

Press Releases 2024 - 'Changing the Narrative' Season 1

Revolutionising Aquatic Participation: How the 'Changing the Narrative' documentary series is about to reshape the future of aquatics within ethnic minority communities and beyond.

London, England - September 11, 2024. The new cinéma vérité style documentary series 'Changing the Narrative' is anticipated to help transform aquatic participation among ethnic minorities, particularly within Black and Asian communities. This innovative initiative aims to spark increased engagement within youth culture, paving the way for a significant shift in the discourse surrounding aquatic activities regardless of ethnicity.

Recent data from Sport England's 2024 Active Lives survey has unveiled concerning statistics regarding low rates of aquatic participation among Black and Asian adults and children in England. The figures indicate a decline in swimming activities, with 97% of Black adults and 96% of Asian adults not engaging in swimming regularly. Similarly, 82% of Black children and 79% of Asian children in England do not participate in swimming activities regularly. Moreover, children of Black heritage in England face a 3.5 times higher risk of drowning compared to their White counterparts, as reported by the National Child Mortality Database.

The reasons behind the lack of engagement in aquatic activities are multifaceted, ranging from issues of representation and hair damage concerns to inherited fears of drowning and limited access to swimming facilities and lessons in communities. The historical exclusion and discrimination in aquatic spaces have also contributed to feelings of discomfort and alienation among individuals from African, Caribbean, and Asian backgrounds. Furthermore, many individuals simply do not consider swimming as a viable option due to a lack of awareness or interest, underscoring the importance of initiating conversations in non-traditional settings.

As the producer of the upcoming series "Changing the Narrative," Ed Accura, known for his work on the "Blacks Can't Swim" film documentaries and for co-founding the Black Swimming Association—emphasises the vital importance of integrating aquatics into youth culture. This documentary is created by the youth, for the youth, and about the youth. By empowering the younger generation to break the cycle of low participation in water-related activities, we can drive meaningful change within African, Caribbean, and Asian communities, and beyond.

The inspiration for "Changing the Narrative" arises from personal experiences, particularly Accura's daughter's waning interest in swimming, despite her ability in the water, alongside the recent decline in aquatic participation among ethnic minority communities. This real-time documentary series explores the lives of young Black individuals in London, highlighting various aspects of their daily experiences, challenges, and perspectives on swimming. Through candid conversations and interviews, the series illuminates issues related to mental and physical health, career pathways, family dynamics, cultural influences, and more, offering a comprehensive view of the relationship between youth and aquatic activities.

'Changing the Narrative' is scheduled for release on Sunday, 29th September 2024, with subsequent episodes airing each Sunday throughout October. This five-part series promises to ignite critical conversations and drive positive change in aquatic participation within ethnic minority communities, offering a unique and insightful perspective on the challenges and opportunities in this realm.

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