

## School Sport is key to tackling childhood obesity

17th October 2007

A major government announcement on obesity has called for "further and faster" efforts to encourage exercise and healthy eating.

The government's Public Health Minister highlighted the drive to increase school sport as a way of halting the rise in childhood obesity.

Public Health Minister Dawn Primarolo, speaking about the government-commissioned Foresight report, said that a longer term view needed to be taken of the obesity issue, starting in our schools.

She said: "The government has been doing a lot already in terms of healthy foods in schools, sports activity in schools, labelling of food, working with young people. This report was part of the development of our strategies.

"But... if we don't act, what will happen in health terms for individuals and for our communities in 10, 20 years' time is really something we that we need to face up to, and that means looking at everything."

The Youth Sport Trust is committed to the values and benefits sport and physical activity can bring to young people.

The report reiterates the government's £100 million plan to provide school children with at least five hours exercise every week by 2010, announced earlier this year by the Prime Minister Gordon Brown. This week's announcement of the latest School Sport Survey highlighted the success of the School Sport Partnership Programme and Secretary of State Ed Balls took time to thank the Youth Sport Trust for their involvement.

He said: "These latest figures reflect the considerable investment we've put into school sport, as well as the leadership provided by Youth Sport Trust and Sport England, and the work of School Sport Partnerships and local sports co-ordinators on the ground."

One Youth Sport Trust managed programme that is helping young people become more physically active – which itself has been shown to improve not only physical, psychological and social health and well-being but also improve academic achievement too - is the 'Schools on the Move' (SOTM) programme.

