



MEDIA RELEASE

Under embargo until 10am on Wednesday 31 July

THE FA COMMUNITY SHIELD MARKS THE BEGINNING OF 'HEADS UP' MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN

Sunday's highly anticipated FA Community Shield supported by McDonald's between Liverpool and Manchester City will kick-off the Heads Up campaign and a season of activities aimed at driving the biggest ever conversation on mental health.

Heads Up – launched by The Football Association [The FA] and Heads Together and spearheaded by The Duke of Cambridge - will harness the influence and popularity of football to help show the nation that we all have mental health and it is just as important as physical health. Visible across The FA's biggest assets and moments of the season, the campaign will strive to raise awareness, spark conversation and signpost support for those in need, with a 24/7 text support service established.

The launch moment for the 2019/20 season will be officially marked during Sunday's FA Community Shield's pre-match ceremony, when a short film by The Duke of Cambridge will introduce the Heads Up campaign and encourage both sets of fans to join in the singing of the clubs' anthems, 'You'll Never Walk Alone' and 'Blue Moon'. The singing will be led by two community choirs – iChoir from Liverpool and Bee Vocal from Manchester – both created to support mental wellbeing and to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health. The choirs will take to the pitch ahead of the teams to lead the iconic anthems, which both refer to themes of isolation and the importance of togetherness, pertinent to



the core message behind the campaign. Heads Up branding will be visible across the stadium and on the LEDs during the fixture.

Following The FA Community Shield, the campaign will be activated across all levels of the game from the elite to grassroots and at the biggest moments of The FA's season including men's and women's England internationals and FA competitions. The campaign will conclude at the Emirates FA Cup Final on 23 May, 2020.

At a grassroots level, a new comprehensive guidance for coaches and managers will be distributed to FA affiliated adult clubs, to support them in identifying the signs of mental health and offer support and signposting where needed to help improve the mental wellbeing of players.

Heads Up will also become The FA's nominated charity and will see The FA work alongside designated charity partners Mind, CALM, Sporting Chance and Heads Together to raise vital funds for mental health initiatives and support.

Those in need of support will be guided to a number of support services available through our charity partners and other mental health organisations. If a fan wants immediate support they can also text 'HeadsUp' to 85258 to connect with a trained crisis volunteer, who will chat to them by text message, sharing only what feels comfortable, and help them through the moment, working together on a plan for longer-term support. This service is available 24/7 and free to text from most mobile networks. It is run by 'Shout' and powered by Crisis Text Line.

The Premier League, EFL, LMA and PFA also support the objectives of the campaign and Heads Up will look to work with each of the organisations to highlight some of the great work they are already doing on mental health throughout the season.

Mark Bullingham, The FA's Chief Executive said: "Suicide is the most likely cause of death for men under the age of 45. Despite this shocking statistic many are suffering in silence with a reluctance to talk about their issues. We will work with Heads Up to use the power of



football to tackle the stigma around mental health and raise awareness of the importance of mental fitness.”

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of Mind said: “We all know about the power of football, not just as the national sport with an ability to unite people, but also as a force to influence and change society for the better. That’s why we’re delighted to be a part of the Heads Up campaign. This is a fantastic chance for the football family to come together and tackle mental health for good. This applies from the national team right through to the grassroots. We look forward to working closely with the Royal Foundation and The FA, as well as our other key partners in the sector, including the EFL and PFA, to build on their excellent work. We want to get the conversation about mental health going not just on the pitch and in the boardroom, but also on the terraces.”

Simon Gunning, CEO of the Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) said: “We firmly believe football can bring great happiness and be a force for good when it comes to mental health. We’re therefore delighted to continue our work with Heads Together and to be part of the Heads Up campaign. At a cultural and societal level, we know the beautiful game has an important role to play in the way we deal with issues including mental health and suicide. Being there for your mates when things get tough, whether you're playing or supporting, winning or losing, creates strong bonds that can genuinely save lives. Heads Up, and football generally, can connect people and be a vehicle for conversations and support across all levels of the game.”

Tony Adams, Founder of Sporting Chance said: “Sporting Chance will be celebrating twenty years of supporting professional sport participants with their mental health in the year ahead. I am delighted that we are able to be part of the Heads Up Campaign, it is a wonderful initiative. Talking to someone and asking for help was the starting place in my own journey of recovery and today I look after my mental well-being like I look after my physical well-being. If we can help encourage people to talk about their mental health, I am ready to start a conversation.”



Lorraine Heggessey, CEO of The Royal Foundation said: “Heads Together has been part of an incredible movement to make more people aware of mental health, but stigma still stops too many people from talking openly and reaching out for help when they need it. If we can get the nation talking about our mental health as openly and as often as we passionately discuss football, then we can defeat stigma and lives will be changed - some will be saved. It’s a privilege to be partnering with The FA on the Heads Up campaign, and we’re delighted to be working with Mind, CALM and Sporting Chance as our charity partners.”

For more information on Heads Up visit – TheFA.com/HeadsUp and headstogether.org.uk.

Click [here](#) to download Heads Up logos and film launched in May 2019.

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About The FA:

The Football Association [The FA] is the not-for-profit governing body of football in England. It is responsible for promoting and developing every level of the game, from grassroots through to the professional game, and successfully generates enough revenue to support the investment of well over £100m into English football each year. The FA oversees 28 England international teams, across men’s, women’s, youth and disability football, as well as running FA Competitions, including the Emirates FA Cup and Women’s FA Cup, and the world-class facilities of Wembley Stadium connected by EE and St. George’s Park, all with a purpose to Unite the Game and Inspire the Nation.

About Heads Together:

In 2016 The Royal Foundation launched Heads Together – a campaign spearheaded by The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and The Duke of Sussex. The campaign convened eight charity partners to tackle the stigma around mental health. The campaign successfully encouraged more people in Britain to talk openly about mental health than ever before, and more people started accessing services as a result. Today we continue to work with our charity partners to support new initiatives to help people get the right help, at the right time and in the right place for them, whether that’s at school, in work, in social groups, or in the armed forces community. Shout, the UK’s first 24/7 crisis text support service, was researched and developed with The Royal Foundation as a legacy of the Heads Together campaign. It was set up with a £3m grant from The Royal Foundation to the charity Mental



Health Innovations, and operates as an independent charity, operating as SHOUT and also providing the service for free to charities in the UK. It is powered by Crisis Text Line.

