

“This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis Group in Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health on 08/02/2021, available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/2159676X.2021.1879919>”

1

2

3

Narratives of trauma and resilience from street soccer players

4

5

6

7

8

9

10 Abstract

11 Trauma exposure is a global public health concern, with lifelong psychological, social,
12 behavioural, and physical health detriments. There is a growing need for trauma-informed
13 interventions, with Sport for Development (SfD) programmes identified as one set of promising
14 interventions. This narrative inquiry explores the lives of soccer players taking part in two SfD
15 programmes (e.g., Street Soccer Scotland, Street Soccer USA) that serve populations with high
16 rates of trauma exposure (e.g., homeless, immigrant, refugee). Through interviews with players
17 and significant others, it became clear that the Street Soccer programmes were using the
18 popularity and appeal of the sport to achieve broader goals. Beyond this, they have embraced the
19 core tenets of trauma-informed programming, cultivating growth and resilience amidst an
20 ecological framework with interrelated systems.

21

22 *Keywords:* homeless, immigrant, refugee, sport for development, sport-based youth development

23

24

25 Exposure to trauma (e.g., abuse, neglect, substance abuse, mental health problems,
26 community violence, armed conflict, natural disasters) is a global public health concern, with
27 over two-thirds of individuals likely to experience at least one traumatic event in their lifetime
28 (Benjet et al. 2016). As awareness of its prevalence has grown, the body of research identifying
29 both individual and societal consequences of trauma have expanded, from lifelong
30 psychological, social, behavioural, and physical health detriments (e.g., Anda et al. 2006) to
31 accumulating costs and productivity losses (e.g., child welfare, medical care) (e.g., Fang et al.
32 2012). The risk is especially grave for those with complex (i.e., exposure to multiple or
33 prolonged traumatic events) and developmental trauma exposure.

34 One population with high rates of complex and developmental trauma exposure is the
35 homeless population (SAMHSA 2014). Those affected by homelessness are not only struggling
36 with social, psychological, and behavioural health issues due to complex and developmental
37 trauma, but these are compounded by serious health problems (e.g., mental illness, substance
38 abuse, infectious and chronic diseases) and other challenges (e.g., extreme poverty, hunger,
39 increased risk of assault) connected to homelessness (Hwang and Dunn 2005). Another
40 population with high rates of trauma exposure are immigrants, with common experiences
41 ranging from physical maltreatment/abuse/assault, domestic violence, and community violence
42 to grief, loss, anxiety, and depression (Beehler, Birman, and Campbell 2012). Refugees are a
43 subset of the immigrant population with higher rates of trauma exposure, given their experiences
44 are more frequently characterized by war, violence, torture, persecution, poverty, hunger,
45 displacement, and forced separation (Ellis, Murray, and Barrett 2019). Additionally, the
46 resettlement and acculturation process can be quite arduous due to factors like isolation,
47 discrimination, identity invalidation, cultural dissonance, and unfamiliarity with language,

48 transportation, and educational, medical, and legal systems (Beehler, Birman, and Campbell
49 2012; Ellis, Murray, and Barrett 2019). All of these populations also navigate barriers to long-
50 term housing, employment and educational opportunities, rehabilitation and resettlement
51 programmes, and beyond. Given these concerns, there is a need for interventions that directly
52 address the potential ramifications of past traumatic experiences and current realities, facilitating
53 pathways out of homelessness and/or support during the resettlement and acculturation process.

54 A growing number of promising and evidence-informed interventions have been
55 developed to help those with trauma exposure, often describing their approach as ‘trauma-
56 informed’ (e.g., Beehler, Birman, and Campbell 2012; D’Andrea et al. 2013). Core tenets of
57 trauma-informed practice are described by the four ‘Rs’: (a) realizing the ubiquity of trauma, (b)
58 recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma, (c) responding by translating the science of
59 trauma into practice and policy, and (d) resisting retraumatization (Purtle 2018; SAMHSA 2014).
60 A common theme in these interventions is the cultivation of resilience (Bethell et al. 2017;
61 Massey and Whitley 2020), defined as the capacity to sustain one’s well-being and achieve
62 positive outcomes in response to trauma (Zolkoski and Bullock 2012). Resilience is understood
63 to be a multi-dimensional construct with individual, family, community, and environmental
64 determinants (Ungar, Ghazinour, and Richter 2013). The most promising interventions for
65 populations with high exposure to complex and developmental trauma (e.g., homeless,
66 immigrant, refugee) are those which cultivate resilience while intersecting various systems
67 within an ecological framework (Bethell et al. 2017; Cronley and Evans 2017; Massey and
68 Williams 2020; Montgomery 2011).

69 Sport for Development (SfD) programmes are one set of interventions with great
70 potential to serve homeless, immigrant, and refugee populations, given their popularity and

71 appeal, commitment to trauma-informed practices, focus on growth and resilience (rather than
72 prevention or deficit-reduction), and intersection with interrelated systems (D’Andrea et al.
73 2013; Massey and Whitley 2020; Massey et al. 2015; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018).
74 Two such programmes are Street Soccer Scotland (SSS) and Street Soccer USA (SSUSA), which
75 provide year-round services for their players (e.g., sport programming, clinical services,
76 educational and employment opportunities) and serve as national partners of the Homeless
77 World Cup. Across four cities in Scotland, SSS welcomes individuals from a variety of
78 backgrounds, including homelessness, mental health issues, addiction, and long-term
79 unemployment. In 14 U.S. cities, SSUSA offers programming for children and youth living
80 below the poverty line and attending under-performing schools, along with specific populations
81 not restricted by age (e.g., homeless families, individuals in recovery, refugees). Both SfD
82 programmes prioritize safe spaces, caring and trained coaches and support staff, and an
83 evidence-based, trauma-informed curriculum to cultivate growth and resilience in their players.
84 There is also an appreciation of their programmes’ intersectionality, with strong connections to
85 systems and services that support steps toward education, recovery, housing, language learning,
86 job training, and beyond.

87 Over the past decade, researchers have begun exploring the impact of the Homeless
88 World Cup on Street Soccer players selected to attend the annual global tournament and
89 participate on national teams (e.g., Australia, UK, France). However, much less research has
90 explored the impact of Street Soccer programming, such as SSS and SSUSA, on their players’
91 lives. Given that one-off SfD events like the Homeless World Cup can produce different
92 experiences and outcomes for participants, with distinct challenges and limitations (e.g., social
93 and psychological pressure of competition, sustainability, lasting impact) (Magee and Jeanes,

94 2013; Schulenkorf 2016; Trejo, Attali, and Magee 2015), there is a need to better understand the
95 impact of Street Soccer programming separate from the Homeless World Cup – especially since
96 most Street Soccer participants will not get the opportunity to participate in the Homeless World
97 Cup. Both Sherry and O’May (2013) and Jarvie and Ahrens (2019) focused on SSS (and the
98 Australian Street Soccer programme for Sherry and O’May) in addition to the Homeless World
99 Cup, although findings specific to SSS programming were rarely isolated from the tournament’s
100 impact. This research suggested that the Homeless World Cup, in combination with Street
101 Soccer programming, can contribute to health (e.g., joy, reduced symptoms of mental illness),
102 develop capabilities (e.g., coping, self-improvement, leadership, confidence), build social capital
103 (e.g., bonding, bridging, and linking), and cultivate pathways (e.g., access to social and health
104 services). Sherry (2010) also explored the impact of the Homeless World Cup and the Australian
105 Street Soccer programme on their players, with the central focus on the tournament’s impact.
106 Findings specific to the Australian Street Soccer programme highlighted how social inclusion is
107 cultivated by both players and support staff, resulting in enhanced self-esteem and sense of
108 belonging. Programming also provides valuable links to housing, rehabilitation programmes,
109 employment and educational opportunities, and extended community support networks.

110 Despite this body of research, there is still limited evidence on the impact Street Soccer
111 programmes may have on their players – as well as how and why this impact may occur. This
112 aligns with broader concerns about the SfD evidence base, with hundreds of programmes around
113 the world using sport in innovative ways to impact the lives of individuals and the communities
114 in which they live, and yet there continue to be questions about the quality of research on these
115 very programmes (Whitley et al. 2019a, 2019b). Additionally, the studies which do exist often
116 overlook the voices and perspectives of the participants themselves (Darnell, Whitley, and

117 Massey 2016), who can help us better understand their lived experiences with complex and
118 developmental trauma, homelessness, immigrant and refugee status, and beyond. A recent meta-
119 study by Massey and Williams (2020) cited the value of narrative inquiry when considering how
120 scholarship may expand our understanding of trauma survivors' experiences in sport and
121 enhance evidence-informed practice. Given that homeless, immigrant, and refugee populations
122 are among the most marginalized and silenced groups in society, with stigma, discrimination,
123 exclusion, and isolation pervasive to their everyday experiences (Beehler, Birman, and Campbell
124 2012; Ellis, Murray, and Barrett 2019; Hwang and Dunn 2005), it is critical to provide these
125 individuals with a platform to share their lived experiences to inform practice, policy, and
126 research efforts. Thus, this study was designed as a narrative inquiry, with multiple in-depth
127 interviews with SSS and SSUSA players exploring their life histories and current realities. This
128 includes a focus on their experiences in Street Soccer programming, along with interrelated
129 systems and services. This adds to the small, but growing, body of literature within SfD that
130 prioritizes the voices of those with lived experiences (e.g., Magee and Jeanes 2013; Parker,
131 Meek, and Lewis 2014; Young and Okada, 2016).

132 Additionally, to better understand the contextualized and multifaceted nature of their
133 lives and their participation in Street Soccer programming, interviews were conducted with
134 family members, friends, Street Soccer coaches, and others, with these interviews facilitating the
135 exploration of interrelated systems in the players' lives. This research design is a direct response
136 to Massey and Williams' (2020) call for gathering multiple perspectives from diverse
137 stakeholders, along with Massey and Whitley's (2019) call for a systems approach to SfD
138 research. Additionally, this study is a multi-site design with individuals from two SfD
139 programmes located in different countries (i.e., Scotland, U.S.). Overall, this approach responds

140 to recommendations for more innovative, diverse, and rigorous research methods in SfD research
141 (Darnell, Whitley, and Massey 2016; Massey and Whitley 2019; Whitley et al. 2019a, 2019b).

142 **Methodology**

143 This narrative inquiry draws from a larger study in which we seek to understand the SSS
144 and SSUSA players' life histories and current realities, along with the longitudinal impact of
145 Street Soccer programming and the Homeless World Cup. Our study is underpinned by
146 philosophical assumptions of ontological relativism (i.e., there are multiple, created, mind-
147 dependent realities) and epistemological constructionism (i.e., knowledge is socially constructed
148 and subjective) (Smith and Sparkes 2009). In line with these assumptions, narrative inquiry was
149 selected as it enables exploration of the complexity of human life in and across time, along with
150 social, cultural, and public narratives about trauma, homelessness, immigrant and refugee status,
151 resilience, and beyond – and the intersection of sport and interrelated systems (Frank 2010;
152 Smith 2016).

153 **Positionality**

154 We embraced our roles as storyanalysts, not storytellers, and recognize that we jointly
155 construct the stories shared by players (McGannon and Smith 2016; Smith 2016). Thus, our own
156 lived experiences affect the research process, requiring awareness of our positionality and
157 engagement in reflexive practice. The primary Scottish researcher ([First Name 1]) is a PhD
158 student and former soccer coach with experience living and working in Scotland's most
159 disadvantaged communities, along with multiple years embedded within SfD programmes to
160 explore their inner mechanisms and evaluate their impact. The primary U.S. researcher ([First
161 Name 2]) is a former university athlete and coach with both positive and negative sport
162 experiences, along with extensive experience in qualitative research and in designing,

163 implementing, and evaluating SfD programmes in under-resourced communities. Both of us
164 have had strong multi-year partnerships with our respective Street Soccer programmes (i.e., SSS,
165 SSUSA). Beginning with the first conversations about this study with one another and with SSS
166 and SSUSA, we engaged in a reflexive process about how we communicate with players and the
167 Street Soccer programmes, along with how we are shaped by the players' stories (McGannon
168 and Smith 2015).

169 As for researcher roles, [First Name 1] conducted all SSS interviews and performed
170 initial analyses of their stories, while [First Name 2] did the same for SSUSA. [First Name 3]
171 collaborated with [First Name 2] on the study design and multi-site data collection. [First Name
172 3] also served as a critical friend for [First Name 1] during the analysis of the SSS stories, as did
173 [First Name 4] for [First Name 2] with the SSUSA stories. Throughout this study, the research
174 team worked from an interdisciplinary lens (i.e., sport psychology and sport sociology),
175 recognizing the potential to advance trauma-related work within the SfD field from both
176 psychological and sociological perspectives.

177 *Study design*

178 Following approval from institutional ethics committees at both researchers' institutions,
179 along with selection of the Homeless World Cup teams by SSS and SSUSA, [First Name 1] and
180 [First Name 2] met (independently) with SSS or SSUSA staff to discuss team members who may
181 be possible study participants. Programme staff were involved: (a) to ensure that individuals
182 invited to participate would feel comfortable being interviewed, (b) to enhance the diversity of
183 the participant pool, and (c) because staff were needed on occasion for logistical purposes (e.g.,
184 access to facilities for interviews).

185 The researchers then held individual conversations with each possible participant about
186 the study purposes, voluntary nature of participation, and ability to terminate data collection. It
187 was stressed that their decision to participate in the study would not impact their participation in
188 Street Soccer programming and/or the Homeless World Cup. Additionally, their rights to
189 confidentiality were explained, including the steps taken to ensure programme staff could not
190 access identifying information, even if they knew who was participating. If the player indicated
191 interest in participating in the study, they read the informed consent form, asked questions as
192 necessary, and signed the form. The final sample was comprised of eight SSS players and eight
193 SSUSA players, with time participating in Street Soccer programming ranging from less than
194 one year to 11 years. Players (seven female, nine male) ranged in age from 18 to 45, with 11
195 players identifying as white, four as black, and one as Latinx. Five players were immigrants or
196 refugees born outside of the U.S. or Scotland.

197 Players took part in the initial interview (time-point one), with [First Name] conducting
198 all SSS interviews in person ($M = 28$ minutes) and [First Name 2] conducting seven SSUSA
199 interviews in-person and one over videoconference ($M = 61$ minutes). These interviews
200 encouraged players to reflect upon their life stages and domains in an approach consistent with
201 life history interviewing (e.g., Cowan and Taylor 2016). A semi-structured interview guide,
202 informed by SfD literature, homeless, immigrant, and refugee population literature, and the
203 researchers' own experiences as practitioners and scholars, elicited further reflections on the role
204 of Street Soccer programming and interrelated systems and services. Additional reflections
205 focused on the upcoming Homeless World Cup, and subsequent interviews explored the impact
206 of the event itself (time-point two) and the long-term impact (time-point three). However,
207 players' experiences in this tournament is not the focus of this paper.

208 At the end of the time-point two interviews, players were asked to identify family
209 members, friends, Street Soccer staff, and/or others who could provide additional perspectives. It
210 was explained that these secondary participants would know the SSS and SSUSA players were
211 study participants, but the researchers would not discuss any details shared by players in
212 interviews, so that confidentiality was maintained.

213 These secondary participants were contacted via telephone or email that included a brief
214 study description, the consent form, and a request to schedule an in-person or telephone meeting.
215 If a meeting was arranged, [First Name 1] (with possible SSS secondary participants) and [First
216 Name 2] (with possible SSUSA secondary participants) described the study purposes, voluntary
217 nature of participation, rights to confidentiality, and ability to terminate the interview. It was
218 stressed that their decision to participate in the study and/or their responses would not impact the
219 players' engagement in SSS or SSUSA programming. If they indicated interest in participating in
220 the study, consent was obtained. The final sample was comprised of three SSS secondary
221 participants and eight SSUSA secondary participants: two (step)parents, one friend, one sister,
222 and six Street Soccer coaches all over 17 years of age.

223 Secondary participants then took part in the interview, with [First Name 1] conducting all
224 secondary SSS interviews in person ($M = 53$ minutes) and [First Name 2] conducting all SSUSA
225 interviews over telephone ($M = 31$ minutes). These interviews explored their relationships with
226 the players, along with the individual's life stages/domains (e.g., childhood, school, family,
227 homelessness, immigrant and refugee status) and experiences in Street Soccer programming, the
228 Homeless World Cup, and interrelated systems and services.

229 ***Data analysis***

230 Thematic narrative analysis was selected as the most appropriate analytic approach,
231 focusing on the story content (i.e., *whats*) rather than the *hows* of stories. The analysis followed
232 Smith's (2016) seven-step guidelines, with the understanding that this was a cyclical and
233 iterative process. The first step in this guide is writing, which we began early and returned to
234 throughout the entire analytic process. The data were transcribed and files organized, followed
235 by narrative indwelling where the researchers (re)read the interview transcripts while listening to
236 the recordings and writing memos with initial impressions. Narrative themes and thematic
237 relationships within stories were then identified for each player, with [First Name 1] performing
238 this initial analyses of SSS stories and [First Name 2] doing the same for SSUSA stories. Serving
239 as critical friends to challenge assumptions and suggest alternative interpretations of data (Smith
240 and McGannon, 2017), [First Name 3] and [First Name 4] reviewed these themes and thematic
241 relationships, engaging in critical dialogue on discrepancies with their country-specific
242 colleague. Next, [First Name 1] and [First Name 2] described and interpreted these themes and
243 thematic relationships for each player, which was again reviewed by and discussed with their
244 critical friends.

245 At this time, themes and thematic relationships across players (first within country, then
246 across programmes) were identified and critically discussed, along with more detailed
247 descriptions and interpretations of these themes and thematic relationships. Throughout these
248 analytic steps, we sought to keep the stories intact, seeking both manifest and latent meanings of
249 data without segmenting the data into fragments. In the final step, we represented the results
250 through a realist tale, going through multiple iterations as we sought to capture the key content in
251 an engaging, insightful manner.

252 **Experiences and impact of complex and developmental trauma**

253 All players in this study experienced complex and developmental trauma, yet due to
254 space limitations, narratives which were especially powerful and representative are shared below
255 (and in the following sections). Themes across players are identified in Tables 1, 2, and 3. All
256 names are pseudonyms commonly used in the U.S. and Scotland (to ensure anonymity), with the
257 exception of those born in another country.

258 [INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

259 *Corinne*

260 Corinne grew up with an inconsistent support system (e.g., family, peers), including a series
261 of abusive/destructive relationships that featured violence, assault, drugs, control, and verbal
262 abuse (e.g., ‘you’re a fat piece of shit’). She was diagnosed with bipolar disorder which resulted
263 in heavy medication at a young age leading to substantial weight gain. These experiences led to a
264 set of struggles that influenced Corinne quite significantly. First, she had very low self-esteem
265 and self-worth (believing ‘I’m nothing’), leading to the use of cocaine to ‘check out’ and numb
266 her feelings. Throughout her adolescence and into early adulthood, Corinne experienced minimal
267 autonomy and independence, beginning when her doctor prescribed medication leading her to
268 feel controlled by the drugs. Later on, her boyfriend controlled every part of her life, and she
269 never advocated or ‘showed up’ for herself. Additionally, Corinne experienced extreme social
270 anxiety amidst an unstable world around her, without a place to call home for years as she
271 bounced between schools and treatment centres. In addition, she was hesitant to share her story
272 with others (even with family), with her abusive boyfriend further drawing her away from others
273 that resulted in feelings of isolation. She described him this way:
274 He was very abusive. Towards the end I almost died...He pulled a gun, it jammed. It was a
275 devastating relationship. He beat me. I have a healed cheek fracture, I have healed skull

276 fractures. He was awful. He was an alcoholic. He'd black out and beat me. He ended up
277 assaulting me in the same way that I had been assaulted before. This reality led to a suicide
278 attempt, where Corinne received help (at first) but then returned to her abusive boyfriend,
279 demonstrating the cyclical nature of her behaviour and environment.

280 *Gary*

281 His parents' divorce, domestic abuse, and alcoholism evoked fear, confusion, and anger
282 in Gary.

283 The physical abuse with my step-dad...there didn't have to be a reason for it, for when it
284 would happen. It would just happen. So, I was kind of [walking on] eggshells...that's
285 how my behaviour, that was my coping mechanism. My defence. Start being this bad boy
286 and try and keep people at arm's length.

287 To cope, he took drugs (e.g., cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine), was regularly truant from school, and
288 isolated himself from others. Gary ultimately left his family home at 16 to live in homeless
289 shelters, which accelerated his drug use and criminal behaviour (e.g., housebreaking). 'At this
290 point, it was torture. Absolute torture, because I didn't want to be around about anybody. I had
291 gone right into my shell. I was a recluse. Scared of my own shadow, and it was absolute torture.'

292 Ultimately, he spent nine months in a young offenders' institution. Eventually, Gary
293 attempted suicide, which led his father to send him to another country for safety and structure. In
294 the midst of this respite, trouble found Gary once again with a brutal mugging and beating. He
295 returned home for treatment and reunited with friends and family, but he became addicted to
296 heroin. This led the mother of his children to move away and restrict access to his children.
297 Though Gary remained resilient and tried to continue working during his addiction, he felt he
298 had disgraced his family, leading to mental health problems (e.g., anxiety, fear).

299 I maintained jobs throughout my using, my addiction, but on the surface, I maybe looked
300 alright to people, but underneath it wasn't...I maintained the feeling of self-loathing that
301 I've got in myself, all the damage I'm causing my family members.

302 He ultimately lost his job when his boss found drug paraphernalia in the company vehicle.

303 *Sophia*

304 Until recently, Sophia's life was defined by her destructive and dysfunctional family
305 dynamics, along with isolation, exclusion, abuse, violence, and hatred. Sophia was born to a
306 young mother not yet ready for kids and a father who sabotaged birth control efforts. Her
307 alcoholic father ultimately cheated, resulting in divorce when she was just five. Her mother
308 found a new husband to make ends meet, but the man she married was abusive and 'verbal about
309 his racism and his bigotry towards gays', requiring Sophia to hide her true identity. She was
310 removed from her home by the government when her sister accused her stepfather of sexual
311 abuse, but they returned without any real form of counselling or support. These experiences led
312 to avoidance behaviours, drug use (e.g., marijuana, ecstasy), and severe depression and anxiety.
313 Sophia was also afraid to be alone, as she was seeking acceptance, inclusion, and connection. In
314 response, she stayed in a destructive relationship (e.g., dismissiveness, bitterness, resentment,
315 fighting) where she had no decision-making power, and she used drugs when 'I felt alone, I felt
316 lack of connectedness to anything and so I turned to using as an escape.'

317 Through meditation and therapy, she realized she was co-dependent on others, had PTSD
318 from childhood trauma, and had prioritized surviving and making others happy. At this point,
319 Sophia began prioritizing and advocating for herself, along with acknowledging and accepting
320 her identity. This led to further isolation, exclusion, abuse, violence, and hatred, with close
321 relationships shifting between acceptance and disgust, hatred, and exclusion. A series of events

322 that involved police led her to homelessness (where she was mugged several times) and isolation
323 from her children. A cycle then emerged, with Sophia returning to avoidance, numbing (this time
324 with drugs like crack and methamphetamines), depression, and anxiety. She described this time
325 period this way:

326 I was just feeling pretty hopeless... was livin' on the streets for a good amount of time...I
327 still wanted to smoke crack, I still had so much that I couldn't handle and process and
328 because [crack] wasn't really around, it became meth amphetamines and I started using
329 that. Pretty much started becomin' an everyday occurrence...I have had everything stolen
330 from me about three or four times...I probably was assaulted about three different
331 occasions, one person pulled a gun on me.

332 ***Makena***

333 Violence, instability, and change were constant for Makena as her family sought a better
334 life, living in three different African countries (one in a refugee camp) without any formal
335 schooling before finally moving to her current country for 'a better future'. Later on, she
336 struggled with understanding the meaning of 'homeless', as her conceptualisation of 'home' was
337 not clear in the first place. This led to two overarching and persistent themes. First, Makena
338 experienced tremendous isolation and exclusion, explaining how 'my whole life, I was getting
339 bullied,' often due to the language barriers (among other factors) each time her family moved.
340 Makena's experience in the refugee camp was even more isolating, with everyday norms (e.g.,
341 soccer with peers) disrupted. When her family moved to her current country, she experienced
342 intense/frequent bullying, as she was black, from Africa, and didn't speak English. She felt
343 excluded both by her home country's culture and black culture, and ultimately was suicidal.
344 Another theme in Makena's life was minimal autonomy, with her parents making most decisions

345 without informing her or her siblings of their reasoning. These norms, combined with
346 expectations that she conform to specific gender roles and meet familial expectations as the
347 oldest female child (where she cooks, cleans, and cares for siblings), have prevented her from
348 being herself and having her own time/freedom.

349 *Prior to engagement with Street Soccer programming*

350 [INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

351 *Growth and resilience in response to trauma*

352 Growth and resilience were common threads across players' narratives, with some able to
353 sustain their well-being and achieve positive outcomes in response to trauma before they
354 engaged with Street Soccer programming.

355 *Ousmane.* Ousmane's first 15+ years in Africa were challenging, as he was poor,
356 frequently hungry, and unable to consistently attend school. In his words, 'we were really poor
357 was a really big challenge for me. Sometime we can spend one day without eating nothing.'
358 However, his supportive mother did her best to provide for him, and ultimately convinced his
359 father (whom he did not know) to bring him to his current country to improve his life. Since his
360 arrival, he has felt ongoing pressure to support his family members still in Africa. In response, he
361 is driven to meet the goals he has set, including plans for college and helping others in his future
362 profession. Ousmane experienced separation and isolation from his family in Africa, as well as
363 from his father when they lived in a shelter for six months and when he chose to go into the
364 foster care system. This, combined with verbal abuse from his father and lack of support from his
365 first foster family (e.g., he was not given keys, often sleeping outside till they got home), made
366 him realize he must carve his own path. For example, he chose to go into 'the foster programme'
367 rather than stay with his father. He explained that 'I'm gonna put maybe a distance between us

368 [his father]. Be in the foster programme. Use my resources and try to develop myself without
369 him.’ Ultimately, I want to ‘try to improve my life so I can achieve my goals.’

370 *Abdou.* Abdou demonstrated an incredible willingness and ability to adapt throughout his
371 life. He learned English at 17 after moving from Africa, and relocated within this country for his
372 family and his job. He also developed a growth mindset, defined as understanding his abilities
373 can be developed through dedication and hard work. One example of this was his commitment to
374 correcting his English when others made fun of him:

375 I was started getting to know English maybe like six months little by little, I’m start
376 speaking after 6 months ’cause I have no choice but to speak it. So even people used to
377 make fun of me and that make me stronger, that make me feel better, ’cause I would learn
378 my mistakes.

379 Additionally, Abdou became homeless for some time, explaining that ‘it was hard for me. I
380 didn’t got no place to stay. I was sleeping in the street.’ While he initially felt self-hatred during
381 this time, he found a way to believe in himself and his abilities – working hard to find a place to
382 live and jobs to support himself. Overall, Abdou demonstrated a drive to survive and a voracious
383 work ethic.

384 *Supports, systems, and services*

385 Prior to engagement with Street Soccer programming, most players sought supports,
386 systems, and services, demonstrating a willingness to reach out for help and an interest in taking
387 advantage of every opportunity available.

388 *Juan.* As a result of his childhood experiences, Juan was uncertain and fearful of his
389 future; he responded to this in two ways. First, he takes advantage of every support system
390 offered to him, seeking out ‘counselling and going to AA meetings and NA meetings...and anger

391 management classes.’ He also takes advantage of opportunities offered to him. For example, he
392 earned his high school diploma while in a recovery housing programme and used the free food
393 pantry at his community college. Second, Juan actively networks (‘he’s big on meeting people’)
394 and takes advantage of key connections who serve as turning points for him. For example, his
395 boss connected him with a shelter when he was homeless, a high school advisor helped him earn
396 his diploma, and his caseworker helped him with university applications, access to free food, and
397 access to free bus passes. All of these experiences led Juan to realize he can carve his own path
398 forward, cultivating resilience along the way. He now sees that he has made mistakes in his life,
399 but he can come back from them and learn from them. In other words, he no longer feels defined
400 or constrained by his mistakes; instead, he feels a sense of control over his path. This realization
401 was critical for him when he relapsed right before the HWC, as he was able to get right back on
402 track without judging himself too harshly.

403 *Sophia.* Ultimately, Sophia found acceptance, inclusion, and belonging at a homeless
404 shelter for women and kids and, later on, with Street Soccer. This had three key impacts for her.
405 First, she finally had the guidance and support she’d been seeking her entire life, along with
406 meaningful opportunities for a better future. This included ‘tough love’ when the shelter learned
407 she was still using and kicked her out, reinforcing her commitment to stay clean. Second, she
408 finally began prioritizing her mental health, learning to process and cope with past traumas and
409 recurring behaviours. ‘They helped me with emotional support, a little bit of behavioural
410 understanding of the traumas that I experienced. Definitely a big understanding of co-
411 dependency in the relationships that I had, why they were the way they were in the past, so that
412 was a really big thing, boundary development which was awesome.’ Third, she started making
413 decisions for herself and learning how to live independently. This began with getting clean, but

414 then she started volunteering and completed a job readiness programme where she received help
415 with resume writing, interview skills, and job opportunities. She also started trying to get back in
416 touch with her children.

417 **Ben.** While sleeping on the streets, Ben regularly reflected on his adverse childhood
418 experiences (e.g., absent mother, abusive stepfather) and internal struggles (e.g., ‘I always
419 thought there was something wrong with me’). His drug use did not mask his pain, as explained
420 here:

421 What I was taking [e.g., heroin, crack] wasn’t taking [away] what I was feeling inside.
422 So, basically rock bottom. Basically, lost all my relationships with my family, getting
423 told to sort of ‘eff off at the doors from everyone; my brother, my sister, my woman and
424 my kids and basically ended up walking about my own town in a sleeping back, totally
425 lost. Nowhere to go.

426 In the midst of this reality, he received instrumental support from a Christian church. Though
427 hesitant of their religious underpinnings, their warmth and kindness helped Ben be vulnerable
428 and share his story without fear of judgement. In his words, ‘They just listened to me. They
429 didn’t judge me for what I had done or what I had been through, and I started building healthy
430 relationships with people.’ These caring relationships and his newfound faith provided Ben with
431 love that was absent from his childhood, along with the ability to process past adversities and
432 begin building resilience for the future.

433 I didn’t even know if it’s grieving. My whole flipping life has been a trauma. So, when
434 the waves come, they come and they go. But when they come, I now know for the first
435 time in my life, I’ll overcome it.

436 ***Street Soccer programming***

437 Before focusing on Street Soccer programming, we must acknowledge the influence
438 soccer had on players born outside of their current countries of residence. For example, soccer
439 has been a lifelong respite for Ousmane, where he can relax, have fun, and be with friends. For
440 him, soccer has always been about community building, where people come together and help
441 one another despite their differences. Similarly, soccer has had an incredible influence on
442 Abdou’s life. In general, it provides him with an opportunity to escape and experience happiness,
443 as it reminds him of his home country and his experiences playing in the streets. On the field, he
444 feels competent and in control of the outcome, which contrasts sharply with other parts of his
445 life. Both Faraj and Makena shared how soccer was just for them, in a life so often focused on
446 serving others. Makena also described soccer as an outlet where she could dream of a different
447 future.

448 As for Street Soccer programming, there was often a shift in the players’ narratives once
449 they joined, with trauma-informed practices, growth and resilience, and intersectionality each
450 playing a role.

451 [INSERT TABLE 3 HERE]

452 *Abdou*

453 Street Soccer’s inclusivity cultivated a sense of community, while also developing
454 Abdou’s sense of competence as he improved each week and felt the coaches’ support. Street
455 Soccer also provided stability with weekly training and games, supportive adults who did not
456 demonstrate favouritism, and a positive environment. In his words, ‘I could be homeless, but
457 when I’m in the field, I forget about everything in the worry. I’m just happy.’ Street Soccer also
458 helped Abdou develop better self-regulation skills. He explained how ‘I used to be so tempered
459 back when I play soccer, I used to get mad like if someone kick me. “Ref what’s going on, like

460 can you call a red card...?” But now...I’m getting better at it.’ The coaches helped Abdou learn
461 to regulate his emotions in soccer, which has translated into better anger management off the
462 field as well. He now dreams of starting a soccer academy in his home country, with Street
463 Soccer showing how soccer can help youth.

464 *Emma*

465 The welcoming and caring environment of Street Soccer contrasted with the clinical
466 support Emma was receiving in her accommodation. ‘The girls gave me hugs. It was the first hug
467 I had had in months and it felt like I belonged. I was part of a team again. I felt like I was worth
468 something.’ Street Soccer provided Emma with an opportunity to develop meaningful
469 relationships, which she was seeking as ‘I wanted to feel part of something again. I wanted to
470 find friends. I wanted to have laughter. I just hoped that I could find it here and I one hundred per
471 cent have.’ In this safe space, Emma shared her story of abuse which she could not divulge to
472 family or friends, and her confidence and self-esteem began to flourish.

473 Furthermore, her consistent attendance enabled more personal development as she
474 engaged in volunteering and was encouraged and supported to attend various educational courses
475 facilitated by Street Soccer and implemented by partnering organisations and institutions (e.g., a
476 course on ‘mental health awareness’). Street Soccer staff explained that with her resilience,
477 ‘nothing will stop’ her, with Emma likely to achieve her goals of gaining qualifications and
478 becoming independent.

479 *Juan*

480 Through Street Soccer, Juan received consistent support and clarity about his personal
481 development and future, with his coaches helping him recognize and reduce the pressure he puts
482 on himself to excel in various domains (e.g., staying sober, getting all As). He felt acceptance

483 and a sense of belonging, with the coaches and players becoming ‘his family.’ This was
484 especially apparent with one of the coaches: ‘ever since I met [the coach], he’s been there for
485 me. We text, we call, we talk. He’s always there for me.’ Additionally, Street Soccer was a safe
486 space for Juan to confide with others, where he openly shared his struggles and successes with
487 the team (without judgment) and then played soccer together, allowing him to work through
488 these feelings in a productive manner. His coach described the Street Soccer environment this
489 way:

490 The beginning of our practices really do feel like a 12-step meeting. We get together, we
491 talk about the soccer skill of the day and the street skill of the day, and it’s really an
492 opportunity and a platform to share what you’re struggling with, how you’ve succeeded,
493 and that does give Juan a platform where he can share with people that he really, really
494 trusts. ‘Hey this is what I’m goin’ through right now.’ And then after sharing all that and
495 kinda getting it off his chest, we just like run around for 2 hours and you work through
496 it...and I think another big part of it is having somebody that believes in you. If Juan’s
497 got a group of teammates and coaches and myself and some of the shelter staff, if he’s
498 got people that he knows are gonna support him whether he slips up or not, that almost
499 takes the pressure off to not use. If you’re so worried and say, ‘oh man, these people are
500 only gonna accept me if I’m sober,’ then that causes stress, and stress causes you to use.
501 And so I think just having a non-judgmental space where he can be himself is really
502 important.

503 Juan has also benefitted from Street Soccer facilitating connections to opportunities (e.g.,
504 job, housing): ‘to me, [Street Soccer]’s changing my life. It’s making me a better person. It’s
505 creating all of these opportunities that were blind to me.’ Finally, he is recognized for his

506 leadership abilities, with his Street Soccer coaches helping him develop coaching skills by
507 leading his peers. Overall, the biggest life lesson for Juan has been the Street Soccer mantra of
508 ‘showing up’. Juan consistently takes advantage of every opportunity, every person, and every
509 experience within Street Soccer and beyond.

510 *Gary*

511 Gary learned about Street Soccer at an addiction centre. Though he was nervous at first,
512 the coaches gained his trust by sharing their own stories (e.g., criminal behaviour, addiction,
513 mental health struggles). ‘I was used to being was judged all my life, and they didn’t judge me.
514 They just made me feel welcome...I kept coming back because I felt safe. And I started to build
515 friendships here.’ Although he was already a competent soccer player, he appreciated the focus
516 on ‘personal development’ within Street Soccer programming, which aided his recovery. The
517 people and the environment helped him ‘see the positive in himself.’ Street Soccer also helped
518 Gary explore new possibilities by connecting him with additional services and supports, such as
519 a non-profit organization where he travelled to another country for valuable volunteer
520 experience. Gary’s continued attendance and ultimate selection for the Homeless World Cup
521 acted as a catalyst for him to rebuild a relationship with his father. For Gary,

522 [Street Soccer]’s been a massive part of where I am today. Without Street Soccer, and the
523 people in it directing me towards what I do today, I don’t believe that I would be here. I
524 still believe that I would be out using and living that life.

525 **Discussion**

526 Exposure to complex and developmental trauma was prevalent in players’ narratives,
527 with these experiences compounded by issues affecting homeless, immigrant, and refugee
528 populations. These included caregiving and household issues (e.g., abuse, neglect, domestic

529 violence, substance misuse, mental health problems, instability, destructive and dysfunctional
530 family life and relationships, restrictive/overwhelming family expectations), community issues
531 (e.g., isolation, exclusion, bullying, hatred), and other challenges (e.g., hunger, poverty,
532 inconsistent access to education). Repercussions for players included lifelong psychological,
533 social, behavioural, and physical health detriments, from mental health problems and mental
534 illness (e.g., low self-esteem, low self-worth, feelings of incompetence, maladaptive processing
535 of emotions, fear, anger, depression, anxiety, PTSD) to co-dependence, subservience,
536 conformity, substance abuse, assault, suicide attempts, and beyond.

537 In spite of this, growth and resilience were common threads across players' narratives,
538 with many seeking pathways to new possibilities. This does not mean that pathology and distress
539 were no longer present, but that most players were able to positively adapt such that they could
540 sustain functioning (Ellis, Murray, and Barrett 2019). The data suggested that one key to this was
541 embracing a growth mindset, along with a drive to survive – and even thrive – in response to or
542 in the midst of trauma. Players shared stories where they sought feelings of normalcy, happiness,
543 inclusion, and competence, all while seeking to connect with others and find/be their true selves.
544 Ultimately, some individuals were able to cultivate and act on their dreams for the future, with
545 this future orientation sustaining their efforts in the present. This was not achieved in a silo, with
546 the more resilient players seeking help from others and taking advantage of opportunities. The
547 number of supports, systems, and services utilized by players highlights the intersectional nature
548 of trauma-informed practice, given that resilience is a multi-dimensional construct with
549 individual, family, community, and environmental determinants (Ungar, Ghazinour, and Richter
550 2013).

551 *Street Soccer programming*

552 As players shared their experiences in Street Soccer programming, it became clear that
553 SSS and SSUSA were using the sport's popularity and appeal (particularly for those raised in
554 soccer-dominant cultures) to achieve broader goals. Beyond this, they have embraced the core
555 tenets of trauma-informed programming, cultivating growth and resilience amidst an ecological
556 framework with interrelated systems (D'Andrea et al. 2013; Massey and Whitley 2020; Massey
557 et al. 2015; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018). This intentionality is explored below.

558 *Trauma-informed practices*

559 The first step in trauma-informed programming is cultivating a safe, stable environment
560 (Massey and Whitley 2020; SAMHSA 2014), which was evident in SSS and SSUSA. This
561 enabled players to physically and mentally escape from their everyday lives, express and process
562 their emotions through conversation and play, and build capacity for additional growth and
563 development (Bergholz, Stafford, and D'Andrea 2016; Massey and Williams 2020; Massey and
564 Whitley 2016; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018). Given that homeless, immigrant, and
565 refugee experiences are defined by a lack of safety and stability, the impact of this environment
566 for SSS and SSUSA players cannot be overstated. Fun also emerged as a powerful feature of
567 Street Soccer programming, which is unsurprising as it is often the driving reason for sport
568 participation (Visek et al. 2015). While the nature of sport encourages a fun atmosphere, this is
569 not guaranteed; the environment constructed in SSS and SSUSA combined with sport-specific
570 features (e.g., inclusive of all abilities, fairness, effective sport-skill instruction) made the
571 experience more enjoyable. Also, the ability to be physically active was quite powerful for
572 players, as it helps regulate physiological hyperarousal (e.g., PTSD) and reconnect with one's
573 physical and emotional self (thereby combatting dissociation, a common trauma symptom)
574 (D'Andrea et al. 2013; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018).

575 Similar to Street Soccer Australia (Sherry 2010), SSS and SSUSA cultivated a
576 welcoming, respectful, inclusive climate where all felt a sense of belonging as part of a team, a
577 community, or – for some – a family (Massey and Whitley 2016, 2020; Massey and Williams
578 2020). Belonging and cohesion have been identified as environmental determinants of resilience
579 (Ungar et al. 2007). For those with homeless, immigrant, and/or refugee backgrounds, respect
580 and inclusion can be elusive as they are among the most marginalized and silenced groups in
581 society, experiencing tremendous stigma, discrimination, exclusion, and isolation (Beehler,
582 Birman, and Campbell 2012; Ellis, Murray, and Barrett 2019; Hwang and Dunn 2005). However,
583 SSS and SSUSA constructed a climate which fostered respect and acceptance (of others and
584 themselves), with players sharing just how powerful it was to connect and share stories with
585 those from similar backgrounds (i.e., peer support; SAMHSA 2014).

586 While there were a number of features in this climate, the lynchpin was the cultivation of
587 safe, stable, and nurturing relationships (SSNRs) founded upon trust (Bergholz, Stafford, and
588 D’Andrea 2016; Bethell et al. 2017; D’Andrea et al. 2013; Massey and Whitley 2016, 2020;
589 Ungar, Ghazinour, and Richter 2013; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018; Zolkoski and
590 Bullock 2012). For those who have experienced complex and developmental trauma (including
591 the players in this study), dysfunctional and destructive relationships are often at the heart of
592 their trauma. Despite this, the path to healing is innately relational, requiring positive, trusting,
593 proactive relationships (Bethell et al. 2017). These relationships are the foundation of SSS and
594 SSUSA, particularly with coaches and support staff who made players feel valued, prioritized
595 their holistic development (e.g., academic support, advice, general check-ins), and connected
596 them with supports, systems, and services beyond Street Soccer. The players reflected on how
597 much the coaches believed in them to rise above their backgrounds and current circumstances,

598 often before they believed in themselves (similar to findings from Whitley, Massey, and
599 Wilkison 2018). While the focus of this study was not on the coaches, it became clear that the
600 training they received – as well as similar backgrounds (Cohen and Welty Peachey 2015) and/or
601 experiences (e.g., working at an organisation serving homeless youth) – were reasons why the
602 coaches were so impactful. Additionally, the coaches and support staff were trained to deliver the
603 evidence-based, trauma-informed curriculum utilized by each Street Soccer programme, which
604 features life and job readiness skills (e.g., show up, adjust the plan) critical for players to
605 promote their own healing and become their own problem solvers (Bergholz, Stafford, and
606 D’Andrea 2016). This type of relevant, contextualized, ongoing training is essential for trauma-
607 informed programming (Bergholz, Stafford, and D’Andrea 2016; D’Andrea et al. 2013; Purtle
608 2018; SAMHSA 2014; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018).

609 *Growth and resilience*

610 Growth and resilience were infused into every facet of SSS and SSUSA, with the
611 foundational belief that all players can progress towards (if not realize) independent, fulfilling
612 lives. This began with sport-specific skill-building, with an appreciation for their improvement as
613 soccer players and (for some) recognition as skilled players. This aligns with previous work from
614 Whitley and colleagues (Whitley, Massey, and Farrell 2017; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison
615 2018), who suggested that task-oriented sport environments focused on learning and
616 development enable players to practice skills in a supportive environment with constructive
617 feedback, ultimately leading to sport skill improvement and enhanced feelings of competence. In
618 SSS and SSUSA, this focus on skill-building extended far beyond sport skills, with players
619 developing life skills that enabled more meaningful engagement in Street Soccer programming,
620 other support services, and other domains (e.g., employment). In particular, the focus on building

621 self-regulation capacity was quite valuable, as it is a fundamental protective factor (SAMHSA
622 2014; Zolkoski and Bullock 2012). This aligns with previous research on self-regulation within
623 SfD programmes, including Street Soccer (D’Andrea et al. 2013; Jarvie and O’May 2019). The
624 players in this study also reflected on developing social competence (e.g., communication) and
625 problem solving skills, along with support for finding their sense of purpose (e.g., goals, belief in
626 future); in fact, many shared dreams of helping others (e.g., doctor, midwife, support worker,
627 sport academy founder). These are all attributes of resiliency (Zolkoski and Bullock 2012),
628 suggesting that SSS and SSUSA are cultivating resilience in their players. Additionally,
629 developing and then using these attributes in different contexts (with the support of Street Soccer
630 coaches, support staff, and others) increased players’ self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy,
631 confidence, and beyond, which had ripple effects in many parts of their lives (Evans and Cronley
632 2017).

633 Another key feature was the person-centred approach taken by SSS and SSUSA, with
634 coaches and support staff recognizing the heterogeneity of complex and developmental trauma,
635 the varied experiences of homeless, immigrant, and refugee populations, and the diverse
636 responses that may unfold (Evans and Cronley 2017). Players reflected on their personalized
637 experiences in SSS and SSUSA, with each receiving qualitatively different support based on
638 their needs and strengths as well as contextual and cultural variances (Bergholz, Stafford, and
639 D’Andrea 2016; Ellis, Murray, and Barrett 2019; Ungar, Ghazinour, and Richter 2013; Whitley,
640 Massey, and Wilkison 2018). Street Soccer programming also shared power and control
641 (environmental determinants of resilience; Ungar et al. 2007), cultivating players’ feelings of
642 autonomy within the programme as well as in their lives. This included developing a stronger,
643 more positive sense of their identity, the capacity to act independently, the ability to self-

644 advocate, and an internal locus of control (Bergholz, Stafford, and D’Andrea 2016; Massey and
645 Whitley 2020; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018; Zolkoski and Bullock 2012). Many players
646 shared how these attributes had been stripped from their lives, and so (re)building them served as
647 a powerful reminder of their own agency.

648 Street Soccer also helped players explore and access various opportunities within and
649 beyond Street Soccer programming. For example, some players valued the roles they held within
650 SSS and SSUSA (e.g., leadership roles, employment) and the opportunities they were able to
651 access (e.g., travel, making connections with people nationally/globally). These experiences
652 enhanced their skill building within Street Soccer programming, cultivated a stronger belief in
653 themselves and their abilities, and helped them develop a future orientation. This aligns with
654 research suggesting that access to new and valued roles, people, and resources is critical for
655 maximizing the holistic development of players in SfD programmes (Whitley, Massey, and
656 Farrell 2017; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018). Street Soccer also facilitated connections
657 with external supports, systems, and services, which is discussed below.

658 *Intersectionality*

659 As evidenced in the sections above, and in alignment with previous research on Street
660 Soccer programmes (Jarvie and Ahrens 2019; Sherry 2010; Sherry and O’May 2013), SSS and
661 SSUSA have a deep appreciation of their programmes’ intersectionality, with strong connections
662 to interrelated systems and services that support steps toward education, recovery, housing,
663 language learning, job training, and beyond. This begins with a robust referral system to Street
664 Soccer programming from other systems and services (and vice versa), as recommended in the
665 literature (Bergholz, Stafford, and D’Andrea 2016; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018).
666 However, this extends far beyond referrals, with SSS and SSUSA aiming to be part of a multi-

667 systemic social ecological framework seeking to enhance the quality of supports, systems, and
668 services available to players – as well as the collaboration and partnerships that take place within
669 this framework (Massey and Whitley 2020; Montgomery 2011; Ungar, Ghazinour, and Richter
670 2013; Whitley, Massey, and Wilkison 2018). For example, SSS has formal partnerships with
671 various organisations and institutions (e.g., Edinburgh Napier University, Celtic FC Foundation)
672 to deliver educational training courses that help their players off the field. This approach avoids
673 sole reliance on the simplistic solution of individual development, which has been rightly
674 critiqued within the resilience and SfD literature due to poor long-term outcomes (Massey et al.
675 2015; Ungar, Ghazinour, and Richter 2013).

676 **Conclusion**

677 These findings must be interpreted with caution, as they are driven by 16 player
678 narratives from two Street Soccer programmes over the same period of time. Additionally, some
679 participants did not engage as deeply in the interviews (resulting in shorter interviews) and/or did
680 not identify secondary participants due to: (a) difficulties communicating their narrative given
681 their early stage of addiction rehabilitation, (b) challenges communicating due to strong
682 medication and/or medication changes to address severe mental health issues, (c) limited social
683 capital, and/or (d) substance relapse. Finally, these players were all selected by their respective
684 Street Soccer programmes as representatives to participate in the Homeless World Cup,
685 suggesting they are regular attendees of SSS and SSUSA programming who likely have had
686 more positive experiences than some of the other participants. Given the critical analysis of SfD
687 to date which indicates that SfD programming does not always lead to positive outcomes (e.g.,
688 Hayhurst, MacNeill, Kidd, and Knoppers 2014; Magee and Jeanes, 2013; Trejo, Attali, and
689 Magee 2015), future research efforts should include the voices of those participants who may

690 have more critical experiences to share (e.g., those who disengaged from programming). Also,
691 there is a need for further descriptive, correlational, and experimental research utilizing
692 innovative, diverse, and rigorous methods (Darnell, Whitley, and Massey 2016; Massey and
693 Whitley 2019; Whitley et al. 2019a, 2019b). This would enable further exploration of how Street
694 Soccer programmes in particular, and SfD programmes more generally, can best support those
695 who have experienced complex and developmental trauma.

696 In conclusion, SSS and SSUSA are promising interventions for serving those (e.g.,
697 homeless, immigrant, refugee) who have experienced complex and developmental trauma. Yet
698 SfD interventions like SSS and SSUSA cannot expect to transform participants' lives on their
699 own, with the literature identifying numerous faults with this logic (Coalter 2010 2015; Massey
700 et al. 2015). The findings in this study point to the importance of intersectionality, with all
701 participants benefiting from various supports, systems, and services – both before and during
702 their engagement with Street Soccer. For some, participating in Street Soccer was the turning
703 point in their journey, with coaches and other Street Soccer personnel connecting them to
704 additional supports, systems, and services. For others, Street Soccer was one of these additional
705 supports, systems, and services, with other determinants (e.g., individual, rehabilitation
706 programme, educational opportunity, employment) serving as the key driver in their growth and
707 development. The key point is that SSS and SSUSA were not operating in isolation nor
708 harbouring unrealistic expectations about their ability to transform participants' lives. Instead,
709 these Street Soccer programmes embraced systems thinking, aiming to be part of a multi-
710 systemic social ecological framework through thoughtful collaboration and partnerships with
711 various supports, systems, and services in the community. Additionally, SSS and SSUSA
712 embraced trauma-informed practices that promote growth and resilience through internal (e.g.,

713 self-regulation, problem solving, self-esteem), external (e.g., safety, stability, play, inclusion,
714 relationships), and environmental factors (Bethell et al. 2017; Cronley and Evans 2017; Massey
715 and Williams 2020). This points to a need for further study on the possibilities of trauma and
716 resilience as critical issues for SfD programming and research, along with further research on
717 how SfD programmes can embrace systems thinking in their programming efforts.

718

719

720 **References**

- 721 Anda, R.F., Felitti, V.J., Bremner, J.D., Walker, J.D., Whitfield, C., Perry, B.D., Dube, S.R. et al.
722 2006. "The Enduring Effects of Abuse and Related Adverse Experiences in Childhood: A
723 Convergence of Evidence from Neurobiology and Epidemiology." *Child: Care, Health
724 and Development* 32 (2): 253-256. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2214.2006.00614_2.x
- 725 Beehler, S., Birman, D., and Campbell, R. 2012. "The Effectiveness of Cultural Adjustment and
726 Trauma Services (CATS): Generating Practice-Based Evidence on a Comprehensive,
727 School-Based Mental Health Intervention for Immigrant Youth." *American Journal of
728 Community Psychology* 50 (1-2): 155-168. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-011-9486-2>
- 729 Benjet, C., Bromet, E., Karam, E.G., Kessler, R.C., McLaughlin, K.A., Ruscio, A.M., Shahly, V.
730 et al. 2016. "The Epidemiology of Traumatic Event Exposure Worldwide: Results from
731 the World Mental Health Survey Consortium." *Psychological Medicine* 46 (2): 372-343.
732 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291715001981>
- 733 Bergholz, L., Stafford, E., and D'Andrea, W. 2016. "Creating Trauma-Informed Sports
734 Programming for Traumatized Youth: Core Principles for an Adjunctive Therapeutic
735 Approach." *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy* 15 (3): 244-253.
736 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15289168.2016.1211836>
- 737 Bethell, C.D., Solloway, M.R., Guinasso, S., Hassink, S., Srivastav, A., Ford, D., and Simpson,
738 L.A. 2017. "Prioritizing Possibilities for Child and Family Health: An Agenda to Address
739 Adverse Childhood Experiences and Foster the Social and Emotional Roots of Well-
740 Being in Pediatrics." *Academic Pediatrics* 17 (7S): S36-S50.
741 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acap.2017.06.002>

- 742 Coalter, F. 2010. "The Politics of Sport-for-Development: Limited Focus Programmes and Broad
743 Gauge Problems?" *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 45 (3): 295-314.
744 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690210366791>
- 745 Coalter, F. 2015. "Sport-for-Change: Some Thoughts from a Sceptic." *Social Inclusion* 3 (3): 19-
746 23.
- 747 Cohen, A., and Welty Peachey, J. 2015. "The Making of a Social Entrepreneur: From Participant
748 to Cause Champion within a Sport-For-Development Context." *Sport Management
749 Review* 18 (1): 111-125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2014.04.002>
- 750 Cowan, D., and Taylor, I.M. 2016. 'I'm Proud of What I Achieved; I'm Also Ashamed of What I
751 Done': A Soccer Coach's Tale of Sport, Status, and Criminal Behaviour." *Qualitative
752 Research in Sport, Exercise, and Health* 8 (5): 505-518.
753 <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2016.1206608>
- 754 Cronley, C., and Evans, R. 2017. "Studies of Resilience Among Youth Experiencing
755 Homelessness: A Systematic Review." *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social
756 Environment* 27 (4): 291-310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2017.1282912>
- 757 D'Andrea, W., Bergholz, L., Fortunato, A., and Spinazzola, J. 2013. "Play to the Whistle: A
758 Pilot Investigation of a Sports-Based Intervention for Traumatized Girls in Residential
759 Treatment." *Journal of Family Violence* 28 (7): 739-749. [https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-
760 013-9533-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-013-9533-x)
- 761 Darnell, S.C., Whitley, M.A., and Massey, W.V. 2016. "Changing Methods and Methods of
762 Change: Reflections on Qualitative Research in Sport for Development and Peace."
763 *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 8 (5): 571-577.
764 <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2016.1214618>

- 765 Ellis, B.H., Murray, K., and Barrett, C. 2019. "Understanding the Mental Health of Refugees:
766 Trauma, Stress, and The Cultural Context." In *The Massachusetts General Hospital
767 Textbook on Diversity and Cultural Sensitivity in Mental Health*, edited by R. Parekh and
768 N.T. Trinh, 253-273. Current Clinical Psychiatry.
- 769 Fang, X., Brown, D.S., Florence, C.S., and Mercy, J.A. 2012. "The Economic Burden of Child
770 Maltreatment in the United States and Implications for Prevention." *Child Abuse &
771 Neglect* 36 (2): 156-165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2011.10.006>
- 772 Frank, A. W. 2010. *Letting Stories Breathe*. The University of Chicago Press.
- 773 Hwang, S.W., and Dunn, J.R. 2005. "Homeless People." In *Handbook of Urban Health:
774 Populations, Methods, and Practice*, edited by S. Galea and D. Vlahov, 21-41. Springer.
- 775 Jarvie, G., and Ahrens, S. 2019. "Sport, Homelessness, and Capability: Voices from the Street."
776 *Quest* 71 (2): 239-251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2018.1552160>
- 777 Jeanes, R., and Magee, J. 2014. "Promoting Gender Empowerment through Sport? Exploring the
778 Experiences of Zambian Footballers." In *Global Sport-for-Development: Critical
779 Perspectives*, edited by N. Schulenkorf and D. Adair, 134-154. Palgrave Macmillan.
- 780 Magee, J., and Jeanes, R. 2011. "Football's Coming Home: A Critical Evaluation of the
781 Homeless World Cup as an Intervention to Combat Social Exclusion." *International
782 Review for the Sociology of Sport* 48 (1): 3-19.
783 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690211428391>
- 784 Massey, W.V., and Whitley, M.A. 2020. "Adverse Experiences of Children and Youth: Can
785 Sport Play a Role in Growth Following Psychologically Traumatic Events?" In *Growth
786 Following Adversity in Sport*, edited by R. Wadey, M. Day, and K. Howells, 204-215.
787 Routledge.

- 788 Massey, W.V., and Whitley, M.A. 2016. "The Role of Sport for Youth Amidst Trauma and
789 Chaos." *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 8 (5): 487-504.
- 790 Massey, W.V., and Whitley, M.A. 2019. "SDP and Research Methods." In *Routledge Handbook*
791 *on Sport for Development*, edited by S. Darnell, R. Giulianotti, D. Howe, and H.
792 Collison, 175-184. Routledge.
- 793 Massey, W.V., Whitley, M.A., Blom, L., and Gerstein, L. 2015. "Sport for Development and
794 Peace: A Systems Theory Perspective on Promoting Sustainable Change." *International*
795 *Journal of Sport Management and Marketing* 16 (1-2): 18-35.
796 <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSMM.2015.074921>
- 797 Massey, W.V., and Williams, T.L. 2020. "Sporting Activities for Individuals who Experienced
798 Trauma during their Youth: A Meta-Study." *Qualitative Health Research* 30 (1): 73-87.
799 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732319849563>
- 800 McGannon, K.R., and Smith, B. 2015. "Centralizing Culture in Cultural Sport Psychology
801 Research: The Potential of Narrative Inquiry and Discursive Psychology." *Psychology of*
802 *Sport and Exercise* 17: 79-87. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2014.07.010>
- 803 Montgomery, E. 2011. "Trauma, Exile and Mental Health in Young Refugees." *Acta*
804 *Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 124 (Suppl. 440): 1-46. [https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1600-](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1600-0447.2011.01740.x)
805 [0447.2011.01740.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1600-0447.2011.01740.x)
- 806 Parker, A., Meek, R., and Lewis, G. 2014. "Sport in a Youth Prison: Male Young Offenders'
807 Experiences of a Sporting Intervention." *Journal of Youth Studies* 17 (3): 381-396.
808 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2013.830699>

- 809 Purtle, J. 2018. "Systematic Review of Evaluations of Trauma-Informed Organizational
810 Intervention that include Staff Trainings." *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*.
811 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018791304>
- 812 Schulenkorf, N. 2016. "The Contributions of Special Events to Sport-for-Development
813 Programs." *Journal of Sport Management* 30 (6): 629-642.
814 <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2016-0066>
- 815 Sherry, E. 2010. "(Re)Engaging Marginalized Groups through Sport: The Homeless World
816 Cup." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 45 (1): 59-71.
817 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690209356988>
- 818 Sherry, E., and O'May, F. 2013. "Exploring the Impact of Sport Participation in the Homeless
819 World Cup on Individuals with Substance Abuse or Mental Health Disorders." *Journal of*
820 *Sport for Development* 1 (2): 17-25.
- 821 Smith, B. 2016. "Narrative Analysis in Sport and Exercise: How Can It Be Done?" In *Routledge*
822 *Handbook of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, edited by B. Smith and A.C.
823 Sparkes, 260-273. Routledge.
- 824 Smith, B., and McGannon, K.R. 2017. "Developing Rigor in Qualitative Research: Problems and
825 Opportunities within Sport and Exercise Psychology." *International Review of Sport and*
826 *Exercise Psychology* 11 (1): 101-121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2017.1317357>
- 827 Smith, B., and Sparkes, A.C. 2009. "Narrative Inquiry in Sport and Exercise Psychology: What
828 Can It Mean, and Why Might We Do It?" *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 10 (1): 1-11.
829 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2008.01.004>

- 830 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2014. *A Treatment Improvement*
831 *Protocol: Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. TIP 57.* U.S.
832 Department of Health and Human Services.
- 833 Ungar, M., Brown, M., Liebenberg, L., Othman, R., Kwong, W.M., Armstrong, M., and Gilgun,
834 J. 2007. "Unique Pathways to Resilience Across Cultures." *Adolescence* 42 (166): 287-
835 310.
- 836 Ungar, M., Ghazinour, M., and Richter, J. 2013. "Annual Research Review: What Is Resilience
837 within the Social Ecology of Human Development?" *The Journal of Child Psychology*
838 *and Psychiatry* 54 (4): 348-366. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12025>
- 839 Visek, A., Achraati, S., Mannix, H., McDonnell, K., Harris, B., and Dipietro, L. 2015. "The Fun
840 Integration Theory: Toward Sustaining Children and Adolescents Sport Participation."
841 *Journal of Physical Activity & Health* 12 (3): 424-433. [https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2013-](https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2013-0180)
842 0180
- 843 Whitley, M.A., Massey, W.V., Camiré, M., Blom, L.C., Chawansky, M., Forde, S., Boutet, M. et
844 al. 2019a. "A Systematic Review of Sport for Youth Development Interventions across
845 Six Global Cities." *Sport Management Review* 22 (2): 181-193.
846 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2018.06.013>
- 847 Whitley, M.A., Massey, W.V., Camiré, M., Boutet, M., and Borbee, A. 2019b. "Sport-Based
848 Youth Development Interventions in the United States: A Systematic Review." *BMC*
849 *Public Health* 19 (89). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-6387-z>
- 850 Whitley, M.A., Massey, W.V., and Farrell, K. 2017. "A Programme Evaluation of 'Exploring
851 Our Strengths and Our Future': Making Sport Relevant to the Educational, Social, and
852 Emotional Needs of Youth." *Journal of Sport for Development* 5 (9): 21-35.

- 853 Whitley, M.A., Massey, W.V., and Wilkison, M.E. 2018. "A Systems Theory of Development
854 Through Sport for Traumatized and Disadvantaged Youth." *Psychology of Sport &*
855 *Exercise* 38: 116-125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2018.06.004>
- 856 Young, K., and Okada, C. 2016. "Engaging the Field through Retrospective Methods: A
857 Cambodian Story." *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 8 (5): 456-471.
858 <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2016.1206611>
- 859 Zolkoski, S.M., and Bullock, L. M. 2012. "Resilience in Children and Youth: A Review."
860 *Children and Youth Services Review* 34: 2295-2303.
861 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2012.08.009>