STATEMENT: Charity says children 'not active enough' to be happy and healthy in response to rising childhood obesity and diabetes

Tuesday 2 May, 2023

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Following new analysis from the NHS
showing the numbers of youngsters having treatment for conditions usually seen in middle-aged adults has soared in the last decade, children's charity the Youth Sport Trust has responded to the news that more children now have high blood pressure, knee problems and Type 2 Diabetes.

Alison Oliver MBE, Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust, said:

"Whilst exercise alone is not the silver bullet solution to this crisis, it is compounded by the fact that our children are simply not active enough to remain happy and healthy. There is a compelling evidence base for more play and sport in children's lives. Unhappy, unhealthy children don't learn effectively. If children don't learn, they don't achieve their potential in life and we don't have a society fit for the future.

"60 minutes of vigorous activity a day is the Chief Medical Officers' minimum guidance. Our new research shows that many parents underestimate this amount by 50%. That's why this National School Sports Week we are urging parents and schools to make the #PledgeToPlay."

Notes to editors

About the Youth Sport Trust:

The Youth Sport Trust is a UK leading children's charity for improving young people's wellbeing through sport and play. It empowers young people and equips educators to transform lives. Founded in 1995, it works with around 20,000 schools and inspires Changemakers to build a sense of belonging. Its vision is to create a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits of play and sport. Visit the YST website for ideas, tips and information www.youthsporttrust.org.

Twitter: @YouthSportTrust

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About National School Sports Week:

National School Sports Week is an annual campaign, launched originally in 2008 and run by national children's charity the Youth Sport Trust, to champion the role of PE, physical activity and school sport in allowing all pupils to reach their full potential. In 2022 1,359 schools registered to take part, the campaign generated 187 media mentions and over 40m campaign impressions were delivered through social media. This year the week is running from Monday 19 to Sunday 25 June 2023 and is themed around 'playing for fun, playing for 60,' with the intention of driving up awareness of the Chief Medical Officers' recommendation that children should be active for a minimum of 60 minutes a day in order to stay happy and healthy. By registering, to take part, participants are making the #PledgeToPlay for a minimum of 60 active minutes a day for the whole of National School Sports Week. Schools, families, businesses and

supportive partners can sign-up to participate in the campaign at https://www.youthsporttrust.org/nssw

Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines for children and young people:

The UK Chief Medical Officer recommends that children and young people need to do two types of physical activity each week:

- aerobic exercise
- exercises to strengthen their muscles and bones

Children and young people aged 5 to 18 should:

- aim for an average of at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity a day across the week take part in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity across the week to develop movement skills, muscles and bones
- reduce the time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity.
- aim to spread activity throughout the day

Read more about the guidelines on the NHS website here;
https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-guidelines/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/

Company Contact:

Youth Sport Trust

T. 07825 065195
E. press@youthsporttrust.org
W. https://www.youthsporttrust.org/

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