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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **THE FA LAUNCHES NEW MENTAL HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR COACHES AND MANAGERS**

The Football Association [The FA] has today issued new guidance notes to coaches and managers working across the adult football pyramid, advising them on how to support the mental wellbeing of their players.

The new guide has been produced in partnership with Mind and a mental health advisory group put together by The FA. The 36-page publication forms an important part of The FA and Heads Together's 'Heads Up' campaign, which seeks to harness the influence and popularity of football to drive the biggest ever conversation on mental health.

In addition to information and advice on mental health and wellbeing, the guidance notes have been created to help coaches and managers spot the signs of mental health problems predominantly amongst male players, giving them the confidence to support and signpost to specialist help where necessary, including Heads Up's charity partners and a 24/7 text support service. The notes will be distributed across grassroots adult football and will be made available to every coach and manager across the football pyramid.

Quotes and personal testimonies are included in the guide from across the football spectrum. It also includes a section for coaches and managers on looking after themselves, as well as tips on actions to take in an emergency. Further tips cover how to have a conversation with someone about their mental health, what language is and isn't acceptable – as well as the answers to frequently-asked questions on the overall topic.

Heads Up is a season-long campaign spearheaded by The Duke of Cambridge which will show the nation that we all have mental health, and that it is just as important as physical health. The Duke will visit non-league Hendon FC on Friday 6 September to discuss the future impact of the guidance and learn more about the club's mental health outreach initiatives.

**Greg Clarke**, The FA's Chairman said: "Understandably, football like society tends to focus on physical fitness, but mental fitness is just as important. We want to use football's popularity and reach to highlight this and stimulate conversation in order to save lives. Coaches and managers have a unique and treasured relationship with their players and it is hoped these guidance notes will provide a valuable tool for them to spot the signs, support and sign-post where necessary. These notes are primarily aimed at coaches and managers within men's football, but we will be producing further guidance notes for the women's game and those working in youth football."

**Paul Farmer**, Chief Executive of Mind, said: "We're delighted to have worked closely with The FA on creating this landmark guide. We hope that by adding this vital resource to the kit bag of football coaches and managers across the country we can ensure more footballers receive the mental health support they need, when they need it most."

For more information on HeadsUp and to download the new guide, visit – [TheFA.com/HeadsUp](http://TheFA.com/HeadsUp) and [headstogether.org.uk](http://headstogether.org.uk). Those in need of immediate support can text 'HeadsUp' to 85258 to be connected to a trained crisis counselor. This service is available 24/7, and free to text from most mobile networks.

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**For further information, please contact:**

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**About The FA:**

The Football Association [The FA] is the not-for-profit governing body of football in England. It is responsible for promoting and developing every level of the game, from grassroots through to the

professional game, and successfully generates enough revenue to support the investment of well over £100m into English football each year. The FA oversees 28 England international teams, across men's, women's, youth and disability football, as well as running FA Competitions, including the Emirates FA Cup and Women's FA Cup, and the world-class facilities of Wembley Stadium connected by EE and St. George's Park, all with a purpose to Unite the Game and Inspire the Nation.

**About Heads Together:**

In 2016 The Royal Foundation launched Heads Together – a campaign spearheaded by The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and The Duke of Sussex. The campaign convened eight charity partners to tackle the stigma around mental health. The campaign successfully encouraged more people in Britain to talk openly about mental health than ever before, and more people started accessing services as a result. Today we continue to work with our charity partners to support new initiatives to help people get the right help, at the right time and in the right place for them, whether that's at school, in work, in social groups, or in the armed forces community. Shout, the UK's first 24/7 crisis text support service, was researched and developed with The Royal Foundation as a legacy of the Heads Together campaign. It was set up with a £3m grant from The Royal Foundation to the charity Mental Health Innovations, and operates as an independent charity, operating as SHOUT and also providing the service for free to charities in the UK. It is powered by Crisis Text Line.