

Edinburgh Leisure want young people to join in a summer of sport

With the Olympics just around the corner, Edinburgh Leisure will be inspiring the young people of Edinburgh to try out a variety of sports and games in the Meadows on Friday, 1 July, plus a free summer sports programme running from 4 July at various venues across the city.



At the free **'Join In'** event, children can kick off their summer with American Football, or get into the swing of things with tennis. Old favourites like football, gymnastics and cycling will also be available for youngsters to try as well as football speed shot, tug of war, volleyball and much more. Sport experts will also be present to help them get the most out of their day in the beautiful green setting of the Meadows.

Children's sedentary lifestyles are a 'ticking time-bomb' for the NHS. A recent poll of 1,039 parents conducted by ComRes, found 75 per cent of parents agree that it is more difficult for parents today to encourage children to become physically active than for previous generations and just 47 per cent of parents think there are enough affordable opportunities for children to be active in their local areas during school holidays.

Edinburgh Leisure's Weight Management Development Officer, Conor McLean, said, "We all know about the positive health and mental benefits of getting active. Edinburgh Leisure is passionate about making sport accessible to young people. Last year, over 300 children turned up to experience our taster sessions.

“We run a variety of projects and classes for this age group, and this is a great chance to provide a way in to a healthy and active lifestyle for Edinburgh’s children, as well as a fun day out. And what’s even better is the day is free.”

Children are welcome to come and go as they please at the ‘Join In’ event, which runs from 1pm – 4pm on Friday, 1 July. Children under the age of 9 years must be accompanied by an adult. Children and young people aged 9 and over can attend on their own or with friends. There is no pre-registration or booking required but all young people must register at the sign-in desk on the day.

Edinburgh Leisure will also be running a **free summer sports programme** at different venues. Events will take place at the Meadows every Wednesday and Friday from 2 – 4 pm, starting 6 and 8 July respectively to 10 and 12 August. There will also be sports at Saughton from Monday, 4 July – 8 August from 2 – 4pm. Younger children (primary school children, aged 5 and up) will be catered for with outdoor play sessions at Hunters Hall, by Jack Kane Sports Centre, every Tuesday from 2-4pm, which will run from 5 July.

There will be spaces for 60 children at the Meadows, 44 at Saughton and 20 at Hunter’s Hall to get involved in the free sessions. No pre-booking is required but everyone must register at the sign-in desk on the day and it will be on a first come, first served basis.

Andy McIntosh, Youth Development Officer continued: “Giving children a balanced play diet is as beneficial for their development as a balanced nutritional diet and we want to encourage all children to get active and stay active. So let’s get them off their screens and down to Saughton, The Meadows or Hunters Hall for some active fun this summer. Who knows, we may even encourage the future generation of Olympians.”

Participants enrolled in Edinburgh Leisure’s ‘2 Your Future’

project, will be helping to deliver the activities. '2 Your Future', a 16 week programme, provides a combination of sports based activities and tailored employment support for young people not currently engaged in education, employment or training.