



Tuesday 3 September 2019

Dear Football Family,

As you may have read, The FA has embarked on a wide-ranging campaign called 'Heads Up', in partnership with the Royal Foundation, of which FA President Prince William is a co-founder and patron.

Through football, the goal of 'Heads Up' is to generate greater awareness of mental health and start normalising conversations about the issue. We also want to emphasise that mental fitness is just as important as physical fitness.

As part of our commitment to this campaign, we will produce a series of guidance notes to help those in football spot the signs of mental illness, support anyone who is suffering or affected and signpost them to specialist help, if needed.

The first of these guidance notes is enclosed. As you'll see from the front cover, it's for coaches and managers in adult football. Collectively, coaches and managers come into contact more often with more football participants – particularly players – than anyone else.

The guidance is also predominantly aimed at men, given men are more likely to take their own lives than women, with suicide the most likely cause of death for men under the age of 45. And football is a uniquely powerful way to reach men.

Further guidance will be produced for other participant groups. This is just the kick-off.

So that you're aware, we will do regular monthly features to coaches and managers through our online resource for coaches, The Boot Room, using some of the helpful tips covered in this publication.

But we also encourage you to put these guidance notes on your website and any other communication channels you have. To help you, I have enclosed our explanatory press release.

Apart from the other guidance notes we'll be producing, we will also be thinking about further ways to embed awareness of mental health in the football community. This will be based on research into the effectiveness of the 'Heads Up' campaign, to shape our future plans.

In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your colleagues for everything you do for football. We all know what a powerful and positive force it can be – this campaign is another step on that journey.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Clarke
Chair, The Football Association