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Organisations across Cambridgeshire are celebrating after being awarded £325,000 of National Lottery funding from Sport England to help low income families get active with their children.

Four out of five primary school children do not get the recommended amount of daily exercise of 60 minutes a day, and are missing out on the benefits it brings. Children from low income families are most likely to do very little physical activity.[\[1\]](#)

Active Families is a project run by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with Peterborough City Council, Fenland District Council, Cambridge City Council, Living Sports and Vivacity Leisure Trust.

It is one of the first projects to receive investment from a £40 million National Lottery funding pot that Sport England has dedicated to helping families get active together because parents and close family members can have a big impact on children's experiences.

The fund is a key part of Sport England's focus on helping young people have an enjoyable experience of sport and physical activity so they develop a positive attitude towards being active at an early age and continue being active in later life.

Active Families will first focus on Fenland, Peterborough and Cambridge City, to deliver free and fun physical activities for children and families most in need. Free school term drop-in sessions, holiday roadshows and virtual activities such as a free treasure hunt app will be available at the school gate, community centres and nearby greenspaces.

Children and their carers will be encouraged to maintain their participation with a reward scheme. An online directory of free family play and physical activity opportunities will also be developed to help those families stay active.

Cllr Peter Hudson, Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee Chairman, said: "The National Lottery funding is excellent news for our Active Families project which can get off the ground and start providing experiences for families that are enjoyable, convenient and low cost.

We are looking forward to working with our partners to offer new opportunities for adults with low income and their children to get active and have fun together."

Steve Barclay MP said: “This is welcome news for this area and the Active Families project is a great example of local partnerships working together to deliver support for encouraging participation in physical activity. The importance of having an active lifestyle cannot be underestimated, and to establish this at primary level is crucial. I am pleased that Active Families have been provided with the necessary support from the National Lottery and look forward to hearing how they progress.”

Heidi Lemmon, Physical Activity Locality Co-ordinator at Fenland District Council and lead co-ordinator of the Active Families project, said: “This funding will make a huge difference in Wisbech and March. We plan to work closely with families to give them opportunities to be active together within their local community. We will work weekly with the same families to embed the behaviour change and provide fun activities as well as a new app that encourages families to explore our green open spaces.”

**Sport England's Director of Children and Young People Jayne Molyneux said:**

“It’s not right that four in five children don’t get enough exercise and are missing out on the health benefits it brings. Just by seeing their parents being active, children can be inspired to do the same, and if they have an enjoyable experience they’re far more likely to continue as an adult.

“Parents have many demands on their time, and often lack the confidence to get active with their children. That’s why Sport England is working hard to make getting active with your children an easy choice.

[1] The Chief Medical Officer recommends that children and young people do at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity every day. Currently, just 23% of boys and 20% of girls meet the national recommended level of activity. 47% of children from the households with the lowest incomes do low levels of activity. Health Survey for England 2016: Children’s health information



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