



New physical education resource to educate young people about health and well-being

Irish Heart Foundation partners Department of Education & Science

Health related activity was highlighted as an essential part of the physical education curriculum, when ‘Action for Life’ - a practical teaching resource for Junior Cycle physical education teachers was launched today (17th December) by the Minister for Education and Science, Mr Batt O’Keeffe, T.D. in Larkin College, Cathal Brugha St., Dublin 1. Action for Life was developed jointly by the Irish Heart Foundation and the Junior Cycle Physical Education Support Service (JCPESS) and has already been delivered through in-service to over 900 physical education teachers by JCPESS.

Speaking at the launch the Minister said that physical education is an important and essential component of the overall school curriculum and urged schools not to erode physical education time. He said he was delighted to launch this resource focussing on health related physical activity, which exposed young people to a range of activities that are enjoyable and that appeal to both genders and all ages. “More importantly as regular physical activity is such an essential component for physical and mental being, it is vital that this component is part of the curriculum”, said Minister O’Keeffe.

Chief Executive of the Irish Heart Foundation, Mr Michael O’Shea, congratulated the Department of Education and Science for their interest and co-operation in developing this resource. “Helping students understand the importance of being active, its links with nutrition and positive lifestyle and how they influence health, especially heart health, is particularly important.

“Heart disease remains the leading cause of death. One in four Irish teenagers are now either overweight or obese, which will lead to increased rates of heart disease in the future. This means that all players, including teachers and the Department through the curriculum, have a role in educating young people about their health and well-being,” said Mr O’Shea.

Action for Life is aligned with the physical education syllabus at junior cycle and seeks to develop an understanding of the role of health related activity in the promotion of wellbeing and of the scientific principles that underpin health related

activity. It also aims to provide the student with the ability to measure and monitor physical wellbeing and develop a sense of responsibility for her/his own health.

The development of 'Action for Life' was also supported by practicing teachers and the Minister thanked them, their students and all those involved for their time and enthusiasm.

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