



## Media Release

### Rio Ferdinand Helps Young People to Tackle Violent Crime

**Date: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand met young people from across Manchester on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February at an event which aimed to break down barriers between young people and the Police and other government agencies.

The visit was part of the Premier League's Creating Chances programme and was hosted by Manchester United Foundation's Kickz project and Trafford Council. The event acted as a consultation evening for young people and showcased the positive activity available to them in Manchester. Rio took part in a question and answers session answering questions about how he achieved his goals and avoided negative influences his own life. He was joined by a panel which included local musician Fabian Wilks (aka Solja), peace activist Joe Malaika, Police Officers from the XCalibre Taskforce and Lee Adams Kickz Coordinator for Manchester United Foundation.

Talking of his own experiences growing up, Rio said:

“When I was growing up I just wanted to play football, I used to play for a team which was on the opposite side of London to where I lived and I had to travel a distance that was probably about the same as travelling from Manchester to Leeds. I did that three nights a week and my Dad gave a lot up for me to do it. It would have been disrespectful of me to then get into trouble and throw all the hard work away. My advice to the people here tonight is to decide what your goal is, and work towards it, you can achieve anything you want if you put your mind to it.”



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Following on from the question and answer session, there was a 'market place' which showcased the young people's services available in Trafford. The young people were then be given the opportunity to take part in a Kickz football session with Manchester United Foundation coaches on the outdoor Astro turf.

Kickz Programme Coordinator Lee Adams said:

"This event was extremely positive for the young people involved. Everything you hear about young people at the moment is negative but we really want to promote the fact that here are a lot of really great kids who come along to Kickz every week. We are aiming to build up their confidence and show them there are some really exciting things going on out there if they are willing to give it a go. If they want to get some qualifications they can do that too."

Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Culture and Sport, John Reilly, said:

"Having such powerful role models at this event, and giving the young people the opportunity to engage with them, may just give the young people the inspiration they need to challenge their own behaviour or direction in life.

"There's lots of excellent work happening in the borough to engage young people in positive activities such as the Kickz football project and I would encourage young people, and their parents, to find out more about what opportunities there are on offer."

Manchester United Foundation has been running Kickz in Trafford, since September 2006. Kickz aims to use the power of football and the appeal of the professional club brand's to target some of the more hard to reach and challenging communities in order to create safer, stronger and more respectful communities through the development of young people's potential.

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The project runs three nights a week less than ten minutes walk from the home of Manchester United. Kickz runs at times when anti-social behaviour is at its highest, with over 400 young people regularly attending sessions. Young people attending are encouraged to volunteer and often move on to take coaching qualifications. Fidel King has been a volunteer since Kickz began:

“Coming to Kickz has been great for me. It has really helped to boost my confidence and I have taken qualifications that I may not have otherwise been given the chance to gain!”

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**For further information please contact:**

- Rachael Pilsbury, Manchester United Foundation, Communications Officer, 07765222003, [rachael.pilsbury@mufoundation.org](mailto:rachael.pilsbury@mufoundation.org)
- Lee Adams, Manchester United Kickz Coordinator, 07795844474, [lee.adams@manutd.co.uk](mailto:lee.adams@manutd.co.uk)
- For information on the national Kickz programme contact Rory Carroll on 0845 345 4555 Ext:4280  
[rory.carroll@footballfoundation.org.uk](mailto:rory.carroll@footballfoundation.org.uk)

**Organisations involved in the event include:**

- Youth Offending Service (Prevention Team) - Work with young people at risk of involvement in crime
- Greater Manchester Probation
- Youth Service - Support services for young people
- Old Trafford Neighbourhood Management Board (Inspiring Leaders Project) - Aimed at developing local leadership capacity
- GMP XCalibre Taskforce - Tackling gangs and gun crime
- GMP Neighbourhood Police Team for Stretford and Old Trafford - Local policing
- Kickz Project
- TUF-C - Local project developing community leaders through sport. Funded by Trafford Leisure Trust
- Sport Trafford - Local sports provision for young people and adults
- Probation Service - Supervision of adult offenders.
- Peace Week 2009 - Week long project across Mcr and Trafford during March to promote peace and tolerance.

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- Eden Old Trafford - Local voluntary youth group
- Trafford Involve - Young Person's Substance misuse service
- Old Trafford News - Local free magazine
- Trafford Housing Trust / Safe Project - Deliver range of prevention activities including music workshops in schools
- Northwest Bullying Alliance
- Connexions Trafford - careers and personal development advice for young people.

### **Manchester United Foundation**

Manchester United Foundation was formed to celebrate 50 years of the Club playing in Europe. It aims to use the passion for Manchester United to educate, motivate and inspire young people to build a better life for themselves and improve the communities they live in. The Foundation delivers football coaching, skills training, personal development and life changing experiences, providing young people with opportunities to change their lives for the better. Through football, we encourage them to develop as players and more importantly as people.

### **About Kickz**

Kickz was originally developed by the Metropolitan Police and the Premier League and is now managed centrally by the Football Foundation. It was launched in April 2006 with pilot projects at four founder clubs (Tottenham Hotspur FC, Fulham FC, Brentford FC and Manchester City FC).

Kickz was designed to:

- engage young people in a range of constructive activities;
- break down barriers between the police and young people;
- reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in targeted neighbourhoods;
- increase young people's participation in sport and provide coaching and officiating opportunities; and
- create routes into volunteering, education, training and employment.

Comparing a four-month period in the year before the Kickz pilots were launched with the same four-month period a year later, the police found crime was down on average by 27 per cent on the days and times when sessions were delivered.

Following additional Government investment of £1 million in Autumn 2006, a further 21 clubs joined the scheme (Arsenal, Birmingham City, Crystal Palace, Charlton Athletic, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers, Chelsea, Everton, Liverpool, Leyton Orient, Manchester United, Middlesbrough, Millwall, Newcastle United, Portsmouth, QPR, Sunderland, Watford, Wigan Athletic, West Bromwich Albion and West Ham United).

In 2007/2008 the existing schemes were extended to include six additional clubs (Aston Villa, Barnet, Dagenham and Redbridge, Derby County, Reading and Sheffield United). Every professional London football club and the majority of Premier League clubs now run a Kickz project.

In September 2008 a further 8 clubs became Kickz deliverers (Brighton, Southampton, Plymouth, Southend, Norwich, Nottingham Forest, Notts County, and Oldham), taking Kickz to the current total of 39 clubs delivering.

As part of a three-year central funding package to each Kickz club and their partners, local

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match funding has and is continually being secured to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project.

The overall national funding breakdown is as follows:

Football Foundation: £4.71 million

Metropolitan Police: £3 million

Department for Culture Media and Sport / Premier League: £1 million

Local match funding: £2.98 million (being secured through local partners)

Kickz is also supported by the Football Foundation, Premier League, Football Association, Football League, DCMS, HM Treasury, Respect Task Force, Department of Health, Youth Volunteering Charity V, and Supporters Direct.

### **Premier League Creating Chances**

Creating Chances Places for Players is a unique programme that brings together all the Barclays Premier League clubs in a high profile initiative that uses star players to highlight the diverse and sheer quantity of community and good cause work carried out throughout the year by the 20 clubs.

This season's Creating Chances will see 100 players across the Premier League take part in a range of events that highlight club's fantastic community work. In total, 120 charities have received £480,000 from the Premier League through Creating Chances.

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