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**SPORT
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PLAY ENGLAND PRESS RELEASE

Friday 23 June

Adventure into Sport helps children and families get active

Play England is delighted to announce our new project, Adventure into Sport, which launches on Monday 26 June.

At the moment, too many children are leading inactive lives with increasing numbers either overweight or obese. Many are growing up in over-crowded housing without access to quality play and sports opportunities outside school.

Adventure into Sport offers free after-school and summer holiday play opportunities to help hard-to-reach children and their families develop a positive and sustained relationship with physical activity and sport.

Play England is working with partners Eccleshill Adventure Playground in Ravenscliffe, Bradford and Play Association Tower Hamlets with Mudchute Farm on the Isle of Dogs, as well as regional sports providers, London Sport and Yorkshire Sports. The Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development & Learning (PEDAL), the University of Cambridge is evaluating the impact of the project, which is funded by Sport England and the National Lottery.

“We hope Adventure into Sport will highlight the importance of play, and foster greater collaboration between play and sport provision. The funding attached to the government’s sports strategy needs to be reaching local play organisations – who can actually deliver the outcomes we all want.”

Nicola Butler, Chair of Play England

“I am delighted to be working with Play England and Sport England to carry out this piece of research. It will be an important first step in evaluating how play impacts on the attitudes and behaviours of children and families regarding physical activity.”

Jenny Gibson, PEDAL, Centre for research on Play in Education, Development and Learning, University of Cambridge

“Play Association Tower Hamlets has run free estate-based play sessions for over 10 years. We’ve seen how people feel much more part of a community and motivated to be active outside. Mudchute Farm is a real treasure of countryside on our doorstep and we’re really excited to be running these play sessions with them.”

Eleanor Image, Play Association Tower Hamlets

“The Big Swing Adventure Playground has been delivering open access play sessions to the local community since 2008. We have an annual attendance of over 10,000 children and young people from the immediate locality and wider Bradford District. We are thrilled to be part of a new opportunity, which recognises the importance of community-based, open-access play in encouraging children and families to be more active.”

Janet Jewitt, Manager of Eccleshill Adventure Playground

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. Play England’s Street Play project has identified increases in children’s physical activity when they play out. The data showed that outdoor, active play was more likely to replace sedentary and screen-based activities, than physical activities. Increased community cohesion was also identified through an in depth study of parents’ views. The project found that hours between 3:30pm and 6pm on weekdays are the ‘critical window’ for children’s physical activity and it is during this time when differences in weekday physical activity between low and high active children and non-obese and obese children are greatest. Currently only 13% of 10 and 11 year old children are outdoors and active during this time.
2. The government’s 2015 Sports strategy recommends ***“[e]ncouraging active play at younger ages is important and can help develop healthy habits, enjoyment of physical activity and physical literacy skills.”***

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf

3. The government’s childhood obesity strategy recommends that ‘Every primary school child should get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day.’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action>

4. Both Bradford and Tower Hamlets have high levels of social deprivation.

In Ravenscliffe, 44% of children are growing up in poverty. 89.2% of children in Eccleshill are in the bottom 20% of the Child Wellbeing index.

In the Isle of Dogs, prevalence of childhood obesity in Year 6 children (children aged 10-11) is 27.1%, well above the national average of 19.1%. At 44%, Tower Hamlets also has the highest proportion of children growing up in poverty of any local authority area in the UK. (Child Poverty stats, November 2016). Isle of Dogs is a geographically isolated community within Tower Hamlets, often living in crowded accommodation in local housing estates. The area is in the top 3% for deprivation (Indices of Multiple Deprivation).

5. Adventure into Play partners

Play England is the national charity for children's play. We provide guidance for thousands of play providers: adventure playgrounds, after-school clubs, parks departments, parents, volunteers and schools. We coordinate the national Free Time Consortium, funded by Social Investment Business involving over 30 play organisations working with more than 20,000 parents and volunteers to create over 500,000 play opportunities, and empower volunteers to run their own play sessions. Play England's annual **Playday** campaign was evaluated by the Institute for Volunteering and NCVO which found **Playday** reached over 900,000 adults and children, giving 191 million opportunities to view the campaign through national and local media coverage.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/>

'The Big Swing' - Eccleshill Adventure Playground

Eccleshill Adventure Playground is a registered charity based in the Ravenscliffe area of Bradford. It is an adventure playground for five to 16 year olds, open five days a week, free of charge. It works closely with disadvantaged children including children from BAME communities, disabled children and children from low income and single parent families.

The playground provides a place where children and young people can play together in a supervised environment. The Big Swing has a trampoline, exciting climbing structures, slides, swings as well as offering children the chance to use tools to construct dens, go karts and other structures and learn how to make camp fires in our outdoor kitchen. Activities are carried out under the direction of the children's needs and wishes. Staff at Eccleshill Adventure Playground work hard to provide exciting and engaging activities which benefit children's health, well being, physical capabilities and literacy. All their activities can be made fully inclusive and adapted to any skill level. Eccleshill has developed strong relationships with a number of local schools, helping

children develop analytical, team-working, language and mathematical skills as well as helping those children who may require help with behaviour in class.

<http://www.thebigswing.org/>

Play Association Tower Hamlets

Play Association Tower Hamlets (PATH) is a charity that provides play opportunities to children and young people across the borough. Their trained play rangers deliver outdoor play sessions, working closely with local communities to ensure children and young people can play on their housing estates, close to their homes, supported by the community. Over 16 years, the charity has built up close links with the local authority, housing and residents associations, working hard to ensure that play is firmly at the heart of community life in Tower Hamlets.

<http://www.playtowerhamlets.org.uk/>

PEDAL, Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning, University of Cambridge

PEDAL was launched in October 2015. Its mission is to conduct academic research into the role of play in young children's education, development and learning to inform wider practice and policy.

<https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/pedal/>

6. SOCIAL MEDIA:

'Adventure into Play' Play England website:

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/adventure-into-sport/>

Partners:

<https://www.sportengland.org/>

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/>

<http://www.thebigswing.org/>

<http://www.playtowerhamlets.org.uk/>

<https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/pedal/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/playengland/posts/1447463915276824>

TWITTER:

#AdventureintoSport

Please RT our launch tweet:

<https://twitter.com/playengland/status/878202516176986113>

Partner twitter handles:

@Sport_England

@PlayEngland

@playPATH

@[@TheBigSwing](#)

@[@mudchute](#)

Attachments:

Adventure into Sport Image (JPEG)

Leaflets (PDFs)