

News release

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Sunderland Match Launches Free Book Campaign

This weekend's FA Premier League match between Sunderland AFC and Bolton Wanderers saw the launch of the incredible Playing for Success free book giveaway in Sunderland.

As part of the 2008 National Year of Reading, a group of Sunderland youngsters and their families were able to choose their favourite titles from a selection of popular authors before enjoying the Premier League game on Saturday afternoon at the Stadium of Light.



Supported by the National Literacy Trust and Penguin Books, the Playing for Success big book giveaway will benefit hundreds of Sunderland families, while 10,000 books will be given away nationally through a series of match day events.

The giveaway took place at the SAFC Foundation's Centre of Light and aimed to help engage families, in particular fathers and sons, whilst also encouraging a greater passion for reading among all age groups.

Councillor Pat Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services within Sunderland City Council, said: "Research has shown that parental involvement in a child's reading can have a stronger influence on their achievements than any other factor. Engaging the city's families through Playing for Success and Sunderland AFC is a perfect way to help capture their imagination and show them how enjoyable and beneficial family reading can actually be."

Playing for Success is an innovative DCSF initiated study support scheme run in Sunderland by the City Council in partnership with Sunderland AFC Foundation. The initiative uses the medium of sport as a motivational teaching platform to help improve young people's key skills, including literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

The 10 week Playing for Success programme, which is held at the Centre of Light each term, has a profound motivational effect on the children taking part, particularly those who maybe struggle within a traditional learning environment. Since Playing for Success began in Sunderland in September 1999 the scheme has helped to provide over 2,100 young people with the additional study support that they need.

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity that works to help change lives though improved literacy skills. The trust's Sport and Literacy initiative aims to promote family reading through the inspirational power of football. It is funded through the Football Foundation and works alongside a number of partners including the Premier League, the FA and Playing for Success.