



<http://smallsteps4life.direct.gov.uk/>

1. What is SmallSteps4Life?

SmallSteps4Life is a fun programme with a serious aim to help initiate and support long-term behaviour and attitude change amongst young people across the UK.

SmallSteps4Life is leading the healthy and active lifestyles strand of Get Set – the London 2012 education programme. Recognised as an outstanding project, it will help deliver the Games' lasting legacy.

2. What does it aim to do?

SmallSteps4Life will help motivate and support young people to take manageable steps to improve their health and wellbeing by taking challenges across the themes of eat well, get active and feel good.

The key principles of the programme are:

- Small steps lead to big changes
- Young people lead the way
- Collective action
- Emphasis on having a go
- Not about success or failure
- Sharing what you are doing and celebrating your involvement
- and having fun!

3. How does it work?

SmallSteps4life is quite simple. Students use the site to decide which area to concentrate on (eat well, get active or feeling good). They pick their challenge from the ones on offer and try to stick with their challenge for at least 4 weeks – but the longer they stick with their challenges the better. Students and their schools can tell us about what they are doing, how they got on and celebrate their success by sharing their stories with us and other UK schools.

4. What sort of challenges are we talking about?

We'll be developing a range of challenges suitable for all ages and ability. The following table provides you with an example of some of the challenges the schools in Kent took forward.

Healthy eating - challenge examples include: eat a healthy breakfast every day, choose baked potatoes or rice instead of chips, fill a water bottle and drink it before going home.

Getting active – walk to and from school with friends, create your own dance routine, go out on your bike.

Feeling good – get more sleep, speak to your family about your experiences at school today, spend five minutes doing a new activity to keep your mind busy.

5. How did SmallSteps4Life evolve and what evidence is there that it works?

It was young people and schools, who took part in a health challenge pilot in Kent, who provided the inspiration for us to take SmallSteps4Life to the rest of the UK. The Food Standards Agency commissioned the National Children's Bureau, who worked in partnership with Kent Healthy Schools Programme and Kent County Council, to develop and pilot the Health Challenge programme in 6 Kent schools in February 2008.

The pilot programme was evaluated and overall was successful in helping children and young people to initiate and maintain lifestyle changes that promoted their health and well-being.

Four months after the end of Health Challenge 74% primary and 65% secondary school pupils, who filled in their questionnaires, told us that they were still going with their challenge.

6. What are the potential benefits from taking part in SmallSteps4Life?

The pilot in Kent provided us with lots of information about how it went in the schools and what young people and schools got out of taking their challenges.

Primary students taking part in the pilot said the best thing about taking part was doing the challenge or particular activity, the impact (e.g. becoming more healthy, fit or strong), doing activities with friends, eating particular foods, and the mud.

Nearly three quarters of secondary students said the challenge made them feel better in some way – fitter, healthier, stronger, happier, more positive and energetic.

The benefits reported for schools taking part include:

- Building a sense of unity
- Learning about students' lives
- Creating a better atmosphere
- Supporting continued work within Healthy Schools agenda
- Continuing aspects of challenges – all three primaries keeping up one aspect e.g. free fruit for all, relaxation exercises

7. How does SmallSteps4Life support schools and young people?

It was young people and schools, who took part in a health challenge pilot in Kent, who provided the inspiration for us to take SmallSteps4Life to the rest of the UK. We have built this website to help support you and young people in primary and secondary schools to get involved.

We have developed the website and programme with the school setting in mind as we know it can work. Through tips, games and classroom resources, the website will help young people challenge themselves to eat well, get active and feel good. It will also allow them to share their ideas and experiences with others around the UK.

This doesn't mean to say that young people can't or won't do their challenges out of school – some of the challenges are definitely for home and young people may want to get their families involved too!

8. Is this programme for all young people?

SmallSteps4Life is for all young people and so the range of challenges available is broad and inclusive. Our website is accessible too. We do want schools and young people to tell us what they are doing and let us know of any challenges they come up with themselves – if fun and different we'll put the challenge on the site for others to try out!

9. What about young people who may find themselves out of school?

The Food Standards Agency is actively exploring how to take SmallSteps4Life to vulnerable young people. To do this we are planning to work with a select number of charity organisations who are already working vulnerable/excluded young people. Our aspiration of this local engagement activity is to develop exciting sustainable interventions, based around small steps, that we can share and transfer across the UK.

We are currently looking at targeted work with young people outside of mainstream education, peer led approaches to facilitate transition and training for the wider school workforce on delivering the programme. Once this work is complete we upload case studies and toolkits for you to use.

10. Who else is supporting SmallSteps4Life?

The Food Standards Agency is leading on SmallSteps4Life, which is spearheading the healthy and active lifestyles strand of Get Set London 2012's education programme. SmallSteps4Life also supports the Change4Life movement, which is aiming to get the nation eating well and more active.

The FSA is working across the UK and current partners include – Department for Health, Department for Children, Schools and Families, National Children's Bureau, Youth Sport Trust, School Food Trust, National Healthy Schools Programme and Change4Life.

11. When will it launch?

SmallSteps4Life was 'soft' launched at the TES show at Olympia on the 2 and 3 October.

We launched part of the site to teachers and other professionals so that they could explore, register and begin to plan so that when the full site becomes available they'll be able to access the fun bits for their schools and help students to start taking their challenges.

12. When will the full site be available?

The website you are currently using is only part built – rest assured that even as you read this we are working on building the rest of the site! We'll update this site as work progresses so if you keep coming back over the next couple of months you'll see the site transform. If you've registered then we'll keep you updated with progress and when we are launching the programme. Our aim is to launch in the new year and we'll keep you updated on the exact date.

13. Who can register with SmallSteps4Life?

Only registered teachers can register with SmallSteps4Life. SmallSteps4Life is using Education Direct to ensure that the integrity of the programme and to protect young people.

Teachers registering will be able to upload case studies/information on what they are doing and once their challenges are underway they'll be able to tell us about young activators in their schools. For more information on young activators see specific section.

14. What do I get if I register?

- Blog about your SmallSteps4Life and shout about your progress
- Upload your images [and videos?] to your gallery – a place to showcase what schools across the country are doing
- A page on the SmallSteps4Life just for your school – share young people's challenge successes and stories with other schools
- A priority placement on our list of schools to receive any future SmallSteps4Life school activity resources
- Receive updates on SmallSteps4Life, Get Set, Change4Life and other activities
- Being able to use your user names and passwords on Get Set and other partner programmes such as EDF's sustainability programme, The Pod, once you've registered with those programmes
- Use your SmallSteps4Life stories as evidence for how your school is helping young people to make healthier lifestyle choices
- Your SmallSteps4Life stories can be used in your application to join the wider London 2012 Get Set network!

15. A website is great but what about hard copy resources?

Teachers registering with the site also get a priority placing on a list to reserve their SmallSteps4Life school resource pack – we are developing this at the moment but it will include trackers, posters, stickers and certificates to help schools bring their challenges to life and to help young people personalise their SmallSteps4Life journey. The pack will not cost anything to your school, though you will need to cover the cost of any photocopying, printing of downloads from the website.

16. What other tools will I be able to access in the future?

For young people

- Fun and stylish pages
- Interactive and exciting games
- Challenges to suit any ages and an easy way to pick
- Ways to share with others how their challenge went
- Videos of young people talking about their experiences
- Galleries to shout about what their school is doing

For teachers

- More information on SmallSteps4Life and links to UK curriculums
- Ways to share their schools experiences across the UK
- Videos and case studies to get ideas and inspiration
- Links to relevant activities and programmes in their country
- and of course opportunity to have a go and make your SmallSteps4Life...

For further information:

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