

BRESSIE LAUNCHES 2014 COMMUNITY GAMES FESTIVAL

With the majestic Athlone Castle as the setting, the HSE Community Games launched their 2014 Festival with the help of former participant and fitness ambassador Bressie (Niall Breslin).

Gerard Davenport, **President** of Community Games, presented Bressie with a Community Games Gold medal to reward him for all he has done over the years in encouraging people to be more active in their daily lives and also for helping to put the spotlight on mental health.

Mr Davenport said on the day that Community Games were looking forward to a spectacular festival in August and that all participants could look up to Bressie as a role model in promoting healthy living throughout their lives.

Speaking at the event Niall said:

"When I took part in the Community Games I loved the feeling of representing my local town and area and it always gave me such motivation to do well. I was a competitive young fella!"

He also gave some great tips to the young participants on how best to keep active:

"Find a sport you love. There are so many sports and just because your friends may love rugby or soccer you don't have to play it. Life is too short to do something you don't enjoy and when there is so much choice there is no reason to not give everything a shot."

With such focus on finding the right balance in life, Niall spoke about the link between physical activity, eating well and feeling good about yourself.

"As you grow older this link becomes much clearer. Sport has a profound impact on your mental health and when you are happy in body and mind, you have more confidence and this all filters down into your private and professional life."

The HSE Community Games has teamed up this year with Healthy Ireland, the new national initiative that is promoting health and wellbeing throughout the country. Dr. Cate Hartigan from the HSE today said, "We are delighted to support the Community Games in 2014, and to make it part of our Healthy Ireland programme. Encouraging more children, families and communities to be active, and to see the enormous benefits that this can bring, is one of the most important changes that we all want to see in Ireland. On top of that, the community participation and volunteerism that is an essential part of Community Games adds to our shared wellbeing in towns and villages nationwide. Well done to everyone involved and we're looking forward to this year's festival."

This year has been a very busy year for the 600 areas involved in HSE Community Games - there will be over 8,000 children from all over Ireland participating over 2 weekends in August (15th to 17th and 22nd to 24th) in Athlone IT.

The HSE Community Games festival will take place in Athlone Institute of Technology, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, over 2 weekends in August:

National Festival Weekend 1: 15th – 17th August 2014

National Festival Weekend 2: 22nd – 24th August 2014

For a List of Events and the weekends they are on please visit the Community Games website

www.communitygames.ie

Ends

NOTE TO EDITORS

PHOTOS TO FOLLOW via SPORTSFILE

The HSE Community Games is an independent voluntary organisation operating in over 600 local communities throughout the entire island of Ireland. The HSE and the Community Games aim to promote healthy active lives and to have a positive impact on young people and their families in maintaining their health, in particular through being active and eating healthily.

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www.communitygames.ie/events

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