

Football company directly tackles mental health

A local football scheme in the UK that helps men with their mental health has proven thoroughly successful. Communities in Kent can join football and therapy sessions, thanks to Head In The Game. The initiative aims fundamentally to help men who struggle with problems like depression and anxiety in their everyday life.

The company was established in 2021 directly as a response to the Covid pandemic and its impact on mental health. The founder of the company Mark Pinkney said half the battle is won, "if we are upfront and honest about these types of subjects". The company's mission is to implement free weekly football sessions for men aged 18-55 to gather and share feelings, "it's all about talking, it's the talking that really saves people's lives", he said.

Before and after the football game, participants openly share their concerns with a number on a scale of zero to ten. The focus is on promoting wellbeing both physically and mentally, such as tackling substance abuse. Pinkney spoke of the friendships securely formed in football teams, "what we try and do is harness that trust with our sessions".

Head In The Game were previously finalists in the BBC's Make A Difference Award in 2022 and receive funding and partnership from various foundations. In 2023 they plan to launch the programme for a different sport, progress to women's football, and eventually roll out to other towns.

Warm-up

Activities:

List the sports you play or do daily, weekly, monthly, or even yearly.

What sports idioms, phrases, or slogans, such as Nike's "Just Do It", do you know?

Write an acrostic poem for the word *community*.

Vocabulary:

1. Scan the text and find a word or phrase that means:

a plan (paragraph 1) s...

effect (paragraph 2) i...

worries (paragraph 3) c...

money (paragraph 4) f...

start (paragraph 4) l...

2. What does the italicised phrase below mean – *size*, *weighing*, or *between*?

a number *on a scale of* zero to ten

3. Which word below doesn't belong?

substance – scheme – initiative – plan

Reading comprehension true or false

1. The scheme runs football sessions as a therapy. T / F
2. The aim of the scheme is to help fathers save money. T / F
3. A pandemic inspired the founder to start the company. T / F
4. The football is free but the therapy costs half its usual price. T / F
5. The players describe their mental wellbeing with a number. T / F
6. The sessions talk about depression, anxiety, and drugs. T / F
7. The founder believes football can create trust and support. T / F
8. The company won a BBC competition. T / F
9. The scheme plans on expanding around the UK. T / F
10. Schools are next on the list for the company's growth. T / F

Match-up phrases, synonyms, antonyms

Match the words on the left to their endings to make phrases from the text.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. substance | A. share |
| 2. struggle | B. on |
| 3. mental | C. to |
| 4. half | D. sessions |
| 5. response | E. with |
| 6. openly | F. out |
| 7. therapy | G. abuse |
| 8. physically and | H. the battle |
| 9. roll | I. mentally |
| 10. impact | J. health |

Match the words on the left from the text to their synonyms.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. depression | A. start |
| 2. establish | B. sadness |
| 3. fund | C. support |
| 4. implement | D. deal with |
| 5. tackle | E. apply |

Match the words on the left from the text to their antonyms.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. gather | A. unimportant |
| 2. fundamental | B. delay |
| 3. launch | C. leave |

Missing grammar: adverbs of degree, manner, and time

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| A. really | F. eventually |
| B. mentally | G. securely |
| C. thoroughly | H. openly |
| D. weekly | I. previously |
| E. directly | J. fundamentally |

A local football scheme in the UK that helps men with their mental health has proven 1._____ successful. Communities in Kent can join football and therapy sessions, thanks to Head In The Game. The initiative aims 2._____ to help men who struggle with problems like depression and anxiety in their everyday life.

The company was established in 2021 3._____ as a response to the Covid pandemic and its impact on mental health. The founder of the company Mark Pinkney said half the battle is won, "if we are upfront and honest about these types of subjects". The company's mission is to implement free 4._____ football sessions for men aged 18-55 to gather and share feelings, "it's all about talking, it's the talking that 5._____ saves people's lives", he said.

Before and after the football game, participants 6._____ share their concerns with a number on a scale of zero to ten. The focus is on promoting wellbeing both physically and 7._____, such as tackling substance abuse. Pinkney spoke of the friendships 8._____ formed in football teams, "what we try and do is harness that trust with our sessions".

Head In The Game were 9._____ finalists in the BBC's Make A Difference Award in 2022 and receive funding and partnership from various foundations. In 2023 they plan to launch the programme for a different sport, progress to women's football, and 10._____ roll out to other towns.

Multiple choice vocabulary

A local football scheme in the UK that helps men with their mental health has proven thoroughly successful. 1._____ in Kent can join football and therapy sessions, thanks to Head In The Game. The 2._____ aims fundamentally to help men who 3._____ with problems like depression and anxiety in their everyday life.

The company was 4._____ in 2021 directly as a response to the Covid pandemic and its impact on mental health. The founder of the company Mark Pinkney said half the battle is won, "if we are upfront and honest about these types of subjects". The company's mission is to 5._____ free weekly football sessions for men aged 18-55 to gather and share feelings, "it's all about talking, it's the talking that really saves people's lives", he said.

Before and after the football game, participants openly share their concerns with a number on a 6._____ of zero to ten. The focus is on promoting wellbeing both physically and mentally, such as 7._____ substance abuse. Pinkney spoke of the friendships securely formed in football teams, "what we try and do is harness that 8._____ with our sessions".

Head In The Game were previously finalists in the BBC's Make A Difference Award in 2022 and receive 9._____ and partnership from various foundations. In 2023 they plan to 10._____ the programme for a different sport, progress to women's football, and eventually roll out to other towns.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. A. Organisations | B. Couples | C. Employees | D. Communities |
| 2. A. initial | B. initiative | C. instant | D. inside |
| 3. A. start | B. figure | C. struggle | D. face |
| 4. A. accepted | B. escaped | C. established | D. settled |
| 5. A. implement | B. play | C. placement | D. payment |
| 6. A. note | B. pitch | C. tone | D. scale |
| 7. A. tackle | B. tackles | C. tackled | D. tackling |
| 8. A. trust | B. crust | C. rust | D. dust |
| 9. A. cash | B. funding | C. income | D. payment |
| 10. A. land | B. launch | C. lend | D. list |

Spelling

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. c e h s e m | 6. s i s o n i m |
| 2. h e t y a p r | 7. c t a t r i p i p s n a |
| 3. n u l a d m y e f t a l n | 8. b u a e s |
| 4. d t s e a h l s e b i | 9. n f a s l i t i s |
| 5. o r u f n e d | 10. l v e y e n u a l t |

A local football 1. _____ in the UK that helps men with their mental health has proven thoroughly successful. Communities in Kent can join football and 2. _____ sessions, thanks to Head In The Game. The initiative aims 3. _____ to help men who struggle with problems like depression and anxiety in their everyday life.

The company was 4. _____ in 2021 directly as a response to the Covid pandemic and its impact on mental health. The 5. _____ of the company Mark Pinkney said half the battle is won, “if we are upfront and honest about these types of subjects”. The company’s 6. _____ is to implement free weekly football sessions for men aged 18-55 to gather and share feelings, “it’s all about talking, it’s the talking that really saves people’s lives”, he said.

Before and after the football game, 7. _____ openly share their concerns with a number on a scale of zero to ten. The focus is on promoting wellbeing both physically and mentally, such as tackling substance 8. _____. Pinkney spoke of the friendships securely formed in football teams, “what we try and do is harness that trust with our sessions”.

Head In The Game were previously 9. _____ in the BBC’s Make A Difference Award in 2022 and receive funding and partnership from various foundations. In 2023 they plan to launch the programme for a different sport, progress to women’s football, and 10. _____ roll out to other towns.

Fill-in first letters

_ocal _ootball _cheme _n _he UK _hat _elps _en _ith _heir _ental _ealth _as
_roven _horoughly _uccessful.

_ommunities _n _ent _an _oin _ootball _nd _herapy _essions, _hanks _o _ead _n
_he _ame.

_he _nitiative _ims _undamentally _o _elp _en _ho _truggle _ith _roblems _ike
_epression _nd _nxiety _n _heir _veryday _ife.

_he _ompany _as _stablished _n 2021 _irectly _s _ _esponse _o _he _ovid
_andemic _nd _ts _mpact _n _ental _ealth.

_he _ounder _f _he _ompany Mark Pinkney _aid _alf _he _attle _s _on, “_f _e _re
_pfront _nd _onest _bout _hese _ypes _f _ubjects”.

_he _ompany’s _ission _s _o _mplement _ree _eekly _ootball _essions _or _en
_ged 18-55 _o _ather _nd _hare _eelings, “_t’s _ll _bout _alking, _t’s _he _alking
_hat _eally _aves _eople’s _ives”, _e _aid.

_efore _nd _fter _he _ootball _ame, _articipants _penly _hare _heir _oncerns _ith _
_umber _n _ _cale _f _ero _o _en.

_he _ocus _s _n _romoting _ellbeing _oth _hysically _nd _entally, _uch _s _ackling
_ubstance _buse.

Pinkney _poke _f _he _riendships _ecurely _ormed _n _ootball _eams, “_hat _e _ry
_nd _o _s _arness _hat _rust _ith _ur _essions”.

_ead _n _he _ame _ere _reviously _inalists _n _he BBC’s _ake _ _ifference _ward
_n 2022 _nd _eceive _unding _nd _artnership _rom _arious _oundations.

_n 2023 _hey _lan _o _aunch _he _rogramme _or _ _ifferent _port, _rogress _o
_omen’s _ootball, _nd _ventually _oll _ut _o _ther _owns.

Cool-down

Discussion questions:

- On a scale of one to ten, how fit are you?
- Is it possible to rate happiness on a scale?
- Why are sports effective at improving our mental wellbeing?
- Which sports personality do you get inspiration from?
- What sports are cheap to participate in and what ones are expensive?

CEFR B2 10 keywords revision list:

community establish fund implement initiative

launch scale struggle tackle trust

Scattergories. In the table below, add one word to each box that matches both the beginning letter and the category, e.g. a feeling beginning with *T* is *tiredness*.

	T	E	A	M
A feeling				
A type of community				
Something healthy to do				
Something unhealthy to eat				
A drink				

Answers

Page 2 Warm-up

1. scheme, impact, concerns, funding, launch
2. between
3. substance

Page 3 Reading comprehension true or false

1T, 2F, 3T, 4F, 5T, 6T, 7T, 8F, 9T, 10F

Page 4 Match-up phrases, synonyms, antonyms

Phrases 1G, 2E, 3J, 4H, 5C, 6A, 7D, 8I, 9F, 10B
Synonyms 1B, 2A, 3C, 4E, 5D
Antonyms 1C, 2A, 3B

Page 5 Missing grammar: adverbs of degree, manner, and time

1C, 2J, 3E, 4D, 5A, 6H, 7B, 8G, 9I, 10F

Page 6 Multiple choice vocabulary

1D, 2B, 3C, 4C, 5A, 6D, 7D, 8A, 9B, 10B

Page 7 Spelling

1. SCHEME, 2. THERAPY, 3. FUNDAMENTALLY, 4. ESTABLISHED,
5. FOUNDER, 6. MISSION, 7. PARTICIPANTS, 8. ABUSE,
9. FINALISTS, 10. EVENTUALLY

For this lesson's interactive exercises, visit:

<https://www.everybitenglish.com/online-exercises-20230226-football-therapy>

Thanks for using this lesson!