



27th April 2009

Mid Essex health and fitness initiative gains backing of Steve Cram MBE and Minister for the Olympics, Tessa Jowell

Olympic athlete Steve Cram MBE paid a special visit to St Peters High School in Burnham today, 27 April 2009, to celebrate the official launch of UpStarts, a comprehensive collection of health and wellbeing initiatives which will provide young people across mid Essex access to a year-long programme of top quality sports coaching alongside food and nutrition classes.

UpStarts is the only programme of its type to be rolled out in the UK to date and is being funded by NHS Mid Essex and delivered by Healthy Living Solutions Community Interest Company (HLS CIC). It forms part of the 2012 Legacy Plan and is designed to give young people the experience similar to that of an elite athlete in terms of support, helping them to reach their potential and develop confidence and self-esteem.

Commenting on the programme, former Olympic medallist, Commonwealth, European and World Champion, Steve Cram, said, "UpStarts is a brilliant example of how local health organisations can work together to play a vital role in helping young people develop healthy attitudes towards food and fitness which will stay with them for the rest of their lives. I'm confident it will be a success and really hope that what is being delivered here in Essex can be replicated in other areas across the UK."

The scheme has also gained the support of the Minister for the Olympics, Tessa Jowell, who said: "UpStarts is a great scheme which takes the inspirational power of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to the heart of the local Essex community giving hundreds of young people the skills they need to live a balanced lifestyle. This is exactly the kind of initiative that will help us build a life-long legacy from 2012 of a healthier more active Britain."

HEALTHY
LIVING
SOLUTIONS

NHS
Mid Essex

UpStarts will link to and complement the delivery of Essex County Council's 2012 Legacy Plan which aims to use the forthcoming London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games as a platform to encourage local residents to make long term lifestyle changes enabling them to reach their optimum health and potential.

Commenting on UpStarts Chief Executive of NHS Mid Essex, Sheila Bremner, said: "We're delighted to have such high profile support for UpStarts. We are incredibly lucky to have the Olympics taking place on our doorstep and intend to use it to our advantage to inspire local residents to take a renewed interest in their health and wellbeing. In mid Essex there are high levels of obesity coupled with low levels of physical activity. We believe that by tackling these issues through the delivery of educational and inspirational programmes for young people, we can instil lifelong positive attitudes to sport and nutrition that will be passed down to generations to come."

Mary-Ann Munford, Chair, Healthy Living Solutions CIC, the organisation responsible for delivering UpStarts, said: "We're immensely proud to have developed this unique programme. It's the first of its type to be rolled out in the UK and we're confident that the results will speak for themselves. Our partnership with the University of Essex enables us to measure and prove to participants that UpStarts will deliver positive changes to their health. We hope that this proof will encourage other 2012 Legacy Teams to invest in similar programmes that will help to teach children that healthy living should stay with them for life."

The UpStarts programme of events commenced this month with school sports clubs which will run for two terms, each lasting ten weeks, at seven schools across the local area. The activity sessions will be led by qualified coaches from Colchester United Community Sports Trust, who will provide premium coaching for more than 150 children. Holiday sports festivals, cookery and nutritional sessions will also form part of the school sports club programme.

An additional 15 cookery clubs will run in parallel, offering parents the opportunity to participate along with their children to learn more about the importance and ease of introducing healthy eating into the home. Essex based Ashlyns Organics has been heavily involved designing recipes and working with the Institute for Optimum Nutrition to ensure

that what is being taught will have the best health outcomes for the children and their parents.

Simon Owen from Ashlyns Organics, formerly a chef for Jamie Oliver involved in the School Dinners Programme, said: “We’re really excited about UpStarts. It’s a unique programme designed to deliver long term positive health benefits to the people of mid Essex. We all know that we need to eat healthily to improve our wellbeing, but knowing how to do this is often confusing and therefore a barrier for people. So we’ve joined forces with the Institute for Optimum Nutrition and the University of Essex to create a series of cookery courses and a recipe book which will teach young people and their families that cooking healthy, cost-effective meals with optimal nutritional balance is really simple and fun.”

The University of Essex will be working alongside Healthy Living Solutions to assess all youngsters taking part in the UpStarts programme. The Sports Science department will carry out a full assessment to measure health, wellbeing, self-esteem and fitness levels before, during and after the programme to chart improvements and changes to participants’ health and evaluate effectiveness.

ENDS

Press office details:

For further information please contact

Kate George tel: 023 8021 5387 kate@merchantmarketinggroup.com or

Zoe Palmer tel: 023 8022 5478 zoe.palmer@merchantmarketinggroup.com

For further information on UpStarts, please contact:

Sue Bayles, Director, Healthy Living Solutions CIC suebayles@hls.cc

Notes to Editors

Background note:

- A recently launched government strategy, ‘Be Active, Be Healthy’, has established a new framework for the delivery of physical activity alongside sport for the period leading up to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond. The programmes outlined in the plan will contribute to the Government’s ambition of getting two million people more active by 2012 and have been designed to leave a lasting legacy from the Games.
- ‘Be active, Be Healthy’ also sets out new ideas for Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to help determine and respond to the needs of their local populations, providing and encouraging more physical activity. This will benefit individuals and communities as well as delivering overall cost savings.

- The plan reveals the local cost of inactivity to each PCT for the first time. PCTs spend on average £5 million a year because of inactivity - a cost equivalent to 1,000 hip replacements or 170,000 nurse consultations.

About UpStarts:

- UpStarts runs from April 2009 to March 2010 and places on the programme are free.
- The NHS Mid Essex Primary Care Trust is working with the three local authorities, Chelmsford, Braintree and Maldon, Community Sports Networks, Essex 2012 Legacy Team, Colchester United Community Sports Trust and governing bodies of six of the top performing sports in the Olympics to develop the Upstarts campaign leading in to 2012.
- Weekly school sports clubs will be established in seven schools across mid Essex – they will include; one special school, two secondary schools with alternative education students, an excluded support unit and a primary school in one of the most deprived areas. As a result of these clubs, more than 150 young people attending activities will improve their wellbeing and activity levels. They will also feature nutrition and self esteem sessions through which at least 60 targeted children and their families will have learned how to prepare and cook a healthy meal.
- An additional 15 cooking clubs will be set up in schools for staff and families to run and provide cascade training. At least 60 people will be ‘cascade’ trained to be able to set up after school cook clubs. At least 400 people will be trained and more than 150 young people and their families will have intense nutrition and cooking training. Initial training will be given by Simon Owen from Ashlyns Organics who was formerly a chef for Jamie Oliver and involved in the School Dinners Programme.
- Schools taking part (sports and cookery)
 - The Edith Borthwick Special School – Braintree
 - Templars Primary School - Witham
 - Powers Hall Primary School - Witham
 - St Peter’s High School Alt Ed Unit - Maldon
 - Plume School - Alt Ed Unit, Maldon
 - Heybridge ISS - Maldon
 - Kings Road School - Chelmsford
- 10 additional schools will be used for cookery clubs.
- UpStarts will be managed by Natalie Blyde, a Loughborough graduate, keen athlete and consultant in sport and health related fitness.
- It’s estimated that by March 2010 at least 3,000 people will have attended a road show or 2012 lifestyle event.

About Healthy Living Solutions CIC

Healthy Living Solutions CIC is a young, highly-skilled community interest company, with a mission to deliver innovative and exemplary sustainable health, wellbeing and regeneration projects. Team members come from many different disciplines and unite to bring fresh thinking and enthusiasm to complex health, wellbeing and regeneration issues. At the heart of their work are the close relationships they build with local communities and partner organisations, working together with them to create joined up solutions resulting in healthier communities, increased opportunities for individuals to reach their full potential and contribute to social and economic regeneration.

- Healthy Living Solutions has a track record in designing and delivering Healthy Living Centre and Wellbeing Initiatives.
- Delivered one of the most successful lottery funded HLC’s in the country

- One of the founder members of the Healthy Living Alliance.
- Healthy Living Solutions CIC is one of the first NHS emerging Social Enterprises in the country. www.healthylivingsolutions.cc