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To whom it may concern

I am emailing you in response to the inquiry into childhood obesity on behalf of Swansea City AFC Community Trust. I am the coordinator of a health project call Healthy Together which is funded by the Premier League and Professional Footballers Association.

'Healthy together' targets families within Swansea that have children aged 7 - 16. Previously there have been very few programs in Swansea that provided an integrated approach to increasing physical activity levels and improving nutrition. Due to the gap in service provision for this type of scheme a bid for the Healthy Together project was submitted and funded granted.

The 'Healthy Together' program will aim to provide a stepping stone between the existing initiatives such as MEND, 5x60 etc. and mainstream community activities such as public swimming, fitness classes and gym sessions. We will be welcoming informal referrals from the programs mentioned above, enabling all participants to continue to develop habits for a healthy lifestyle and sustain their behaviour changes over a longer period of time.

Current evidence shows that on completion of a short term project or initiative individuals slowly revert back to the unhealthy lifestyle that they originally led. This is due to the existing projects not being long enough for individuals to embed changes and to feel confident that they can sustain behaviour change without support.

Current evidence also shows that whilst there are only a small number of targeted physical activity and / or nutrition projects within Swansea, there are even fewer appropriate exit routes. The Healthy Together project will help to address this by providing the exit routes to mainstream activity.

Having delivered MEND for the City and County of Swansea myself many of the families that completed the program often asked what do they do now? Some still needed support and guidance and many did not feel ready or confident enough to access main stream activities. I also felt that some families struggled to complete the program due to its intensity and the commitment needed. I think that Mend is a worthwhile project and do believe that many more families could benefit from the program if the strict criteria of the weight issue maybe relaxed to some extent. I do think that some people do not engage in the program because of the stigma of acknowledging and accepting that your child has a weight issue is difficult to swallow.

I hope that this brief explanation gives you an insight in to the project I am coordinating and an understanding of why it was felt that this project was needed.

Kind regards



Debbie Boulter
Healthy Together Project Coordinator
Swansea City AFC Community

Registered Charity Number: 1126933



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