EMBARGOED MONDAY 16TH APRIL 2007

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SLOUCH POTATOES

The British Chiropractic Association (BCA) launches Straighten Up UK and reveals young people are suffering from back pain more than ever but don't care

New consumer research[1] released today, by the British Chiropractic Association, (BCA) reveals that **50% of 16-24 year olds are currently suffering from back pain compared to 18% just three years ago[2]**. But this future generation just isn't 'bovvered' about having a bad back.

Over half of 16-24 year olds have already been told that they have bad posture but 22% weren't bothered and nearly a third (29%) haven't done anything about it.

Sedentary lifestyles and slouching have a lot to answer for. Poor posture is the second biggest trigger of back pain amongst this group followed by using PCs and computer games.

Young people have reason to be concerned.

Back pain is not only causing the nation to lose sleep, with 40% of sufferers struggling to get a good night's rest, 14% missing out on social events because of pain, and, for 15%, it has a negative impact on their sex life.

On Monday 16th April 2007, to coincide with the start of Chiropractic Awareness Week, the BCA is launching Straighten Up UK; a three minute exercise programme designed to help strengthen the spine and improve posture.

The effects of bad posture are far reaching. Not only can it have a negative affect on your health but it could cost you that dream job; nearly 60% of all respondents cited that bad posture was off putting in a job interview situation.

More worryingly, **one in three said that poor posture can make people seem unapproachable and lacking in confidence,** a further 12% associate bad posture with laziness, while 21% said that it displayed a lack of care about appearance.

When questioned about the cause of their poor posture, 62% of respondents blamed slouching or being tired, 44% blamed seating, 38% choose to slouch when they relax whilst 8% retreat to a bad posture if they are feeling shy or embarrassed.

Women, it seems, are suffering the most, with over 50% of respondents experiencing back pain, and 13% of them claiming that they have suffered with it for as long as they can remember.

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[1] Research carried out online by Tickbox.net between 21 / 02 / 2007 – 08 /03 / 2007, sample 1562 adults aged 16+.

[2] Research carried out between 7/10/2004 – 13/10/2004, sample 2024 adults aged 16+

Tim Hutchful from the British Chiropractic Association comments: "We are concerned that the incidence of back pain has grown so dramatically amongst young people. In 2004, under one in five young people were suffering, now that figure has risen so that every other young person in the UK has some form of back pain; which is of serious concern.

"We need to educate people about the harm that can be caused by poor posture and work towards reducing the incidence of back pain. By making just a few lifestyle changes, people can help to improve their posture, take care of their spine and help them look and feel their best."

This research was commissioned by the BCA to coincide with the launch of **Straighten Up UK**. **As part of the campaign the BCA is encouraging people to incorporate the simple 3 minute exercise routine into their daily lives to help strengthen the spine and improve posture – the routine is available to download from www.straightenupuk.org**

During Chiropractic Awareness Week, selected BCA chiropractors will be holding Straighten Up UK events which will include fundraising for The Children's Trust, a charity which provides specialist care, rehabilitation, education and therapy to some of the UK's most severely disabled children. For more information call the BCA on 0118 950 5950 or visit www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk

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For more information on Straighten Up UK and the British Chiropractic Association:

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Notes to Editors

Chiropractic is a primary health-care profession that specialises in the diagnosis, treatment and overall management of conditions that are due to problems with the joints, ligaments, tendons and nerves of the body, particularly those of the spine.

*The **BCA** represents well over 50% of UK chiropractors. Chiropractic is a statutorily regulated healthcare profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council. Members of the BCA must abide by the GCC's Code of Conduct and Standard of Proficiency. The association only accepts graduates who have gone through a minimum four-year full-time internationally accredited degree course at an internationally recognised college of chiropractic education. Chiropractic care offers hands on pain management and focuses on muscles, joints and nerves. Chiropractic is suitable for all ages and can help with a wide range of aches and pains from head to toe. Chiropractors use their hands to 'adjust' or 'manipulate' the spine and joints where signs of restriction in movement are found and can also involve working on muscles. This restores normal function to the affected muscles, joints and nerves allowing the body to then get on with the job of healing itself.*

About the Children's Trust

The Children's Trust is a registered national charity providing care, education and therapy to children with multiple disabilities and complex health needs.

The charity's services include:

- *Residential nursing care (for children unable to return home after hospital) on a short break, transitional or continuing care basis;*
- *Residential intensive rehabilitation for children with an acquired brain injury;*
- *Residential (and day) special education for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex health needs;*
- *Short break care for children in the family home;*
- *Palliative care;*
- *Support for children returning to school after an acquired brain injury.*

The Trust's current Appeal needs £5.3 million to build new, purpose-designed, residential accommodation for children who have suffered a brain injury, either as the result of a tragic accident or serious illness.

Winner of the UK Charity Awards 'Best Charity to Work For'
Winner of the 2005 Nursing Times 'Top Independent Employer for Nurses to Work For'
Charity Registration Number: 288018