

# Mentally Healthy Football

## A Joint Declaration From the UK Football Family

Monday, 27th July 2020



Heads Up

The Football Family in the UK recognises that mental health is as important as physical health. We have been proud to support the Heads Up campaign during the current season, and the role that football has played in helping to change the conversation around mental health.

It is clear that Covid-19 will have significant and long-term effects on mental health, and that football will have an important role to play in bringing people together and supporting the wellbeing of fans and the football community. We will continue to lead positive change in football, and society more widely, by building on the important work clubs and football organisations are already doing; by working together to scale up these efforts in all parts of football right across the UK; and by supporting the development of 'mentally healthy clubs' at every level of the game.

We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health – players, staff, managers, officials and coaches, as well as fans and our wider communities. That's why, as football moves forward during this unprecedented time, we are uniting to commit to making mental health and fitness a key priority within football's agenda in all affiliated clubs and organisations across the UK, now and for future generations. We will do this based on four key principles:

SPOT	SPEAK	SUPPORT	SIGNPOST
Building an understanding of mental health to enable people to spot the signs that they, a team-mate or colleague might be facing challenges and need particular help or support.	Promoting an environment where people feel more comfortable speaking about their mental health, and where speaking out is seen as a sign of strength, rather than weakness.	Encouraging players and staff to look after and improve their own mental health, just as they do their physical health, and providing them with the tools and support to do so.	Knowing where help is available and making it clear how people can access support both within and outside of their organisation.

To deliver the above, as a collective, we will:

- **Lead from the top within our own organisations to help create a 'mentally healthy' culture across the whole game.**  
This will include all signatories implementing their own mental health strategy or action plan during the course of next season.
- **Make awareness-raising, training, education and guidance available to all clubs.**  
This will include sharing and widening access to existing training, education and guidance for staff, players, coaches, officials and managers. In addition, we will continue to promote mental health as a focus each year after the Heads Up campaign has concluded.
- **Embed mental health within our existing policies and practices.**  
This will include working with the Football Family to include mental health within existing policy frameworks across the UK.
- **Support clubs and organisations to grow a 'mentally healthy' culture through the provision of guidance and resources.**  
This will include providing tailored toolkits as part of our individual action plans to support mental fitness for players, as well as staff wellbeing, with clear guidance on where to signpost those needing support.
- **Work together through a UK-wide mental health implementation group for UK football.**  
This will be formed next season to ensure we all drive progress towards these pledges and share best practice between ourselves.

Football is a team game and we recognise that every organisation will have a different part to play within it. Each of our organisations will adopt their own approach based on these common principles and commitments, building on the work we are already doing on mental health. By coming together around one collective game plan for better mental health, we will be able to achieve our shared vision for football more quickly.

Now, more than ever, is the time for us to support each other and for all parts of society to prioritise mental health. We will do everything we can to play our part in this and help make football a 'mentally healthy' environment now and in the future.

### Signed:

