



Strictly embargoed 00.01 Thursday 7th February

Young people in Lincolnshire - prisoners in their own homes

- **Largest ever study of young people and parents reveals that despite high demand, less time is being spent outside than ever before**
- **The Scout Association launches 'KidsOutdoors' campaign to promote outdoor adventure to everybody**

Thursday 7th February: Research released today by The Scout Association has revealed that young people in the UK are spending worryingly little time outside engaging in the activities that enable them to enjoy a longer and healthier life. The findings, commissioned to coincide with the launch of The Scout Association's 'KidsOutdoors' campaign, highlight how 8 million young people between the ages of 7-18 (89%) spend far less time engaged in physical activity per week than is recommended by the Department of Health¹.

The Government recommends that Children should accumulate at least one hour or more of moderate physical activity most days of the week. The research also identified that over 600,000 (7%) young people between the ages of 7-18 spend no time at all participating in outdoor physical activities outside of school.

The research questioned both young people and their parents on their attitudes to the outside world and found that whilst both groups appreciated the benefits, barriers such as a lack of outdoor space, low knowledge of local activity, concern for personal safety, the pressures of school work and economic constraints meant that the positive attitude was rarely translated into action. Screen based activities in the home still remain the most popular uses of young people's leisure time.

In response to these statistics, The Scout Association is today launching 'KidsOutdoors', a campaign aimed at getting young people and their parents outside and participating in a

¹ P.7 DoH Report '**Choosing activity: a physical activity action plan**' 2005
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4105354

At least five a week: Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4080994



million new outdoor adventures across the UK. The campaign is also encouraging other charities and companies to sign up and tackle the problem as a coalition, with the British Heart Foundation, Outward Bound, Duke of Edinburgh, National Children's Homes all signed up already.

Specifically, the five campaign objectives are to:

1. Encourage parents and young people to engage in 1 million outdoor adventures across the UK
2. Call for a halt to the erosion of outdoor space for physical activity (including playing fields, swimming pools, and public gardens)
3. Provide more information for young people and parents on what is going on in their local area
4. Raise £10 million for investment into facilities and logistics to encourage young people in the UK to experience outdoor adventure
5. Ensure more adults volunteer to work with young people in their local communities.

Helen Burt, 14, Sentries Explorer Unit, Waddington. Lincolnshire.

"Doing activities outdoors is really good for your body and is excellent fun. You're spoilt for choice because of everything happening up and down the County, you get the feel good factor and there's not a reason why you shouldn't."

"You can be doing a tough hike or just having a kick around in the park with your mates, or maybe doing something more adventurous like climbing or caving. Whatever it is, there is no excuse to sit in front of a T.V screen all day!"

The campaign will be focussed at www.kidsoutdoors.com where the emphasis will be on user-generated content such as blogs, video and images of activities, that demonstrate just how fun and easy outdoor activity in a safe and secure environment is.

Chief Scout, Peter Duncan, said: "The findings of this report should come with a national health warning. It is a fact that young people who spend more time outdoors are healthier than those who do not and at the moment the outlook is bleak.

"Scouting has chosen to launch the 'KidsOutdoors' campaign because it already encourages 400,000 young people into the outdoors every week of the year. The campaign is for all of the 14 million young people in the UK. It doesn't matter who you are, but the message is simply to get out there and get involved in the adventure."



David Barker, Head of Communications for the British Heart Foundation, said:

“With predictions that one in four children will be obese by 2050², it is essential that we get children and young people more active. Physical activity can help build a healthy heart, develop strong muscles and bones and may help reduce the risk of some chronic diseases in later life.

“The Scout Associations Kids Outdoors initiative is a great campaign and will help young people to get the recommended daily dose of at least one hour of moderate intensity exercise each day.”

Evidence shows that active people have a longer life, less risk of developing many diseases, greater well-being, less anxiety and depression, lower stress levels, lower rates of smoking and substance misuse, greater ability to function at work and home, improved sleep, better maintenance of a healthy weight and increased social opportunities.

Other key findings included:

- The most significant barriers cited by young people include:
 - Lack of knowledge (58%)
 - Pressures of school work (42%)
 - Financial constraints (40%)
 - Safety concerns (21%)
 - Peer pressure (23%)
- 74% of young people would like more youth clubs and outdoor facilities provided
- Young people say they spend 30 minutes or more outside on an average of 3.4 days per week
- Only 25% of parents feel their children spend enough time outdoors. 80% wish their children spent longer outside.
- Regardless of how long they spend on outdoor activities, 64% of young people would like to spend more time outdoors
- 94% of young people and 99% of adults appreciate that spending more time outside has a positive effect on an individual's health and development
- Parents spend about 5 hours a week engaged in outdoor activities, with two fifths of this time spent with their children
- Running, football, swimming, cycling and walking are the most common outdoor activities
- Overall, young people attribute positive adjectives to outdoor activities – three quarters select healthy, energetic and fun, although inactive young people have more negative perceptions'
- 74% of parents would like their children's schools to provide more outdoor activities both in and out of school

² Tackling Obesity: Future Choices, Foresight Report, October 2007



Ends

Further Information:

- Young people who are Members of The Scout Association are available for media interviews.
- For further information please contact Ian Cashmore who is the Media Development Manager for Scouting in Lincolnshire, on 0845 643 0465, or mobile 07821 306640 – email: media@lincsscout.org.uk

Notes to Editors:

- nfpSynergy is a research consultancy for the not for profit sector. Nfp was commissioned by The Scout Association to conduct this research.
- The report involved quantitative and qualitative random research of:
 - 1,083 young people aged 7-18
 - 1,027 parents of young people aged 7 – 18
- Fieldwork was conducted during December 2007.

About Scouting:

- Adventure is at the core of Scouting, and the Association passionately believes in helping their members fulfil their full physical, intellectual social and spiritual potentials by working in teams, learning by doing and thinking for themselves.
- Over 200 activities are offered by Scouting around the UK, made possible by the efforts of 100,000 voluntary adult leaders. This has helped make Scouting the largest co-educational youth Movement in the country.
- One of the challenges that the Scout Movement faces is finding more volunteers to plug the current gap. At present there are nearly 30,000 young people on waiting lists.
- Adults working in Scouting contribute in excess of 364 million hours of voluntary work each year to their local communities.
- The number of volunteers working for Scouting is bigger than the combined workforces of the BBC (24,000) and McDonalds (67,000) put together.
- Worldwide Scouting has 28 million members both male and female and operates in nearly every country in the world.