



MEDIA RELEASE
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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND EXERCISE IS IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

Inadequate and insufficient participation in regular, quality physical activity renders children at risk throughout their lives.

Physical activity is vital for a child's development and lays the foundation for a healthy and active life.

In South Africa, every school-going child should access at least 90 minutes of physical activity, per week, within the prescribed school curriculum. Dr Claire Nicholson, founder of the Move-It, Moving it Matters™ Programme says "since physical education was removed from the school curriculum in 1999, a significant challenge faces all societies as we need ensure that learners are sufficiently active during their critical development period when growth and physical development are peaking."

As part of its Corporate Social Investment (CSI) framework, the Life Healthcare Group -a leading South African healthcare service provider- has partnered with [Move-It, Moving it Matters™](#) (which is an all-South African initiative, aligned with the World Sport Alliance and committed to delivering quality, physical education worldwide).

To recognise the Group's commitment to the Move-It, Moving it Matters™ Programme and showcase the learners' progress, an Event in the form of a fun, Mini-Olympics GASP™ (Get Ahead Sports Programme) was held at Yeoville Community School in Johannesburg on 1 December.

Speaking at the event, Life Healthcare Executive, Yvonne Motsisi said, "This programme drew our attention because of its health-protection focus, particularly as it relates to bone health, cardio-vascular demand and its focus on the development of good motor skills."

The Move-It, Moving it Matters™ Programme is designed to grow and develop age appropriate motor skills for Learners, specifically focusing on balance, locomotion and manipulation. Dr Nicholson remarked that, regrettably, our children aren't nearly as active as they should be. "Healthy physical activity during the early school years should be a critically important feature of the curriculum as it is well-known that, during the pubescent and adolescent growth and development periods, sufficient activity can reduce the onset of physical problems such as functional decline in later life."

The Programme continues to gain momentum and respect locally, nationally and internationally and ,thanks to funding from Life Healthcare, more Learners have been able to access this quality intervention. Currently, 30 000 children in public schools across South Africa are participating in this Programme.

The principal, Martha Mente, from Yeoville Community School said: "This programme helps our pupils in many educational areas. They learn useful skills like hand and eye coordination which impacts their overall academic development. Thanks to this programme, we are also able to identify children who require more attention in terms of physical and skills development."

By teaching the youth of today about the importance of physical activity, the burden of disease could be ameliorated thus alleviating pressure on the country's healthcare system. "This Programme meets the Group's requirements in terms of its management credibility, business structure and controls in respect of its model of delivery. We believe it has a reputation worthy of our support", concludes Motsisi.

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About Life Healthcare's contribution to Move-It, Moving it Matters™

Move-It, Moving it Matters™ is a healthy, active living initiative funded by Life Healthcare, one of South Africa's leading private healthcare groups, as part of their on-going Corporate Social Investment (CSI)

contribution. Life Healthcare has supported the four year old Move-It, Moving it Matters™ Programme since 2013 to help develop disadvantaged children's physical competence.

The Move-It, Moving Matters™ Initiative commenced in 2009. It continues to gain momentum and respect locally, nationally and internationally. It responds to leading Global Initiatives such as: the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, The Global Alliance on Physical Activity and The World Sport Alliance. It was nominated as a "hero" initiative by **eTV** recently. Move-It, Moving Matters™ is a powerful educational suite of Programmes which stimulate positive engagements in activity, for life. Thanks to CSI funding, it is currently in the hands of 20,000 children in Public schools across South Africa.

About Life Healthcare Group

Established in 1983, The Life Healthcare Group has more than 32 years' experience in the private healthcare and hospital industry. With headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Group is a listed company on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. The company's primary business is private acute hospital care with 63 healthcare facilities in seven of South Africa's nine provinces and one hospital in Botswana, as well as providing services for acute physical rehabilitation, acute mental healthcare and renal dialysis. Life Healthcare is the first and only South African hospital group to have achieved a multisite ISO9001 certification. Acute and long term hospitalisation services to public sector patients is provided by Life Esidimeni, while Life Occupational Healthcare services both occupational health and employee wellness to private and public employers. The Group includes an international presence through Max Healthcare in India and Scanmed Multimedis in Poland. The three cornerstones of the Life Healthcare Group business and its commitment to patients are, **Life, Health** and **Care**. For additional information about the Group, please visit lifehealthcare.co.za.

References:

1. <http://fitness.mercola.com/sites/fitness/archive/2012/01/20/physically-active-children-perform-better-academically.aspx>