



Welcome pack

Join the movement





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Has your school joined The Daily Mile movement?

If your school does The Daily Mile, make sure you've signed up via our website to appear on our global participation map and receive all the latest news and updates from The Daily Mile team: www.thedailymile.us/school-signup/

What is The Daily Mile?

The Daily Mile is simple and free. We want to get children fit for life and fit for learning by encouraging them to run or jog for 15 minutes every day in their schools or preschools.

It is a physical activity which promotes social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing, as well as fitness.

It takes place outside in the fresh air during the school day at a time of the teacher's choosing. Children run in their school clothes and no special gym clothes or equipment is required.

Schools like yours, who have committed to improving children's health and wellbeing, will have access to useful, free resources and certificates of achievement.

The inconvenient truth

The Daily Mile is supported by senior representatives across health, education and the sports world, who all agree that every child should have the opportunity to do The Daily Mile.

In February 2012, I asked a class of ten year olds to run round the school playing field.

By halfway round most children were exhausted and had to stop. Most of them were completely unfit – and they recognised this themselves. What was to be done about this inconvenient truth? **If not now, then when? If not us, then who?** I sat down with the class and their teacher to discuss the situation. The children were eager to run round the field for fifteen minutes every day, to see what level of fitness they could achieve after a month.

The results were remarkable. The children looked better, felt better and were much fitter. They were averaging five laps of the field in the fifteen minutes, which, when measured, turned out to be a mile – so The Daily Mile was born. Despite the name, however, it's never a set distance. It's always just 15 minutes a day with each child running and jogging at their own pace.

By the end of the spring term, five classes were doing The Daily Mile. By the end of the summer term, all twelve classes were taking part. The preschool children (3–5 year olds) joined in early 2013. All 420 children were now doing The Daily Mile.

The improvements in the children's physical health were obvious. Of course, we could have predicted that running daily would make them fit but what we didn't foresee were all the other equally important **benefits to their mental, emotional and social health and wellbeing**, which became apparent over time.

Six years later, The Daily Mile has seen transformational change in participating children. They are physically fit, more focused in the classroom, more confident and more resilient.

The Daily Mile is wholly simple and fully inclusive. It introduces daily physical activity into children's lives with the minimum of fuss. It takes place outside in the fresh air where all of our children are every day – in their schools and preschools – and it has the full support of children, parents and staff. Without this it could not have been sustained for so long. On reflection, The Daily Mile succeeds because **the barriers to participation in physical activity are removed.**

Though many millions of British pounds have been spent on complicated and expensive initiatives to tackle the problem of physical inactivity, not one of them has worked. No single initiative in the Western world has had any impact on childhood obesity; children continue to become overweight, younger. The Daily Mile has stood the test of time, is being adopted by schools and preschools across the world, and senior figures in Public Health believe that it is a powerful weapon in the fight against physical inactivity and obesity.

The Scottish Government, the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, the Welsh Government, and the CEO of the Royal Society for Public Health, have all said that **every child should have the opportunity to do The Daily Mile.** The initiative has also received support from other senior medical and educational figures, and was recommended for all preschools in the UK Government's Childhood Obesity Strategy. It is a simple, universally valuable intervention

that – in this time of austerity – **costs nothing.**

I wish you all the best as you implement The Daily Mile in your setting. I'm sure that the children and staff in your schools and preschools will have as much fun doing The Daily Mile as the children at my former school did – and will experience the same benefits.

Elaine Wyllie, former elementary school principal and founder of The Daily Mile.

Elaine Wyllie

“After four weeks, The Daily Mile produces transformational change in participating children. They are physically fit, more focused in the classroom, more confident and more resilient.”

Elaine Wyllie





The Daily Mile works...

Successful implementation of The Daily Mile can be summarised as 'every child, every day', based on the 'Four Fs': fun, friendship, fresh air and fitness.

...for children aged 4+

- Children become more aware of their health and the need to take responsibility for it.
- Improves body composition - bone density, muscle strength and cardiovascular health.
- Helps children achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Benefits children with a variety of health issues, including those with special and/or complex needs.
- Overall balance, gross and fine motor skills are enhanced.
- It's 100% inclusive and no-one is left behind - every child succeeds.
- It's not a race or competition - there is no sense of failure.
- Children enjoy it - having fun, in the fresh air with friends, and a sense of freedom.
- Children connect with the weather, seasons and nature.
- Supports improvement in self-efficacy, satisfaction and happiness.

...for teachers and principals

- There is no workload - no training, planning assessment or measurement is required.
- The Daily Mile is simple and free to implement.
- It's proven to be sustainable - happening all year round, every year.
- It always takes place outdoors in a safe, risk-assessed school environment.
- It helps improve focus, concentration and behavior in class.
- Physical activity is known to improve test scores.
- Teachers can, if they wish, choose to link it to aspects of the curriculum.
- It embeds daily physical activity into the school's approach to health and wellbeing, and promotes health awareness and self-care.
- It helps schools to meet the recommendations for daily physical activity outlined by Federal standards.
- The children are more physically fit and better able to participate in sports and PE.

...for parents and caregivers

- It meets the needs of childhood - freedom, fun, fresh air and friends.
- It takes place in a safe and secure environment.
- Children are noticeably fitter - usually only four weeks after starting to run regularly.
- It helps children achieve a healthy weight, reducing obesity and improving body composition.
- No need to transport children to clubs or events - and it's free.
- It prevents children being too sedentary and encourages physical activity out of school.
- Children develop greater resilience and confidence.
- Enhanced test scores are linked to increased physical activity.
- It helps children feel happy.
- Mental health and wellbeing can be enhanced by regular physical exercise.
- Many children will sleep and eat better.

The Daily Mile Removes barriers to participation in physical activity

and facilitates wider engagement in PE and sports.

The Daily Mile is easy to implement and fun to do. Even children who are reluctant to take part in PE enjoy and participate happily in The Daily Mile. Children with mobility difficulties and special needs should be fully supported to take part as well.



No change of clothes: there's no 'cool'/'uncool' gym clothes, no time spent changing, no lost or forgotten gym clothes.



No revealing your body, so fewer issues around body image.



No specialist input required: no equipment, set up, clean up or warm up necessary.



No staff training required. No extra workload for staff. No planning or measurement needed.



Not competitive. No need to be athletic - it's health and wellbeing, not PE or cross-country. The children set their own pace.



Safety - takes place outdoors under supervision on the school premises, usually in the playground or on existing paths.



No costs - it's easy and is free to implement.



Fully inclusive - it's for every child, every day, regardless of age, ability or personal circumstances.

...for preschool children

- Links to early nutrition - children come back in from their Daily Mile to a healthy snack/lunch and drink of water.
- Read the Scottish Government's guidance for doing The Daily Mile with young children: goo.gl/ERdFWY
- Aids learning about the natural world and their physical environment.

- Encourages the children to 'self-care' and to take greater responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- By starting at an early age, we are able to provide all children with the opportunity to develop their 'physical literacy' and improve their body composition for the rest of their lives.



10 core principles

Your steps to Daily Mile success



QUICK

It takes just 15 minutes with no time spent changing, setting up or cleaning up. Transitions between class and route should be quick and easy.



FUN

The Daily Mile is physical activity in a social setting and must be fun for the children. They can talk to their friends as they run along enjoying the experience together.



100%

It's always fully inclusive – every child, every day. They should all be out together in the fresh air. Children with mobility difficulties should be supported to take part.



WEATHER

Treat the weather as a benefit, not a barrier. Children enjoy being outside in different types of weather, connecting with nature and being aware of the seasons.



ROUTE

Ideally, your Daily Mile route should have a firm and mud-free surface – most schools use the playground or an existing path. Incorporating child-pleasing loops and turns works well.



RISK

Risk assess the route in order to ensure that The Daily Mile is a safe activity. Please see a sample risk assessment on our website.



WHEN TO GO

The Daily Mile should happen during curricular time, at least three times a week. Ideally, the class teacher should decide when to go out – they know their class and can respond flexibly to their needs.



CLOTHES

The children run in their school clothes without changing into gym clothes; jackets on if it's cold or damp and sweatshirts off if it's warm.



OWN PACE

The children go at their own pace. Done properly, it's not a walk – able-bodied children should try to run or jog for the full 15 minutes with only occasional stops to catch their breath, if necessary.



SIMPLE

Keep it simple. Resist the temptation to overcomplicate it. It should always be social and fun. From time to time, you may wish to connect it to the curriculum or do something seasonal, for example, running the laps to the North Pole.



Setting up The Daily Mile in your school

1 BEFORE YOU START

It's good to ensure that staff, children and parents know exactly what The Daily Mile is, what the benefits of The Daily Mile are, and that it's not competitive. The children always run at their own pace, often using the language of friendship to support and include each other.

2 PLAN YOUR ROUTE

Schools normally use their existing playground, as all-weather surfaces such as asphalt are ideal. They are also easily risk-assessed. Child-pleasing slalom paths work well. If possible, make the route about 5–10 laps long. This allows the children to enjoy running as many laps as they can in the 15 minutes, without anyone appearing to be in the lead.

3 GETTING STARTED

You might decide to start with one class or one year group, then scale it up to the whole school and preschool, or every class might start on the same day. Many schools and preschools have held successful launch events, which quickly raises the profile of The Daily Mile in their community. Some schools carry out a survey at the start and again after a few weeks.

4 HOW TO BUILD THE CHILDREN'S FITNESS

It's important not to introduce The Daily Mile as a walk. The children should be encouraged by their teacher to run and jog at their own pace, for 15 minutes. After about four weeks, all able-bodied children should be running or jogging for most or all of the way.

5 WHEN TO DO THE DAILY MILE

Try to avoid a tight timetable – it's best if the timing of The Daily Mile is as flexible as possible, with the class teacher deciding when to go out. To ensure that everyone receives the full benefits do it daily, going out in almost all weather conditions.

6 WHO DOES THE DAILY MILE?

Everyone! It's always fully inclusive, so make sure all children are out in the fresh air every day. Staff should support the children and can run with them or encourage them from the side. Children with special needs should be supported, as appropriate, to take part.

7 HOW TO KEEP IT EASY

Staff should make the transitions very quickly and easily – from class to outdoors and back in again, so that The Daily Mile takes no more than 15 minutes in total.

8 FINALLY, KEEP IT SIMPLE!

The Daily Mile should always be kept social and fun. The main thing is that the children go out to run for 15 minutes a day to get fit in the fresh air with their friends!

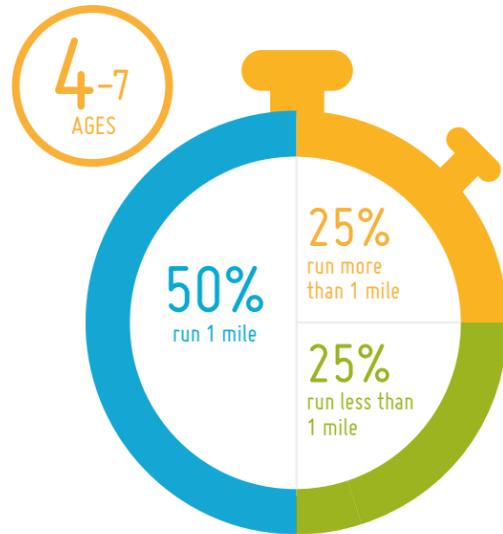


Children go at their own pace for 15 minutes

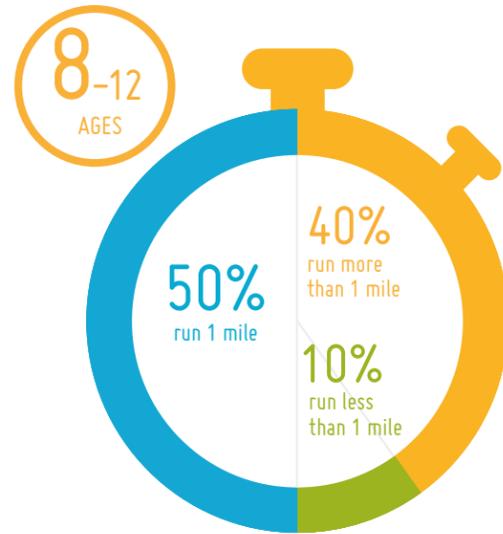
Source: the University of Stirling, Scotland, 2015

How far do they run in that time?

The number of laps the children will complete varies, as shown by average distances covered below. Children as young as two years old can take part in The Daily Mile at a suitable pace.



75% of younger children run a mile or more



90% of older children run a mile or more

The impact of The Daily Mile on health & wellbeing

- Children are happier. Stress and anxiety are reduced.
- Fitness and energy levels are improved.
- Better focus and concentration in class.
- Health outcomes for life are improved with benefits to muscle, bone density, joints and cardiovascular health.
- Classes experience the pleasure of being outdoors in all weather and engage with nature and the seasons.
- The Daily Mile helps children towards achieving a healthy weight.
- Helps to build confidence and self-esteem - all children succeed at The Daily Mile because it's non-competitive and fully inclusive.
- Children with special needs feel the benefits of regular participation.
- As a social activity, it can improve existing relationships and reduce isolation.
- Children bring the benefits home, often eating and sleeping better, and encouraging active family life.
- Develops greater resilience and determination, and promotes the idea of self-care.



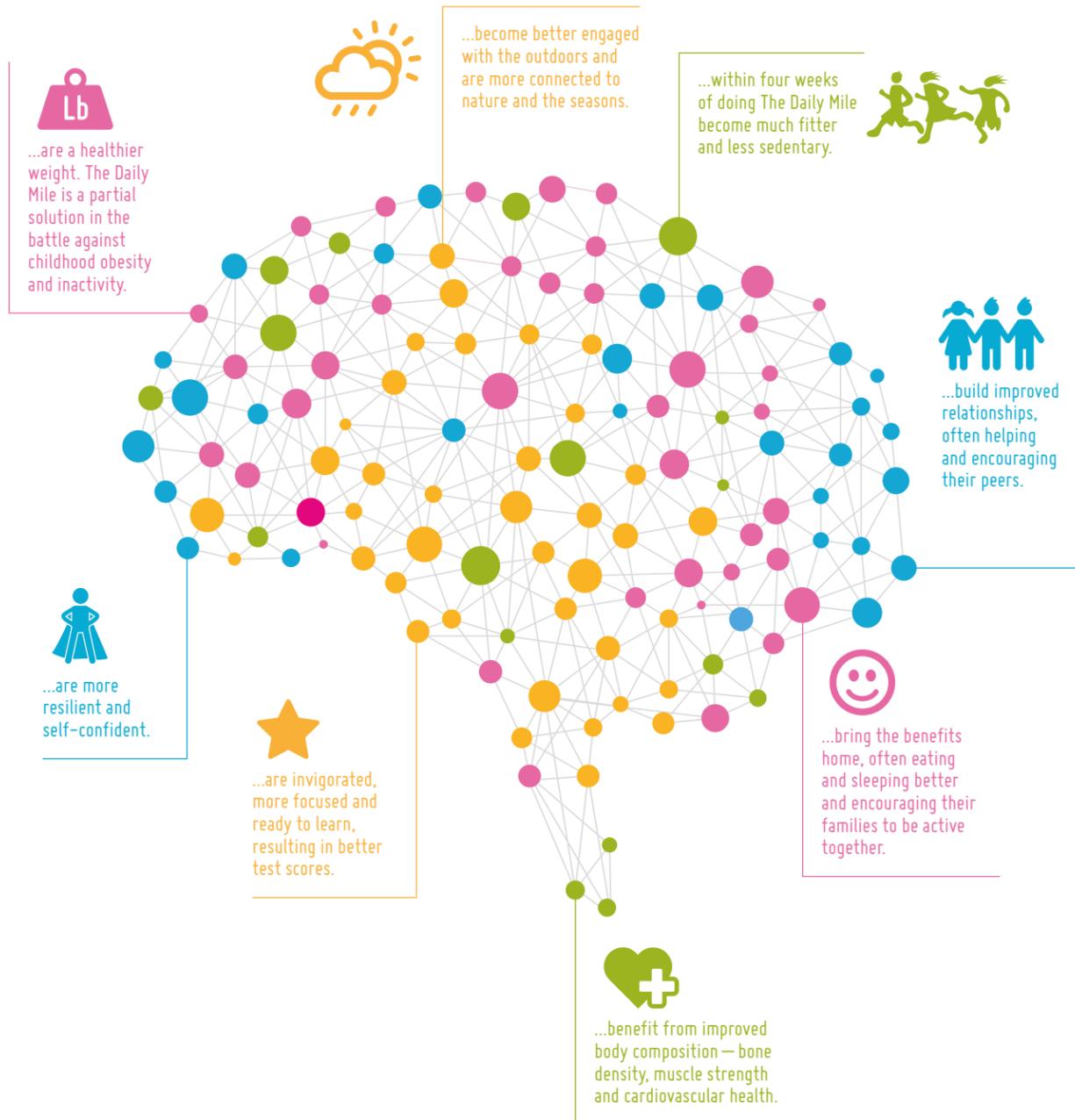
What does the science say?

How being more active improves health and wellbeing

It is widely accepted that physical inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle are bad for our health. It leaves children at risk of developing a variety of adverse medical conditions during childhood and beyond into adulthood.

This contrasts with those children who are physically active – who will generally have better blood sugar regulation, improved bone density, less body fat, lower blood pressure and improved arterial development.

And evidence suggests that there are benefits beyond physical health. Regular physical activity, such as The Daily Mile, can lead to improvements in social, mental and emotional health too, resulting in children who...



Please visit the research page of our website: www.thedailymile.us/research/ for more information.

FAQs

We've listened to your questions and answered the most frequent ones.

If you have a question which isn't answered here, visit our website: www.thedailymile.us/faq



Do the children need a special surface or running track to run on?

The simple answer is no – no special surface or running track is needed to do The Daily Mile. Most schools do The Daily Mile in playgrounds, around school fields (providing it isn't muddy) or simply around school buildings. Some schools choose to put funding towards a running track, but this is not a necessity to do The Daily Mile. As long as you have some outside space big enough for children to run around, your school can participate in The Daily Mile. Schools looking to install a track should think about incorporating child-pleasing loops and swirls into the route, as this prevents it from feeling like a race or competition.

What about the children's footwear?

School footwear should be suitable for active play. The Daily Mile is 15 extra minutes of physical activity in the school day, alongside break and lunchtime. Some schools have chosen to make black trainers part of the school uniform.

Won't the weather be a problem?

The weather is a benefit not a barrier; the children respond well to the seasons and enjoy connecting with nature. Teachers choose when they'd like to take their class out and they use a common-sense approach. Children wear clothing appropriate to the weather – jackets on if it's cold or damp, sweatshirts off if it's warm. This sensible approach helps build resilience in children.

Is it fully inclusive?

Every child, no matter their age, ability or circumstances succeeds at The Daily Mile. All children take part, including those with special or complex needs. In our experience, even children initially reluctant to take part in The Daily Mile come to enjoy participating and many become more naturally inclined to engage in sport and physical activity.

Why should I take time out of a busy curriculum to do The Daily Mile?

The Daily Mile is quick. It happens in a slick 15-minute turnaround, from desk-to-desk and fits flexibly into the school curriculum. Studies have shown that The Daily Mile improves children's focus, behavior and self-esteem, and has been shown to raise attainment.

How often should a class do The Daily Mile?

Ideally, The Daily Mile is run every single day in school. For children to be able to experience the full benefits and enjoy their Daily Mile, it needs to be done at least three times a week – preferably more.

Contact The Daily Mile Team

Let us know how you're doing on with your school's Daily Mile. Share your photos, videos and feedback with us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook – we love to hear from you!

If you run into any difficulty setting up your Daily Mile, don't worry – you can contact one of the team at team@thedailymile.us

f @thedailymileUSA

t @thedailymileUSA

i @thedailymileUSA



What they say about The Daily Mile

Don't just take our word for it! Hear what children, teachers and staff, parents and caregivers have to say about The Daily Mile.

Children

“ I love doing The Daily Mile because I can run with my friends and get healthier at the same time. ”

Y5 pupil, All Saints Church of England Primary School

“ I like it because it shows we can do running in any weather and any day, at any moment! ”

Y4 pupil, Hallfield Primary School

“ It's a lot of fun and keeps us fit and healthy. ”

P4 pupil, Deanburn Primary School

“ I really enjoy The Daily Mile because it gets us outside, a break from the classroom for 15 minutes every day. I like the chance to jog, chat with my friends and try to keep ahead of Mr Ainsworth! ”

Y3 pupil, St Andrews Catholic College

Teachers and staff

“ I've found The Daily Mile to be a great way to settle my class, particularly in the afternoon as it really helps their concentration. ”

P2 Class teacher, Cumbernauld Primary School

“ The Daily Mile is a very effective brain break for children and often gives me the chance to chat to individual children on our way round. ”

Class teacher, St Andrews RC Primary

“ Its beauty is its simplicity and the fact that it targets every single pupil in the school. It is worth stating this is not a PE or school sports initiative but a health and wellbeing one! Start to finish, it takes 15 minutes out of the day and for staff it is as easy as opening a door. ”

Headteacher, Westgate Community Primary School

“ The children have developed skills in sportsmanship as they are consistently encouraging and supporting each other throughout the 15 minutes. ”

Class Teacher, St Bede's RC Primary School

“ It has really helped the special needs children develop their coordination. ”

Class Teacher, St Bede's RC Primary School

“ I've really enjoyed seeing the progress my First Grade children have made since we started The Daily Mile. Some of my less active children who were a little reluctant at the start have become more confident and now enjoy participating with their friends. ”

PE Coordinator, Bishop Ridley C of E Primary School

Parents and caregivers

“ I thought it was a fabulous idea and such a simple, commonsense way to enrich children's lives in so many ways. ”

Parent, St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School

“ My daughter was not up for walking anywhere, but after she started doing The Daily Mile at preschool she wanted to walk everywhere, which was great! ”

Parent, Royal School of Dunkeld

“ I love The Daily Mile because it's a great way to get kids into a healthy habit of daily exercise. It's great for their body and mind, and I would love for it to continue each year. ”

Y3 parent, St Andrew's Catholic College

Please see our website for a range of news articles, case studies and videos.

The Daily Mile Community

We're committed to support all schools who adopt The Daily Mile and help our children to become fit for learning and fit for life.

We're immensely proud of all the schools, preschools, teachers, children, parents and caregivers that make up our global Daily Mile Community. To thank you for signing up and joining The Daily Mile movement, your school will receive the latest news and updates from The Daily Mile team, plus some useful free resources and rewards.



After you join The Daily Mile movement your school pin will appear on our participation map within 10 working days. Find your pin at: www.thedailymile.us/participation-map

Building The Daily Mile Community!

We've compiled a number of resources to help you start your Daily Mile, which include:

-
- A sample risk assessment
-
- A sample letter to parents
-
- A PowerPoint presentation
-
- An A5 information flyer
-

Feel free to browse our website where you will find a variety of case studies and videos.



Tell us your stories

We do love it when you share your experiences with us. For example, we are told of ways The Daily Mile has helped children with specific conditions or been used to enhance the curriculum. If you have a story like this to share with us, please get in touch: www.thedailymile.us/contact/

“ INEOS has been supporting The Daily Mile for the last three years. We know how important it is to encourage children to get fit and healthy, and look after themselves, not just for today but for the years to come. ”
Sir Jim Ratcliffe,
Founder and Chairman of INEOS

“ Like all really good ideas, The Daily Mile is simple and easy to implement. I was blown away by the enthusiasm of parents, staff and — most importantly — pupils for the concept. If all schools adopted it, we'd have an incredibly powerful antidote to the ills resulting from physical inactivity that plague modern-day Scotland. ”
Dr. Aileen Keel CBE, Former Acting Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

“ The Daily Mile has already proved a great success for the schools that are taking part, with a hugely positive impact on children's health and wellbeing. ITV wants to use the power of TV and the reach of our programming to change attitudes and behaviors towards living more healthily. We are aiming to get the whole country engaged with this initiative and every UK primary school taking part. ”
Carolyn McCall, Chief Executive of ITV

“ It's fantastic to see initiatives like The Daily Mile be established, showing real leadership from the education sector to improve children's fitness levels, their cognitive behavior and make a real difference to schools, teachers, parents and young people's lives. ”
Tanni Grey Thompson,
celebrated Paralympian and chair of UK Active

“ I am proud to be supporting The Daily Mile. It is a simple initiative, which benefits children's physical and mental health along with their well-being. ”
Sir Andy Murray OBE, professional tennis player and ambassador for The Daily Mile

“ The Daily Mile has been an excellent initiative and it is very encouraging that it is being taken up by an ever-increasing number of schools. It has introduced physical activity into the everyday life of the school in an easy, inclusive and fun way. ”
Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom

“ I am a big believer in physical activity because it has a positive impact on both physical and mental health, which is exactly what The Daily Mile sets out to achieve. I want to give young people the best active start in life. ”
Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester

“ Physically active children and young people perform better academically than their inactive peers, and those who are most active benefit the most. ”
Dr Richard Bailey, International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education

“ At every single school that I go into, whether as a local MP or as a Minister, I ask if The Daily Mile is being done. It has been a brilliant import from north of the border and it is excellent. I hope that every Member who goes into a school talks about the importance of The Daily Mile and encourages them to do it. ”
Steve Brine, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health

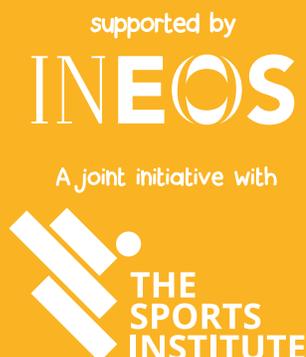
The Daily Mile is a simple yet effective initiative — within a month the children are much fitter, and feel happier and more confident in themselves. By instilling these healthy habits at a young age, we're helping our children to live full and healthy lives. ”
Christian Malcolm,
World and European 200m Medallist

“ Increasing opportunities to be physically active during the school day is key to ensuring our children are healthy and well. We are supporting The Daily Mile in Wales as a simple and innovative approach to help children be more active, more often. ”
Dr. Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer, Medical Director NHS Wales

“ I believe The Daily Mile will have a huge impact on young people's lives, helping children across the UK to be fitter, healthier and happier. I'm delighted to be supporting The Daily Mile, and hope that every child has the opportunity to take part in this fantastic initiative. ”
Colin Jackson CBE,
Olympic 110m Hurdles Medallist

“ Our research suggests that The Daily Mile is a worthwhile intervention to introduce in schools and that it should be considered for inclusion in government policy, both at home and abroad. ”
Dr Colin Moran, University of Stirling, Scotland

“ The Daily Mile is a fantastic initiative, with teachers and parents seeing a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of those children taking part. ”
Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Scottish Government



We want to make sure that every Daily Mile school has signed up. If you haven't already, please visit our website:
www.thedailymile.us/school-signup/

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@thedailymileUSA

This booklet is produced by The Daily Mile Foundation
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