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Press Notice

Health for Kids is to give away £10,000 in cash prizes to people who help kids fight obesity and stay healthy

People who help children to live healthier lives will benefit from new cash awards thanks to a unique scheme launched on 16th January 2007.

With over £10,000 available in prizes the Health for Kids awards programme aims to celebrate and reward individuals, teams and groups who have made a real difference to child health through healthy eating and physical activity initiatives as well as by tackling tough issues including obesity, emotional health, drug and alcohol abuse, safety, or helping young people get wise about sex and relationships.

The programme will be promoted at various ASDA stores throughout the UK with the help of many celebrities including Olympic Champion Sally Gunnell OBE and other members of the current Norwich Union Great Britain and Northern Ireland Athletics Team - thanks to awards sponsor Norwich Union who, together with UK Athletics, get over one million children active each year."

Gunnell, now a mother herself, and principally involved in promoting health, fitness and well-being believes it is important to shine the spotlight on those who are determined to teach kids a proactive healthy living approach. "I had a great PE teacher and coach who saw the talent in me and worked to bring it out. Other people are doing the same type of thing for many kids today, setting up projects and programmes to encourage children to lead healthy and more active lives - and their work goes unrecognised. The Health for Kids awards scheme helps to put that right" she says.

The National Healthy Schools Programme, jointly funded by the Department of Health and the Department for Education & Skills, has joined forces with Sport England to drive the Health for Kids awards - which is open to anyone working with children up to 18 years old in a caring or educational setting.

Any initiative or long term project that has been set up to educate or improve the health of children and young people, or facilitate a change in their attitudes and behavior to healthy living is eligible to enter. Visit www.hfkawards.co.uk and complete the on-line entry form.

The initial launch will take place at ASDA Watford on 16th January with activities and information to demonstrate how children of all ages and abilities can have fun and be healthy. This will be followed by events in Glasgow, Northern Ireland, Manchester, Cardiff, and Birmingham throughout January, February and March.

Andy Bond, CEO ASDA Wal-Mart says: "At ASDA we recognise our responsibility to do the right thing for the wider community as well as our own colleagues and customers. That's why our partnership with Health for Kids awards fits so well; we are able to raise the profile of local initiatives or long term projects which are designed to help improve children's attitudes to healthy living."

The Health for Kids awards programme is inviting entries from schools, colleges, clubs, associations, youth groups, sports teams, leisure centres and other educational and social organisations or individuals who have initiatives or programmes in operation now.

Stephen Baddeley, Interim Chief Executive of Sport England, "We want as many people as possible to enjoy the benefits of sport and active recreation. Being active is particularly important for children and young people and that's why we support projects that get kids into sport and active play. Anyone who has an initiative in place to do this should enter the Health for Kids awards."

Thanks to the enthusiasm and support of generous sponsors including Norwich Union, Tropicana Go, Lion Eggs, Dairy Farmers of Britain, Whitworths and many others, the Health for Kids awards will highlight the good work taking place in the community to improve the health of our children.

Sam Mellor, Head of the National Healthy Schools Programme Delivery Unit, added: "Despite all the bad news we hear about kids' health there is so much good work already taking place and we think it's really important to tell people about it and encourage others either to adopt similar initiatives or introduce new ones."

"These unique new awards will give winners the recognition they deserve – not to mention a useful cash prize – and I'd urge anyone who works with kids on any health improvement initiatives to consider entering. Just visit the website and complete a simple on-line entry form."

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1) For further information please contact Karen George or Terri Woodhams on 0845 130 1078, Karen@hfkawards.co.uk terri@hfkawards.co.uk or visit www.hfkawards.co.uk

2) There are 10 categories in the inaugural Health for Kids awards. Details of each category and a downloadable entry form are available at www.hfkawards.co.uk

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