



**PRESS RELEASE:** 12 June 2019

**CYCLING AS A FAMILY POSITIVELY IMPACTS CHILDREN'S MENTAL WELLBEING**  
***Bikeability launches 'Our Bikes Our Adventure' to get families cycling together this summer***

With the mental wellbeing of children high on the UK's agenda, a survey by The Bikeability Trust, the national charity for Bikeability, reveals more than a third of parents (37%) say their child feels less stressed and more relaxed from cycling together with their family.

The survey\* was commissioned as part of The Bikeability Trust's new campaign, *Our Bikes Our Adventure*, which hopes to encourage families to put their Bikeability skills into practice over summer and have fun exploring the great outdoors together as a family on their bikes. The *Our Bikes Our Adventure* campaign launch coincides with National Bike Week, taking place from 8-16 June 2019.

Insight from the Mental Health Foundation\*\* shows that mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people. The Foundation lists regular exercise, having the time and freedom to play outdoors and being part of a family that gets along most of the time as some of the things that can keep children mentally well.

As well as recognising the importance of cycling and spending time outdoors on their child's mental health, The Bikeability Trust's survey also revealed that 71% of parents whose child has completed their Bikeability courses agree that the training has encouraged their family to cycle together more.

**THE POSITIVE BENEFITS OF CYCLING AS A FAMILY**

The Bikeability Trust's survey reveals that;

- Three fifths (60%) of parents say that cycling as a family makes their child happy,
- 47% of parents say that cycling as a family makes their child physically fitter and stronger,
- 37% say their child feels less stressed and more relaxed after cycling as a family.

The survey shows that cycling, and more specifically cycling together as a family, has a positive impact on a child's health and wellbeing. The survey also reveals that more families enjoy cycling together if their children have been through Bikeability training. Over two thirds (67%) of parents whose children have done Bikeability training say that cycling with their children is their favourite family activity, compared with just over a fifth (22%) of those whose children have not done Bikeability training.

Commenting on the findings, Sarah Swire, a Bikeability instructor said; "Enjoying a family bike ride is an easy way for parents to help improve their child's mental health, with open green spaces, woodland and traffic-free cycle routes all over the country. Being outdoors and spending time together as a family is a great way to reduce stress, increase alertness, instil a sense of freedom and take in fresh air.

\*Bikeability Parents Survey, 1,000 participants, May 2019

\*\*Mental Health Foundation - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/c/children-and-young-people>



“Bikeability training gives families the confidence to go out cycling together, happy in the knowledge that their children have the skills and capability to tackle anything that comes their way. In turn, this confidence encourages children to start cycling young, creating a habit they will carry through for generations to come.”

The survey also highlighted the other benefits that parents see their children reaping from cycling regularly;

- 63% of parents think cycling is an easy way to increase their child’s physical activity levels,
- 60% of parents enjoy cycling as a family knowing that they spend quality time together outdoors,
- Nearly 45% of those surveyed stating the sense of freedom and adventure is what they enjoy most about cycling as a family.

#### BOX OUT

Moti Tabulo, whose child has been through Bikeability training, comments:

“We love cycling together as a family because it’s a great way to get some fresh air and exercise, enjoy the sense of freedom and adventure and spend quality time together. Since my child has been through Bikeability training, I have noticed him spending more time outdoors and enjoying their cycling much more.”

The Bikeability Trust’s *Our Bikes Our Adventure* campaign will put family time first this summer, encouraging parents and children to grab their bikes and explore the best of England together. Families can find lots of useful content on the Bikeability website to help them put their Bikeability skills into practice, have fun and experience the great outdoors together, including ‘Top tips for planning a successful family cycle ride’ and ‘11 of the best places to cycle in England’.

Bikeability is the UK government’s cycle education programme, underpinned by the National Standard for cycle training; a set of principles for better and safer cycling. Bikeability is an improved, updated and more relevant version of the old cycling proficiency scheme, delivered by professional instructors throughout England

Please visit [www.bikeability.org.uk](http://www.bikeability.org.uk) (Our Bikes Our Adventure) for more information about cycle training, and general hints tips and inspiration for families keen to cycle more.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Bikeability

Bikeability is the UK government's cycle education programme, underpinned by the National Standard for cycle training; a set of principles for better and safer cycling. Bikeability is an improved, updated and more relevant version of the old cycling proficiency scheme, delivered by professional instructors throughout England.

Cycle training providers delivering Bikeability must use professional National Standard Instructors and operate within our quality assurance system. Bikeability is therefore a quality mark for cycle training, identifying cycle training delivered to the highest standards.

There are three Bikeability levels, each designed to improve cycling skills. At Level 1, new riders learn to control and master their bikes in a space away from traffic such as playground or closed car park. Level 2 takes place on local streets, giving trainees real cycling experience, learning how to deal with traffic on short journeys. Level 3 takes riders through complex road and traffic situations and prepares them to cycle in any permissible road environment.

Bikeability courses are available through the year in every local authority in England. Children and adults can be trained individually or in groups, through school, clubs or private tuition. More information can be found at [www.bikeability.org.uk](http://www.bikeability.org.uk).

### About The Bikeability Trust

The Bikeability Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose object is to advance the education of the public in general (and particularly amongst children) on the subject of cycling.

The Trust manages, develops and promotes the Bikeability programme, supports local Bikeability commissioners, schemes and instructors, and distributes Bikeability award materials. More information can be found at [www.bikeabilitytrust.org](http://www.bikeabilitytrust.org).

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