

Coaching in the UK: A Spotlight on Mental and Physical Health

In 2017, UK Coaching commissioned the largest-ever survey into coaches and coaching. Over 20,000 adults were surveyed about their experience of receiving coaching and their experience of being a coach. The survey revealed a positive association between coaching or receiving coaching, and physical and mental health.

Coaching

People who are actively coaching¹ were more likely to report excellent or good physical and mental health than those who are not actively coaching and those who have never coached.

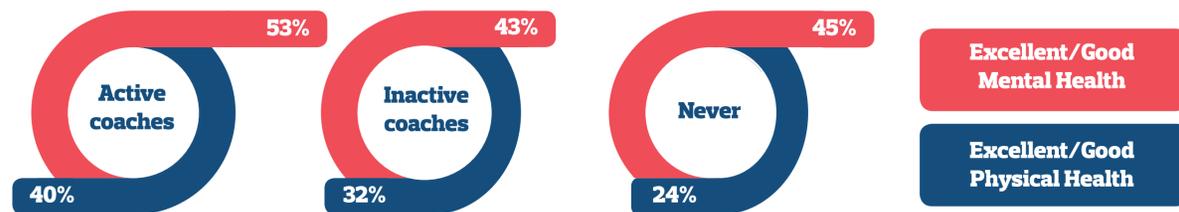
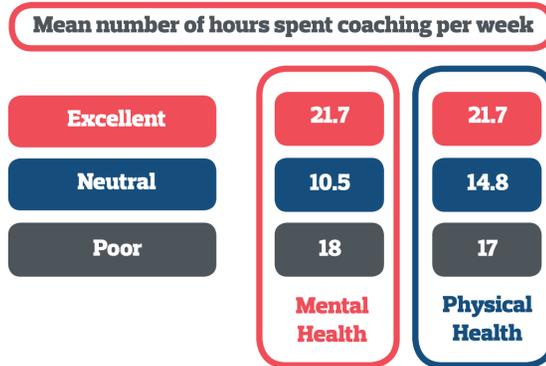


Figure 1: Proportion of coaches or those who have never coached who report excellent or good physical or mental health

Time Spent Coaching

Those who rated their physical or mental health as excellent or good spend, on average, 4.5 hours and 3.5 hours longer coaching per week than those who rated their physical or mental health as poor.

Figure 2: Mean number of hours spent coaching per week according to physical and mental health ratings



Paid vs Volunteer Coaches

A greater proportion of volunteer coaches rated their mental health as excellent or good compared to paid coaches or coaches who are both paid and volunteer.

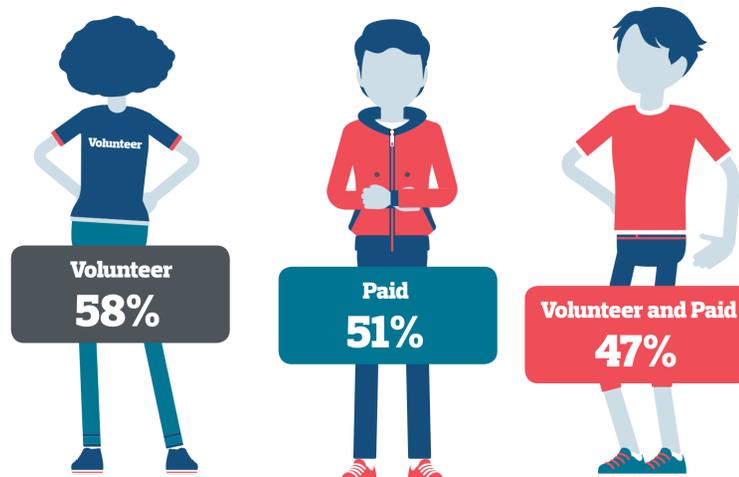


Figure 3: Proportion of coaches who report their mental health as excellent or good

¹Those who coached within the previous 12 months of the survey.

Receiving Coaching

Receiving coaching is also linked positively to physical and mental health. A greater proportion of coached participants reported excellent or good physical and mental health, than individuals who participate in sport or physical activity without a coach, or those who have never participated in sport or physical activity.

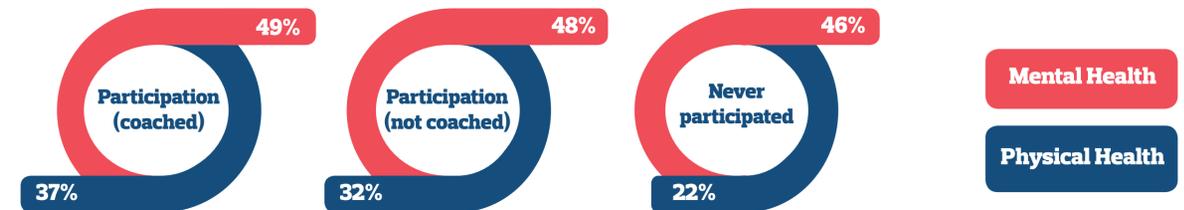


Figure 4: Mental and physical health ratings according to participation status

Time Spent Receiving Coaching

A greater proportion of coached participants also rated their mental and physical health as good or excellent compared to those who participated in sport/physical activity (PA) but did not receive coaching.

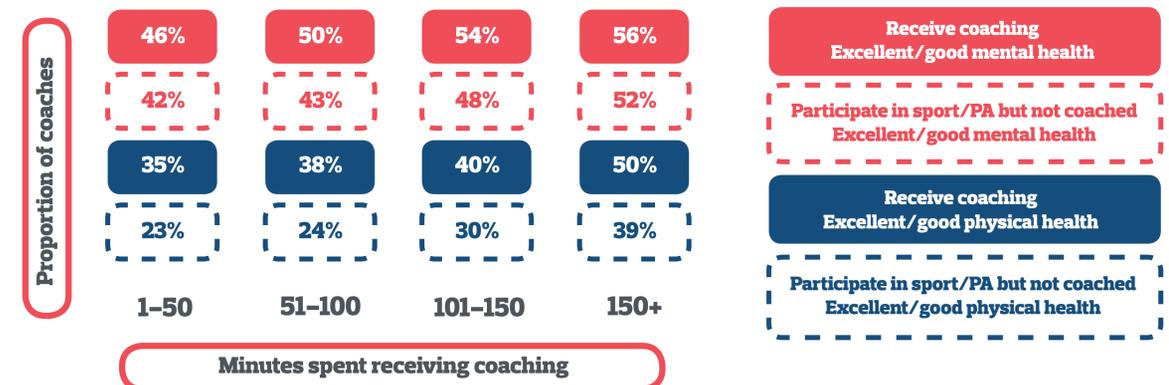


Figure 5: Proportion of people who rated their physical and mental health as good or excellent according to time spent taking part in physical activity

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Coached participants reported healthier BMI than participants who were not coached and those who have never participated in sport or physical activity.

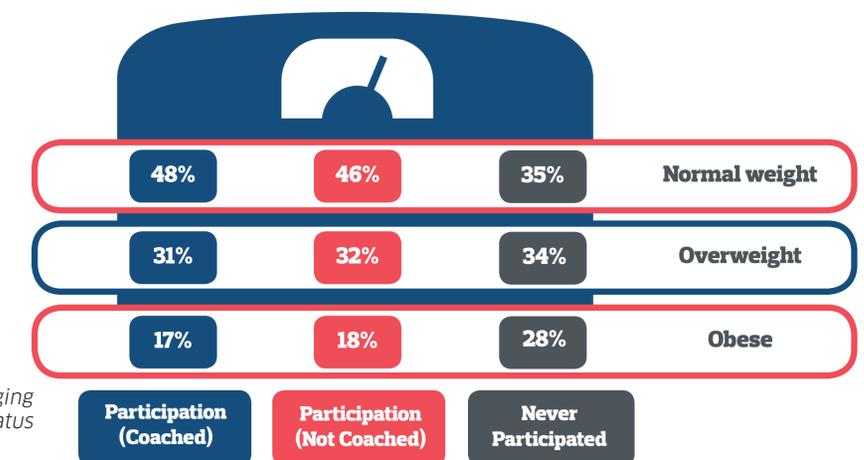


Figure 6: Proportion of participants belonging to BMI group according to participation status

A positive association exists between coaching and receiving coaching, and physical and mental health, although we cannot conclude that coaching or receiving coaching results in better mental or physical health. It could be that those who report more positive mental and physical health ratings seek out coaching or coached opportunities, or other activities. Further investigation is warranted to provide evidence of the dual benefits of coaching for both the coach and the participant.