

#together

Issue 1 August 2021



Feelgood factor

Boost your children's
wellbeing with
our top tips

DECISION TIME

What to consider
when choosing
a school

Rediscover your summer

Make the most of the warmer weather
after a year where we missed so much

Welcome!

Welcome to the brand new issue of #together, our first magazine for parents. We fully understand the challenges facing parents right now and we want to support you with some of the fun ideas, advice and tips we've gathered over the past 25 years working with young people.

This issue is bursting with information and suggestions as you 'rediscover your summer' after a difficult year where parents and children alike missed out on so much. Turn to pages 4-5 and you'll find a treasure trove of resources, activities, games and ideas all aimed at helping you and your family get back out and embrace the summer, from nature walks and bike rides to games in the garden and larger-scale events.

For many parents, the biggest challenge during the holidays is to encourage your children to put down their devices and get active. Turn to page 6 for top tips from World Thai Boxing Champion and mum-of-two, **Rachael Mackenzie**. We also talk to British and Commonwealth Judo Champion **Tom Davis** to find out how you can encourage your children to be their very best selves emotionally, mentally and physically.

There's plenty more to read about plus there's a Team GB scooter and helmet up for grabs, just turn to page 7 to find out how you could be our lucky winner!

The Youth Sport Trust team

Don't miss out on future editions of #together! Have your copy delivered straight into your inbox – sign up [here](#)



Winner, winner!

We meet the Davis family, our lucky winners of weekend passes to Festival of Sport

The Youth Sport Trust team is excited to announce its charity partnership with Festival of Sport 2021. This is the ultimate family weekend, jam-packed full of sporting activities, fun and entertainment and we will be delivering some of our Active in Mind and Healthy Movers sessions during the event, which takes place 13-15 August at Holkham Estate, Norfolk.

We are thrilled to announce the Davis family (pictured) as our #Together competition winners, winning weekend family passes to the Festival. We couldn't have picked more worthy winners as Wendy Davis tells us how much winning the competition means to her and her son, Oliver: "Oliver and I really are over the moon to win such an amazing experience, giving us the opportunity to try so many new sports and enjoy being active as a family. This is even more special as Oliver is a young carer as I have heart problems, so the chance for a weekend away having fun and time out from being a carer is even more special. Being active is so great for mental health and just what we both need."

We look forward to welcoming Wendy, Oliver and the rest of the family to the event in August.

LOCKDOWN LESSONS

The pandemic has led to huge changes at schools. We caught up with our network of schools to see which changes they'd like to keep

1 Wearing sports kit to school on the day they have PE lessons. Feedback shows that children are more engaged and excited to get to school than normal and less time spent changing means more time being active.



2 Holding intra-school competitions within bubbles saw whole classes or year groups compete virtually against other bubbles. The children enjoyed a variety of personal and group challenges and worked really well as a team.

3 Schools used physical activity to provide some children with personal space and time to regulate emotions and de-stress. These 'Sport Sanctuaries' enabled children to let off steam so they could then re-engage with their learning.



4 Getting everyone active together at the start of the school day helped children to re-socialise and re-engage with friendship groups. It also helped children to feel comfortable being in close contact with other children and adults and led to improved learning outcomes.



As a legacy for all of the work schools have done to keep children active during lockdown and holiday periods, many have continued to provide 'active homework' to maintain habits for good physical, social and emotional health.



We believe in every child's future. Our vision is to support every child to enjoy the life-changing benefits that come from play and sport.

The Youth Sport Trust is a children's charity working to ensure every child enjoys the life-changing benefits that come from play and sport. It has 25 years of experience in pioneering new ways of using sport to improve children's wellbeing and give them a brighter future.

The charity works with more than 20,000 schools across the UK and operates on a local, national and global level. It harnesses the power of sport, physical activity and PE to build life skills, connections between people and support networks which increase young people's life chances through improved wellbeing, greater attainment and healthier lifestyles.

www.youthsporttrust.org

Connect with us on social media:



For those looking to choose a school for their children, the deadline is looming closer. Choosing the right school can be a daunting process so check out our guide to what you may want to consider

For any parent, choosing the right school for your child is a huge decision and inspection reports only tell part of the story.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, the focus has changed for parents. Rather than the school's academic performance, parents now believe that children's wellbeing is their priority when choosing a school.

A [recent survey](#) has revealed that 64% of parents believe that the wellbeing of their children is more important than academic achievement. The survey, commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust and supported by the Gregson Family Foundation, also highlights parents' desire for wellbeing to be measured and tracked with 76% of parents agreeing that "we need to measure young people's wellbeing if we are going to improve it".

Wellbeing continues to be the most important issue at school and must now be prioritised

The survey also revealed that a staggering two thirds of parents feel that the pandemic, lockdown and changes to schooling have worsened their children's wellbeing, so it's no surprise that parents feel this needs to be a priority.

At the Youth Sport Trust, we agree and

believe that sport, PE and physical activity are a key element to children's wellbeing.

"The message from parents is clear; wellbeing continues to be the most important issue at school and must now be prioritised," said Ali Oliver MBE, Youth Sport Trust Chief Executive. "We want to see a joined-up national strategy for young people to be the most active and happiest in the world. A key part of this should be a national wellbeing measurement programme."

Choosing a new school?

Here are some things to think about before filling in those forms:

- ✓ Visit the school. Most will hold open days, but ask if it's possible to view during school hours which will give you a better sense of how the school is run
- ✓ Check out the latest [Ofsted inspection reports](#) and [school performance tables](#)
- ✓ Get thoughts from parents of children at the school either on social media forums or visit [Ofsted Parent View](#)
- ✓ During an open day, listen to the headteacher's talk. What are the school's values? How do they encourage children to achieve their potential? How do they support pupils with their mental health?
- ✓ What is the school's ethos around bullying and discipline? Speak with current students and ask about their experience



- ✓ Consider location and available transport routes – be aware that many school buses carry a cost
- ✓ And, most importantly, talk to your child – what do they think? What do they like most about the schools you've seen?





REDISCOVER *your* SUMMER OF SPORT

After a difficult year that saw us all miss out on so much, this summer offers us the chance to rediscover our love of being active. With so much on offer, you're spoilt for choice... so what are you waiting for?

While the past year has been a challenge for us all, it's clear that our children have been disproportionately affected and have felt the impact of lockdown more acutely.

Schools closed and not only did they lose their structure, routine and familiarity, but they lost social interaction with their friends. Clubs, activities and hobbies came to an abrupt end, meaning children lost out on physical activity. They had no face-to-face time with friends and extended family and were forced to stay at home which, for some, was in difficult living situations. And then there was the fear of catching Covid-19...

We know that during this time, children were doing less activity, and since returning to school, this has continued.

AS A RESULT:

41% of children were lonelier

38% of children were more worried

37% of children were sadder

34% of children were more stressed*

However, a glimmer of hope is that children are recognising the power of sport and being active. A recent survey showed that **37%** of children see exercise as more important to their lives than before, while **27%** said it made them feel better and more than half (**51%**) said they planned to exercise more in the future.

It's clear that sport, exercise and being active has never been more important for our children, which is why we're so delighted to produce this magazine, which is full of ideas to help you support your children to get active this summer.

GOVERNMENT SAYS YES

And the Government is backing this too. They've launched a campaign, **Rediscover Summer**, with suggestions and ideas for how you can get your children active this summer.

Visit the [website](https://www.youthsporttrust.org) and you'll find plenty of ideas to keep brains and bodies busy this summer. You could try a new activity, such as orienteering or STEM projects, discover a new skill, such as map reading or soap making, or visit a variety of new places – the choice is yours.



Banish

BOREDOM

To help you encourage your children to get active, we have put together a fantastic guide of fun-filled activities for your family to enjoy. From short bursts of energetic exercise to get the blood pumping to competitive games that your children will love, this guide is completely free and can be downloaded [here](https://www.youthsporttrust.org).





CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH GETS A HELPING HAND

Help your child grow an emotional toolkit with new wellbeing app

A worrying 90% of school leaders have reported an increase in the number of students experiencing anxiety or stress over the past five years.

Recognising the need for this to be addressed, ex-primary school teacher and mum-of-two Julia Karnacz launched Seedlings Wellbeing.

"We are currently facing a children's wellbeing crisis," she said. "By giving our young people these life skills and self-care tools we're supporting them to navigate through life in a self-aware, resilient and compassionate way."

Set in the magical Seedlings Enchanted Forest, each world includes yoga lessons, breathing techniques, mindfulness activities and thought-provoking stories, all helping children to grow their own wellbeing toolkit.

FREE TRIAL

Scan the QR code and you and your children can benefit from a free two month trial of Seedlings Wellbeing.



TIK TOK, TIK TOK...

Have you had a go at the National School Sports Week dance routine yet?

Pussycat Doll and our very own Youth Sport Trust ambassador, Kimberley Wyatt created a special Tik Tok dance routine for National School Sports Week and it's gone viral. Have you tried it yet?

Designed for everyone to have a go, the routine is a great one to practise with the kids in tow and see who can get step perfect first. Take a look [here](#)

Why not film yourselves having a go and upload it – just remember to tag us @youthsporttrust #NSSW21



kimberlywyatt • 6-19
National School Sports Week...let's do this! Dance with me & celebrate the power of sport and how it makes us feel good
@youthsporttrust #NSSW2021



FUEL OLYMPIC FEVER

As the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games come to a close, keep the passion for sport going with I Am Team GB

If your child has been inspired by the Olympics this summer and is looking to channel their inner Laura Kenny, Max Whitlock, Dina Asher-Smith or Frazer Clarke, then check out '[I Am Team GB](#)'. The national campaign aims to encourage youngsters inspired by their sporting heroes this summer to 'get up and get active'. There are organised sporting events held right across the UK, from skipping and break dancing to social runs and garden circuits, all designed to keep the fire for the Olympics burning!

If you're unable to get to any events that are taking place, you can carry out your own activities at home, such as bike rides, tennis in the garden or even a steps challenge for family and friends. Or, if you want it make it more of an event, why not invite others? Download the [Activity Host Guide](#) to help you organise an event for your child and their friends.

Getting involved couldn't be easier, just visit www.iamteamgb.com and get active your way!



With more than 350 free resources up for grabs, the Active Recovery hub is a must visit if you're looking for ways to keep the kids active and entertained during the long summer holidays. You can filter by age, school type, and even the time of day, and there's guaranteed to be something to do that will put a big smile on faces. Visit the Active Recovery hub [here](#).

TACKLING MONEY MATTERS

Benefitting from financial education at school could be life changing says HSBC as it rolls out a brand new programme

Recognising the very real need for schools to provide financial education alongside traditional subjects, HSBC has rolled out a financial education programme, delivered through rugby.

The programme, Rugby Counts, focusses on learning within the classroom, on the playground or school field and at home, and aims to teach children about the value of money, how to save, how to budget and how to manage money digitally.

Griffydham Primary School in Leicestershire was one of the schools

piloting Rugby Counts with huge success. A mixture of Year 3 and 4 children took part, throwing themselves into the weekly sessions. They learnt essential financial skills while having huge amounts of fun, passing, catching and taking on leadership roles and embracing sportsmanship.

Feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive, with parents describing it as a 'game changer' for their child as 'he is definitely understanding the value of money now' and is 'working on keeping more money in his savings for a rainy day'.



"Sport provides a platform for learning, whether it be leadership, how to work together or how to focus on a goal. It can teach people valuable life lessons about strategy and planning, winning and losing, setbacks and fairness; all of which can be comparable to the world of finance." HSBC

BEING THEIR *best*

How can you support your child to be their personal best? We asked Tom Davis, Commonwealth Judo Champion and dad of two, for his thoughts

I was an energetic youngster and was fortunate to be encouraged by my mum to try every type of sport. This opened up my world. From summer camps to school PE lessons, I tried so many types of sport. Some I loved, others less so. Cricket, I'm looking at you.

After my mum saw an advert in a local paper for judo, I knew I'd found my sport. I wasn't one of the best but I was passionate. It wasn't about comparing myself to others, I just loved that my personal best was good enough and threw myself into improving and getting better. I

discovered an inner drive and that, combined with my love for judo, saw me years later being selected to represent Great Britain.

So, how can sport help your children to be their best? Well, firstly, it opens up their world and enables them to discover new skills as well as a network of like-minded people. Whatever your child's passion – swimming, drama, art, football – aiming for their personal best is empowering, boosting confidence and providing that essential feel-good factor which, as parents, is what we want for our children.



TOM'S
top tips



Explore lots of options to help your children find their **passion**

Focus on the **fun!**

Help them identify their **goals**, such as passing exams or progressing to the next level



Help them to ignore **negativity**



GIVE THEIR WELLBEING A WELCOME BOOST

When it comes to supporting older children with their health and wellbeing, we picked the brains of Rachael Mackenzie, World Thai Boxing Champion and mum of 12-year-old twins

For parents, your children's emotional, mental and physical health and wellbeing is a top priority. As children get older and want to make their own decisions, parents need to find a way to offer choice while gently encouraging our children to make positive choices.

So how can we do exactly that for the summer holidays and beyond?

A biggie, of course, is encouraging them to turn off devices and be physically active. Older children often want to be glued to phones and tablets, particularly after the past year where they've relied on them to connect with friends. A way to reduce this is to allocate a set amount of time per week for devices, but leave it to your child to decide how it's spent? This sets boundaries over usage but also gives them control.

We also have a rule about no tech upstairs – including us adults – which helps us all to sleep much better.

When it comes to encouraging children to be active, a great starting point is to role model the type of behaviours you want to see from them. If they see you riding a bike, working out, walking the dog or getting stuck into games, they're far more likely to follow suit.

Kids of all ages love a sense of competition, so could you set a family challenge, such as a timed obstacle course in the garden, or a burpees, catch or skipping challenge?

After this summer of amazing sport, explore their interest in Olympic sports such as

skateboarding, swimming or athletics.

Explore options in your local area – you may be amazed to see what's on offer.

Incorporate activity into days out and find ways to make days more physically active. Walk to the cinema perhaps or link activities to their interests. Nature walks, geocaching, climbing are all great ways to stay active but add another element of interest for restless tweens and teens.



Click [here](#) to view our free Active In Mind resources featuring Rachael's top tips



Win!

A TEAM GB MINI MICRO SCOOTER AND HELMET

Perfect for little ones looking to scoot in style, this limited edition Team GB Mini Micro Scooter is up for grabs with our easy-to-enter competition.

Micro Scooters are the only scooter company working with Team GB and this themed scooter for riders aged 2-5 is available for a limited time only, but is built to last for a lifetime of adventure!

To enter click [here](#)

Competition closes at 23.59 on 3 September 2021.

Winner will be notified by email on Friday 10 September 2021.

Full terms and conditions apply and can be found [here](#)

View the whole range at

www.micro-scooters.co.uk/team-gb

DECATHLON
co.uk

MAKE THE school run WORK FOR YOU

As children's return to school beckons, so too does the school run. We caught up with Decathlon to discover some great ways to transform the daily journey and get more active

We all know the importance of exercise – it makes us feel better and improves our health and wellbeing. However, with Government guidelines stating that children and young people should be exercising for 60 minutes each day and adults for at least 150 minutes a week, it can be a real challenge to factor it into an already busy week.

If this strikes a chord for you and your children, then why not see if you can combine activity with the daily school run and get the day off to a brilliant start?

Walking, riding a bike or scooting to school are fantastic ways to build in your daily exercise but there are far more benefits than that. As your children feel the wind in their hair, they'll connect much closer to nature and their local area, spotting so many things that would be missed from the car. It will spark

conversations about wildlife, the colour of the leaves on the trees, the buildings you pass... the list is endless.

Being active on the way to school also means your children will arrive at school relaxed, alert and ready to start the day. According to the Mental Health Foundation, it also reduces stress and anxiety so you can start the day with a spring in your step knowing you've started the day in the best possible way for you and your children.

Walking, riding and scooting are also great ways to instil road-safety awareness in your children from an early age.

And, as an added bonus, you'll be doing good too – one less car on the road means less air pollution and less congestion on the roads and at the school gates – and you'll be saving money on petrol, so it's a win win.



For further reading and information on cycling courses, [click here](#)

Support our work

The work we do simply would not be possible without our generous supporters. If you would like to make a donation to our charity or become a regular donor, click [here](#) to visit our Virgin Money Giving page. Thank you!



10 TIPS for perfect preparation

1 If your children are new to riding or scooting, it's essential that they have plenty of practice so they feel confident before making the journey to school.

2 Plan out the route beforehand and walk it with them, pointing out sections of the journey where you need them to take special care, such as roads, hidden driveways or where it's likely to be more busy.

3 For those scooting and riding, kit your kids out with protective gear. It's not enough to buy them a helmet, they must know that they need to wear it every time. Show them how to adjust it so it's not too tight or loose. If you're riding or scooting, lead by example and wear one too.



4 If you plan to ride with them, remember to check your own bike too. If you've not ridden for a while, have a quick practice before hitting the road. Check your balance, ability to brake and that you have suitable footwear and clothing.

5 Never hang anything from a bike or scooter's handlebars – these can knock you off balance.

6 When riding a bike, teach your child how to correctly signal their turns using arm signals. Help them understand that their arm is like the turn signals on a car and they need to let others on the road know that they will be turning.

7 Teach them how to stop by the side of the road safely. If they have a problem or need to wait for you, show them how to pull up a bit off the road to park their bike without risk of danger.

8 Always ride behind your children and teach them to stay close.

9 Think about visibility, so mount lights and reflectors on bikes, reflector strips onto coats and add a bell so they can make themselves heard. If they're riding on the road, consider attaching a safety flag to the rear of their bike.

10 Always give bikes and scooters a quick once-over before taking them out on a ride. Are bike seat and handlebars adjusted properly? Are brakes and lights working? Are tyres correctly inflated? For scooters, make sure handlebars are aligned correctly. Check for any unusual noises or rattling and that any attachments are secure.

