

## PRESS RELEASE

### National Children's Day UK 2019 Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May

- for immediate release -



**National Children's Day UK (NCDUK)** is all about the importance of a healthy childhood and how we need to protect the rights and freedoms of children in order to ensure that they can grow into happy, healthy adults.

This year National Children's Day UK is taking place on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May** and people can run any kind of big or small event that they want for the week up to and including the day. From small family outings, to whole school and community events, local authority initiatives, talks, seminars and city-wide celebrations, it's an opportunity for everyone to raise awareness about the things they care about or projects they are running.

#### **An increasingly important national event**

Over the six years since its launch the day has attracted the support of hundreds of organisations throughout the UK. These include: children's centres, nurseries and schools, local authorities, the national Play organisations, The National Trust, The Wild Network, The Football League Trust, Eureka National Children's Museum, The Childhood Trust, The Mental Health Foundation, Action for Children's Arts, Pip UK, Coram, Pre-school Learning Alliance, Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, Human Values Foundation and many others.

#### **Wendy Ellyatt, Chief Executive of the Save Childhood Movement said:**

*"Children in the modern world are experiencing pressures that were unknown to previous generations. National Children's Day UK provides a wonderful opportunity for people to highlight things that are going on in the lives of children and families and issues that they care about. We hope everyone will use the day as a platform to celebrate everything that is magical about childhood, but to also shine a light on any problems and what we can do to alleviate them".*

**People can run any kind of big or small activity or event that they want for the week up to and including NCDUK.**

The conversation continues on social media #NCDUK2019  
www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com

- Ends -

For more information please contact

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

- National Children's Day UK is an initiative of the Save Childhood Movement – [www.savechildhood.net](http://www.savechildhood.net). The movement was established in 2013 and consists of a growing collaboration of individuals and organisations that share a deep concern about societal values and wellbeing and the current erosion of childhood.
- The concept of Children's Day was established by the UN General Assembly in 1954 as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding between children. The Assembly suggested to governments that the day be observed on the date and in the way which each considers appropriate. In the UK it was launched by the Save Childhood Movement in 2014 and is now held at the beginning of summer.
- The initiative has been the recipient of two 'Awards for All' Big Lottery grants

## CHILD WELLBEING IN THE UK

- **Maternal Mental Health:** More than 1 in 10 women develop a mental illness during pregnancy or within the first year after having a baby. If untreated, these perinatal mental illnesses can have a devastating impact on the women affected and their families. In the UK, mental illness in pregnant and postnatal women often goes unrecognised, undiagnosed and untreated. <http://everyonesbusiness.org.uk>
- **Early Attachment:** Four in ten babies don't develop the strong emotional bonds – what psychologists call “secure attachment” – with their parents that are crucial to success later in life. Disadvantaged children are more likely to face educational and behavioural problems when they grow older as a result – *Sutton Trust, Baby Bonds Report, 2014*
- **Child Poverty:** The UN's children's rights body directly criticised the government by predicting that its ambitions to eradicate child poverty were unlikely to materialise in the near future. Among key areas of concern, Britain was also ranked bottom out of 37 countries for the disparities in healthy eating between children from differing social and

financial backgrounds. [https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/RC13\\_eng.pdf](https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/RC13_eng.pdf)

Child poverty has risen by 200,000 children over the past year. The numbers, show 29 per cent of children are now classed as being in poverty. *Department for Work and Pensions, June 2016.*

The Institute for Fiscal Studies believes that relative child poverty is now set to increase from 30% to 37% by 2021

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/benefit-freeze-uk-record-tackling-child-poverty-risk>

Children and adults from the lowest quintile (20 per cent) of household income are three times more likely to have common mental health problems (than those in the richest quintile) - *Centre for Social Justice Report, Feb 2011*

Early child poverty has been linked to brain changes related to depression in older children. "*Children from poorer families are more likely to experience changes in brain connectivity that put them at higher risk of depression, compared with children from more affluent families.*" *American Journal of Psychiatry, January 2016*  
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/305208.php>

- **Obesity:** Today nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are overweight or obese, and younger generations are becoming obese at earlier ages and staying obese for longer. *Childhood Obesity: A plan of action* [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
- **Physical Literacy:** the numbers of young boys and girls meeting the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) physical activity guidelines *has fallen below one in five*. This is less about the number of children who are playing sport and more about the number of children growing up without the aptitude for basic motor and coordination skills learned through childhood activity. A study by Cambridge University published in Paediatrics in March 2014 found that children are not just 'naturally active' or inactive, but that they take their parents' lead in developing healthy exercise habits early on. *Childhood Physical Literacy Report, 2015*  
[http://www.ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Start\\_Young\\_Stay\\_Active.pdf](http://www.ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Start_Young_Stay_Active.pdf)
- **Lack of contact with nature:** Children are twice as likely to be short-sighted than 50 years ago. Short-sightedness has more than doubled in UK children in the last 50 years, according to a recent study  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/children/12111882/Children-twice-as-likely-to-be-short-sighted-than-50-years-ago.html>
- Fewer than a quarter of children regularly use their local 'patch of nature', compared to over half of all adults when they were children  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/Childhood%20and%20Nature%20Survey\\_tcm6-10515.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/Childhood%20and%20Nature%20Survey_tcm6-10515.pdf)  
Fewer than one in ten children regularly play in wild places; compared to almost half a generation ago.  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/Childhood%20and%20Nature%20Survey\\_tcm6-10515.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/Childhood%20and%20Nature%20Survey_tcm6-10515.pdf)

Children spend so little time outdoors that they are unfamiliar with some of our commonest wild creatures. According to a 2008 National Trust survey, one in three

could not identify a magpie; half could not tell the difference between a bee and a wasp; yet nine out of ten could recognise a Dalek. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/what-we-do/news/archive/view-page/item737221](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/what-we-do/news/archive/view-page/item737221)

- **Mental Health:** 850,000 children aged 5-16 have mental health problems [http://www.youngminds.org.uk/about/whats\\_the\\_problem](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/about/whats_the_problem) - Nov 2016

Three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder.

Roughly 725,000 people in the UK suffer from Eating Disorders, 86% of these will have shown symptoms before the age of 19.

One in 10 deliberately harm themselves regularly (and 15,000 of them are hospitalised each year because of this

Nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression

Half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14

45% of children in care have a mental health disorder - these are some of the most vulnerable people in our society

Nearly 300,000 young people in Britain have an anxiety disorder.

Many thousands of children and young people are isolated, unhappy, have eating disorders and self-harm; some tragically take their own lives. Many are likely to become victims of crime, grow up in dysfunctional families, or left to cope with illness, drugs and/or alcohol issues – not necessarily their own.