

## **WISH COLLABORATES WITH LIVERPOOL FC FOUNDATION TO ENHANCE SPORTS COACHING FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN QATAR**

*Festival Day Marks Culmination of Week-Long 'Respect 4 All' Training Program*

**Doha, Qatar, October 14, 2017:** The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) collaborated with the LFC Foundation, the official charity of Liverpool Football Club (LFC), to host a week-long football training course that addressed effective ways for people working in sport in Qatar to engage with children who have autism, or sensory or physical impairments.

The training program, titled 'Respect 4 All, Qatar' took place at Education City, Doha, from October 8-12. It focused on giving sports coaches targeted practical training in helping children with autism reach their potential, socialize, and pursue a healthy lifestyle through participation in football-related activities.

The course included both classroom sessions and practical outdoor workshops, the latter of which saw coaches work directly with local children who have autism. The sessions discussed topics such as the evolution of working practices and language, how people with additional needs engage in sport, and best practice.

The training culminated in a festival day that brought together the participating coaches and children for a range of fun activities. Alongside coaches from LFC Foundation, the day was also attended by Mrs. Machaille Al-Naimi, President of Community Development, QF, and Greg Gomis, goalkeeper from Al-Sailiya Sports Club, a Qatar Stars League football club. Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar also supplied a juice kiosk and bicycles as part of its 'Sahtak Awalan' healthy living initiative.

The new program follows on from a workshop held in May 2017 that was organized by WISH and delivered by LFC Foundation community coaches. At the May workshop, representatives from a variety of local government, health, and educational organizations were briefed on the skills required to set up successful training programs for children with autism.

Among those taking part in the workshop and subsequent training program were Awsaj Academy, Qatar Autism Families Association, Primary Health Care Corporation, Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs, Evolution Sports Qatar, the Ministry of Interior - Police Sports Federation, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Qatar Foundation Recreation Services, Qatar Paralympic Committee, Renad Academy, and Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Sports Academy.

Andrea Cooper, Head of LFC Foundation, said: "We are delighted to collaborate with WISH on their inclusive training program for local children in Qatar. Our coaching team is highly experienced in delivering specialist sports sessions that promote inclusion and wellbeing and achieve our goal of creating life-changing opportunities for children and young people in Liverpool and beyond.

“I would like to thank WISH for welcoming the LFC Foundation to Qatar, and I hope that all the participants had a positive and fun experience.”

Sultana Afdhal, Acting Chief Executive Officer of WISH, who brought LFC Foundation’s ‘Respect 4 All’ program to Qatar, said: “To see local coaches benefiting from the expertise, professionalism, and warmth of the LFC Foundation team is extremely rewarding. As well as being a globally famous and successful football club, Liverpool FC is well known for its strong commitment to using sport to benefit communities, both in the city of Liverpool, the UK, and around the world.

“WISH is delighted to have had the opportunity to bring the LFC Foundation team to Qatar and to work with them to deliver a program that we hope will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of children with disabilities within our local community for many years to come.”

Since the inception of WISH in 2013, children’s health has been a core research area. To date, WISH has worked with its global community of healthcare experts to create two evidence based reports; ‘Mental Health and Wellbeing in Children’ and ‘Autism: A Global Framework for Action’. WISH, an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, has also made it a priority to highlight innovations that expand access to effective mental health treatment and the care of people with autism.

WISH’s collaborative work with the LFC Foundation is in line with its commitment to establishing a sustainable program that supports Qatar’s National Mental Health Strategy, ‘Changing Minds, Changing Lives 2013-2018’.

**Image Captions:**

**Image 1:** Children with special needs engage in indoor and outdoor football games with LFC Foundation coaches and Qatar-based sports trainers.

**Image 2:** Children with special needs engage in indoor and outdoor football games with LFC Foundation coaches and Qatar-based sports trainers.

**Image 3:** Children with special needs engage in indoor and outdoor football games with LFC Foundation coaches and Qatar-based sports trainers.

**Image 4:** Sultana Afdhal, acting CEO of World Innovation Summit for Health and Mrs. Machaille Al-Naimi, President of Community Development of Qatar Foundation, with the children and trainers at the end of Liverpool Football Club Foundation’s ‘Respect 4 All’ Qatar training program.

**ENDS**

**About the World Innovation Summit for Health:**



مؤتمر القمة العالمي للابتكار في الرعاية الصحية  
World Innovation Summit for Health  
An Initiative of Qatar Foundation

The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through international summits and a range of ongoing initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research and industry.

Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

### **Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organization that is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercializing solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>

### **Liverpool FC Foundation**

The LFC Foundation is the official charity of Liverpool Football Club.

Their mission is to bring together the LFC Family to create life changing opportunities for children and young people. They achieve this by delivering a wide range of programmes and partnerships to improve the life and health chances of children and young people.

For more information on the LFC Foundation, please visit: <https://foundation.liverpoolfc.com/>