

SAVE THE UK'S CHARITIES

stem4, teenage mental health charity, calls on supporters to join

The 2.6 Challenge from Sunday 26 April 2020

APRIL 2020, WIMBLEDON: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a catastrophic effect for UK charities with the cancellation of thousands of events and the loss of billions in income through fundraising events. The Virgin Money London Marathon alone, which should have taken place on Sunday 26 April, is the world's biggest one-day fundraising event, which raised more than £66.4 million for thousands of charities in 2019.

stem4, like so many charities across the UK, has been hugely impacted by the cancellation of thousands of fundraising events due to COVID-19. Meanwhile, measures to reduce the spread including social distancing, have had a profound negative effect on mental health, causing record demand for resources to support young people. stem4 therefore needs help to continue supporting young people, to prevent further decline in mental health, to safeguard a positive future and alleviate additional burden on the NHS.

In response, the organisers of the biggest mass participation sports events across the country have come together to create a new campaign to raise vital funds to help with fundraising and save the UK's charities. The campaign, **The 2.6 Challenge**, will launch on Sunday 26 April 2020 – what should have been the date of the 40th London Marathon. The challenge will last for a week. **The 2.6 Challenge** is open to anyone of any age – the only requirement is that the activity must follow the Government guidelines on exercise and social distancing and remember to stay local (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>).

To take part, supporters can simply complete any activity based around the numbers 2.6 or 26, it could be anything from completing 26 press ups or a 2.6k bike ride to baking 26 cupcakes or hosting a 26 minute disco! Supporters can register here:

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-portal/createFundraisingPage?charityId=1004701&eventId=35005>

“The 2.6 Challenge can be anything that works for you,” says Nick Rusling, Co-Chair of the



Mass Participation Sports Organisers group (MSO) and CEO of Human Race. *“You can run or walk 2.6 miles, 2.6km or for 26 minutes. You could do the same in your home or garden, go up and down the stairs 26 times, juggle for 2.6 minutes, do a 26 minute exercise class or get 26 people on a video call and do a 26 minute workout – anything you like. We want people to get active, have fun and raise money to help Save the UK’s Charities by giving money or raising funds for the charity close to your heart.”*

“For many of the UK’s charities, the day of the London Marathon is the biggest fundraising day of the year,” said Hugh Brasher, Co-Chair of MSO and Event Director of London Marathon Events. *“One of the founding pillars of the London Marathon was ‘to show how the family of mankind can be united’. We hope that The 2.6 Challenge, which starts on the day our 40th Race should have taken place, will embody that spirit and inspire people, families and communities to fundraise for their chosen charity to help Save the UK’s Charities. Right now, our vulnerable members of society need the help of charities more than ever before..”*

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About stem4: stem4 is a Wimbledon based, award winning charity that supports teenage mental health. In order to foster positive teenage mental health, it provides evidence-based education, builds resilience, enhances motivation to change, and signposts to ensure early intervention and action. stem4 focuses on commonly occurring mental health issues in teenagers including eating disorders, anxiety, depression, self-harm and addiction. stem4’s work is primarily provided digitally through their innovative education programme, pioneering mental health apps and clinically-informed website. They also host mental health conferences that contribute to helping young people and those around them flourish. stem4 targets and supports families, schools, health professionals and communities as well as the teenagers themselves.

Website: Please see website for more information www.stem4.org.uk

About The 2.6 Challenge: The mass-participation events organisers behind **The 2.6 Challenge** are: Human Race, parkrun, The Great Run Company, Run 4 Wales, Grounded Events, London Landmarks, Virgin Sport, Limelight Sports, Threshold Sports, Running High and London Marathon Events. The design and website has been created by Studio Republic and the social media campaign by LiveWire Sport. Both agencies are working pro bono. The campaign is supported by the Charities Aid Foundation, the Institute of Fundraising, the Small Charities Coalition, the Office for Civil Society, Sport England, Let’s Do This, Virgin Money Giving and JustGiving. For more information on **The 2.6 Challenge**, visit twopointsixchallenge.co.uk

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