

**To: Hertfordshire Secondary Headteachers**

13<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Dear Headteacher,

**One of the biggest barriers to achievement is pupils' declining physical and emotional wellbeing**

Can you think of any girls in your school who do not seem to be reaching their full potential?

As girls enter adolescence, they tend to be less and less physically active. At the same time, the emotional wellbeing of girls can also often decline. We know from the Hertfordshire Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (HRBQ) that the two greatest worries for girls are exams, and the way they look. The HRBQ also tells us that the vast majority of young people do not feel that they have the coping strategies to positively handle these worries, and most try to handle them on their own without the support of others.

It is time to take a different approach to building the emotional wellbeing and resilience of girls aged 11-14 to address this decline in physical activity and emotional wellbeing, in order to support them to reach their full potential.

Hertfordshire Public Health team and Herts Sports and Physical Activity Partnership (HSP), with support from CAMHS transformation, have teamed up with Youth Sport Trust to pilot an adapted version of their award winning **Girls Active** programme in Hertfordshire. From September, the pilot will support 10 schools to deliver a programme designed to promote physical activity and emotional wellbeing in adolescent girls. Through this approach we will seek to improve girls' engagement and relationship with PE and physical activity, improve their confidence, resilience, and self-esteem, and ultimately improve their emotional wellbeing. This will help them to achieve at school and have a healthier happier future.

The pilot is being implemented by the Youth Sport Trust, an independent charity drawing on over 20 years of experience in using the power of PE and sport to change young peoples' lives. The 2013/14 national pilot of Girls Active in 20 schools showed;

- 3 fold increase in girls feeling positive about school from 23 % to 78%
- 50% increase in girls who enjoy coming to school on days when they have PE from 41% to 62%
- Doubling of girls who enjoy their non PE lessons at school from 29% to 61%
- An increase in girls feeling positive about school from 24 % to 78%
- Girls who feel confident when taking part in PE lessons rose from 35% to 64%
- An increase from 25% to 56% of girls who were happy with the way their body looks
- A decrease from 37% to 16% of girls who were unhappy with the way their body looked



Through commitment to the ***Girls Active***, Hertfordshire pilot schools will receive;

- A full day of teacher training for two teachers along (training date 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016)
- Inspirational hard copy and electronic resources including case studies, evidence based insight and marketing materials for teachers
- Pre and post intervention surveying of girls concluding in a School Insight Report based on student responses
- Development support from Youth Sport Trust staff to support teachers with action planning and impact
- A self review framework to benchmark and evidence progress
- Enhanced connectivity to local health and sport partners
- Access to Youth Sport Trust athlete mentor visits through the *Sky Sports Living for Sport* programme
- Support to secure funding to support further implementation

Hertfordshire is one of a few counties who have committed local funding to provide this opportunity and we encourage you to take advantage of this unique and free opportunity!

### Registering Your Interest

Please read the accompanying programme guidance outlining in more detail the support available and the commitment required. For 2016/17 this opportunity is only available to 10 schools. **Therefore we would encourage you please complete the expression of interest form attached**, and return to [girlsactive@youthsporttrust.org](mailto:girlsactive@youthsporttrust.org) as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, in the meantime, then please contact me. Otherwise, we look forward to receiving your expression of interest!

Yours sincerely,



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