



PRESS RELEASE

19th July 2021

92% of children have changed their playing habits as a result of the pandemic*

Charity, In Kind Direct is distributing over 100,000 products to children as new research from Save the Children and Beano Brain shows how the pandemic has drastically changed their social and physical interactions, with 51% playing outside less* and 34% playing alone more than before*.

[19th July 2021] As restrictions lift, getting back to 'normal' is simply out of reach for many families and children, who are lacking the funds and resources to reconnect with friends and family, play sport, visit attractions and play outdoors. At the same time, Oxford Brookes University research** highlighted that lockdown restrictions have had a detrimental impact on children in particular, as reduced play and more sedentary behaviour has the potential to damage their long-term development.

In response, In Kind Direct, the UK charity that distributes large scale donations of products to charitable organisations, has set its sights on supporting Save the Children and the #SummerOfPlay initiative aimed at helping children get mentally and physically active this summer. At its heart it aims to give children the summer they deserve.

Over 100,000 products have been donated to In Kind Direct so far, which they will be distributing to the 7,000 UK charitable organisations in their network across the summer. Products include arts and crafts, board games, stationery, lunch boxes, backpacks, jigsaws, books, toys, sports kits, balls and outdoor play equipment – all to support schools, charities and community groups with their holiday activities and aiming to address the startling statistics:

- Almost a **quarter (23%) of children** revealed they're playing less sport and being less active than they used to be
- 77% of charities in In Kind Direct's network are seeing declining health and wellbeing in their areas
- 76% of respondents from In Kind Direct's charity network report people they support are feeling increasingly isolated and lonely***

In Kind Direct has joined forces with a number of incredible donating organisations and brands such as; **Flying Tiger Copenhagen, PZ Cussons, TCC Global, Micro Scooters, Amazon, Mitre Sports and Hasbro** - All have generously donated a wide range of products that will have an incredible impact and enable charitable organisations to do so much more across the summer holidays. Activity specialists **Merlin, Junior Adventures and Big Game Hunters**, have also donated generously, offering free placements at theme parks, opportunities to attend activity camps and chances to win outdoor play equipment – helping to boost physical and mental wellbeing at a time when it has been negatively impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Rosanne Gray, In Kind Direct CEO, comments: *"It's heartbreaking to see the statistics of how much the pandemic has impacted children's mental and physical development. Not having access to simple pleasures like a football or puzzles which many families take for granted has stopped many kids from being active and social. We cannot let this pandemic continue to impact physical and mental wellbeing for our younger generation, which is why we are encouraging any businesses with products or services to donate and make a difference over these summer months."*

Dan Paskins, Director of UK Impact at Save the Children, said:

"In the last 15 months, millions of children around the world have missed out on so much fun. Creating more opportunities for children to play is crucial for making up for some of those missed moments of play and precious time spent with friends and family.

"We also know that for people living in poverty, accessing safe places to play can be even harder. We want to focus on creating more opportunities for children from disadvantaged and minority backgrounds who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic."

Anita, Home-Start North West Leicestershire [Regional quotes provided for regional press]

"Children need access to play, both indoor and outdoors, which has been much harder since the pandemic hit as lots of children we support have been stuck inside. Access to outdoor play and socialising with other children is vital to help children develop and maintain social skills. Using products distributed by In Kind Direct will enable us to facilitate play this summer".

If you are a manufacturer, retailer or supplier and want to donate contact: donations@inkinddirect.org

Charitable organisations seeking donations, and wider products from In Kind Direct can register via: inkinddirect.org

-Ends-

Rosanne Gray, CEO of In Kind Direct, and local charity spokespeople, are available for interview and comment.

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Notes to editors:

Reference:

*Beano Brain Omnibus data from questions asked between 29th April and 4th May 2021. n= 4556 7- 14 year olds in the UK

** Oxford Brooks University research - <https://babylab.brookes.ac.uk/research/social-distancing-and-development>

***Quarterly Impact Survey January 2021 by In Kind Direct: 865 respondents from the In Kind Direct charity network

About In Kind Direct

In Kind Direct is a UK charity distributing consumer goods donated by companies to UK charitable organisations working in the UK and overseas. Founded in 1996 by HRH The Prince of Wales, it offers a simple solution to connect companies and products to thousands of charities, community groups, food banks and schools supporting local communities. Collectively they make a difference to 249,000 people each week. So far, In Kind Direct has distributed over £275.7m worth of essential products, supporting over 11,200 charitable organisations and millions of people, as well as diverting 31,268 tones of usable goods from waste. They empower charitable organisations to do more for less and put local knowledge at the heart of its work, making it easy for companies and brands to have a positive social impact with the products they make and sell. Find out more at <https://www.inkinddirect.org>

About Beano Brain

Beano Brain is the insights consultancy from Beano Studios. Born from decades of engaging kids, it now helps companies build their own connections with families using its unparalleled knowledge of Gen Alpha, Gen Z and their Millennial parents. Its proprietary direct to kids insight services pair millions of data points with rich, bespoke insights to tell an empathetic, insightful and often untold global view of kids, teens and their families. For more information visit beanobrain.com