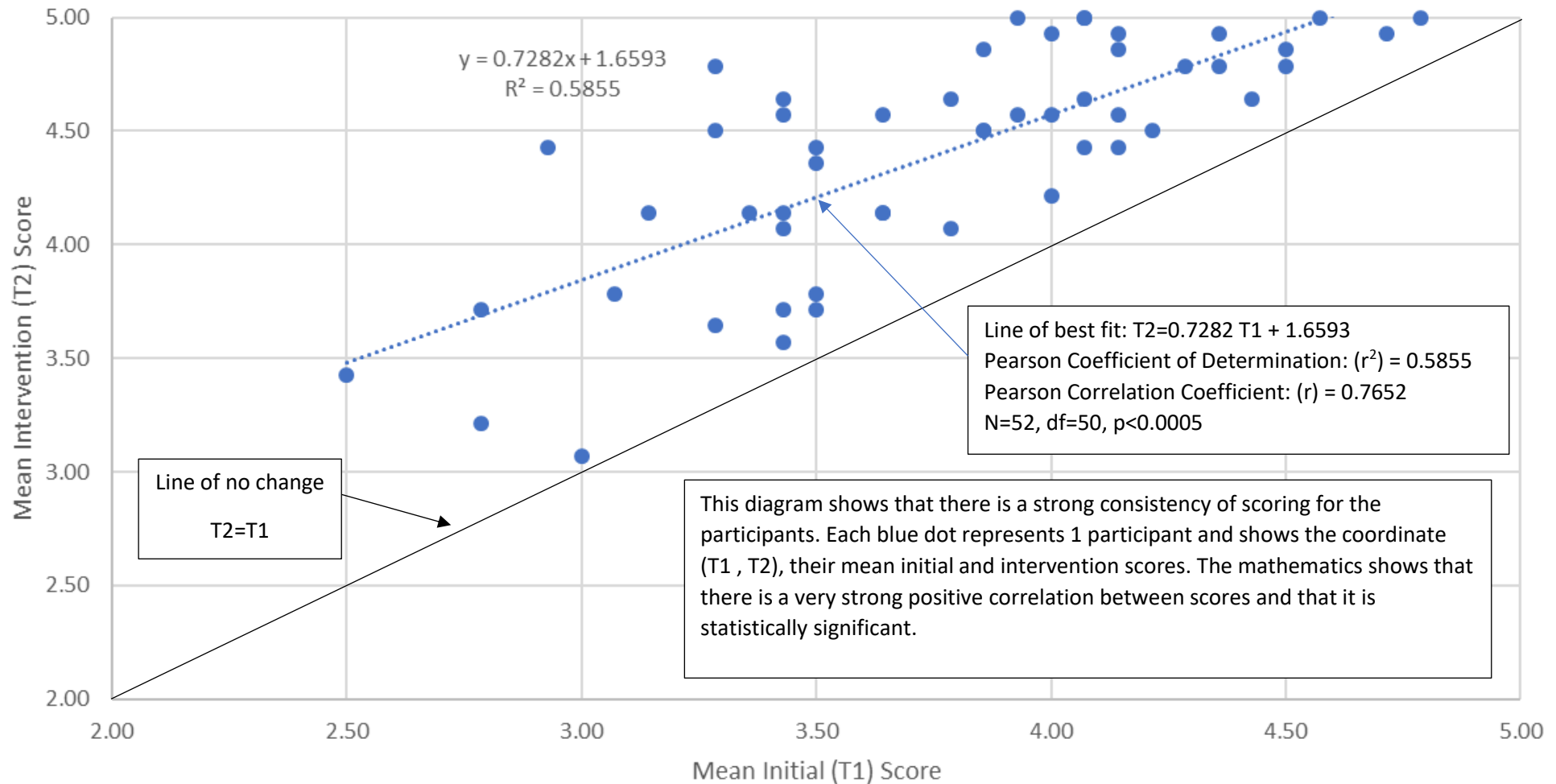
This diagram shows that there is a consistency of scoring for the girls. Each blue dot represents 1 girl and shows the coordinate (T1 , T2), their mean initial and intervention scores. The mathematics shows that there is a strong positive correlation between scores and that it is statistically significant.



A Scatter Graph Showing the Mean Initial (T1) and Intervention Scores (T2) for 32 Boys



A Scatter Graph Showing The Mean Initial (T1) and Intervention (T2) Scores for 52 Participants





## Outcomes

The outcomes agreed with the Royal British Legion at the outset were as follows

1. Support 52 children and 70/parents/guardians from the armed forces community
2. 20 Children undertake SLSGB courses
3. 32 children undertake BCU and BSUPA Courses
4. To build/reinforce family and community relationships.

## Children

The data above shows that we supported the 52 children in their sporting endeavours and that their wellbeing scores improved on average by:

- 22.34% for the girls
- 15.01 % for the boys
- 17.83% for the group as a whole.

In fact we engaged with a total of 72 children in this project which was very encouraging.

It was good to see so many girls participate and they seem to have benefited more in particular, something which we will note for the future. These scores also show that the childrens physical and psychological wellbeing has improved. These improvements were statistically significant.

In conversations with parents it was reported that;

- Several children had ADHD and their concentration improved during their participation with resultant noticeable improvements in behaviour and performance at school.
- Several children had been diagnosed on the autistic spectrum and they had not been able to settle on a hobby/activity which they could stick with until they took up surfing. Being in a non-judgmental group was a bonus and some parents have subsequently bought boards and wetsuits so that they can continue to benefit from this new found experience.
- One child had recently had an operation which had left a physical mark on their face and had become very withdrawn for fear of people noticing it. They loved the group experience and confidence building of the surfing and are now much more self-confident and resilient.
- In a role-reversal, some children had started to give their parents surf lessons!
- Strong new friendships had been made amongst the children and this was of particular help to those who were about to move up from their primary to new secondary schools.

In view of the above we achieved and indeed exceeded Outcomes 2 and 3.





## Parents and Guardians

We were genuinely impressed by the number of parents/guardians who stayed at the scene of each activity and either went into the water with their children or encouraged them from the waters edge.

- Most weeks all the children participating had their own dedicated family member in the water with them and this continued rain or shine!
- There were also grandparents, aunts and uncles who attended often bringing other young children with them. Many of them are now eager to participate in the future should we be able to run it again.
- Surfing was a great leveller as both parents and child were normally both learning a new skill and thus on a level playing field. This was excellent for inter-family competition.
- There was also a great mixing of ranks and rates amongst the parents/guardians ranging from the Captain of RNAS Culdrose and his family all the way down to able rates and their families. All mixed together really well because they were all learning a new skill and thus at the same level.
- Some parents have also enquired about being able to join our weekly veterans Saturday surf Clinic in Newquay with their children.
- The parents/guardians also took the opportunity to make new friendships and to discuss matters relevant to the modern service life. Some were about to deploy and others had just returned.
- At the time of writing some parents have already been sent to help out on the relief effort in the Caribbean at very short notice.

We engaged with over 100 parents/guardians and family members during the course of the project and supported 52 children and thus achieved and indeed exceeded Outcome 1.

## Community and Family Relationships

The qualitative conversational data and quantitative health and wellbeing data outlined above shows that we have helped improve family and armed forces community relationships and in doing so supported the Armed Forces Families Strategy of 2016. The long-term aim is to be able to continue doing this as the unstable world political outlook suggests these relationships will come under pressure very quickly in the future.

We would like to thank the Royal British Legion for supporting this project financially and also for the excellent video produced on the visit by their representatives. This was very well received on social media and got us a lot of good publicity for the services we provide. As an outcomes driven charity this is very important to us.







SurfAction, Unit 11, Long Rock Industrial Estate, Penzance, Cornwall, TR20 8HX  
 T: 01736 365645 | Email: [info@surfaction.co.uk](mailto:info@surfaction.co.uk)  
[www.surfaction.co.uk](http://www.surfaction.co.uk) | Registered Charity No. 1140191

