

## Half of people cannot run 100 metres

It's likely that Usain Bolt will run the distance in less than 10 seconds this weekend, but a survey has found that nearly half of adults in the UK (45 per cent) believe it would be difficult or impossible to run 100 metres **without stopping**.

The survey of 2,065 people was conducted by Slimming World and YouGov to mark the start of Slimming World's Miles for SMILES activity programme to encourage people to become more active while raising money for the NSPCC at the same time. The survey found that women are almost twice as likely as men to be brought out in a cold sweat by the idea of running 100 metres, with 56 per cent of women believing it would be difficult or impossible to run the distance compared to 31 per cent of men.

When it was announced that the Olympics were to be held in London it was hoped that it would leave a legacy of a more active Britain, but the survey revealed that three out of four people (75 per cent) in the UK never take part in competitive activity and more than half (55 per cent) never take part in non-competitive activity either. In contrast, six out of 10 men (59 per cent) enjoy watching sport on TV at least once-a-week, with that figure likely to have risen during the Olympic season.

"These findings show how daunting the idea of physical activity can be for the many of us who lead completely sedentary lives," says Carolyn Pallister, Slimming World's public health manager.

"It's easy to fall out of the habit of being active and the longer we go without doing it the less confident we feel. For people who are worried about their weight or poor fitness – and that's the majority of the population – the thought of taking those first steps to a more active lifestyle can feel terrifying and, with busy lives, it's easy to make excuses and decide that now just isn't the right time to make a change.

"It was hoped that the Olympics would leave a legacy of a more active Britain. Yet while I'm sure that the number of sport spectators has increased during the event, watching world-class athletes could actually be making some people feel less capable of being active themselves.

"That's why the real focus of any programme designed to help people become more active needs to be about helping people to build their confidence in their ability to make changes. Being encouraged to start slowly and find ways of being active that they enjoy and can build into their everyday life can help take the threat out of activity. At Slimming World we find that by helping our members identify ways of moving more and supporting them to increase their activity levels gradually, we can help them to grow their confidence as they build up to a more active lifestyle. Whether it's taking the stairs instead of the lift, swapping sedentary video consoles for active gaming like the Nintendo Wii or Xbox Kinect or trading nights in front of the TV for more active pursuits like taking a brisk walk, joining a zumba class or kicking a football around in the park, we see first-hand what a difference small, enjoyable changes can make.

"Being active improves health, boosts mood, reduces stress and builds confidence. And when you're losing weight it can also be a huge factor in helping you to keep the weight off. With

all these benefits, it's no wonder that once people find a way of being active that works for them as an individual, it can quickly become a habit that they just couldn't bear to give up.”

**-Ends-**

For further information please contact the Slimming World press office on 01773 546101 or 01773 546039 or email: [leigh.greenwood@slimming-world.com](mailto:leigh.greenwood@slimming-world.com)

*Notes to Editors*

- The National Slimming Survey 2012 by Slimming World, conducted with YouGov, asked a nationally representative sample of 2,065 people a series of questions about their weight, eating habits and fitness levels.
- Slimming World is the largest and most advanced slimming organisation in the UK. Margaret Miles-Bramwell (OBE, FRSA) founded the company in 1969 and there are now more than 9,500 groups held weekly nationwide via a network of more than 3,500 Slimming World trained Consultants.
- Nearly half-a-million members attend Slimming World every week and achieve outstanding success.
- Slimming World pioneered referral schemes in the UK and actively supports the building of partnerships with the NHS and local authorities to develop effective strategies to manage overweight and obesity in the community. Slimming World works with university researchers and specialists in an active research programme to further knowledge of the causes and treatment of obesity.
- Slimming World's healthy eating plan, Food Optimising®, and the principles behind Slimming World's philosophy are based on a deep understanding of the challenges faced by overweight people. Slimming World integrates practical, up-to-date dietary advice with a highly developed support system.
- Slimming World Consultants receive specific training in dietary aspects and the role of physical activity in weight control. The highly developed training focuses on facilitating behaviour change in a group environment, acknowledged by experts as being the most effective way to support long-term weight management.
- To find out more about Slimming World visit [www.slimmingworld.com](http://www.slimmingworld.com) or call 0844 897 8000.