

## OFFICIAL STATEMENT

# JAEE Expects Industries to Develop and Disseminate Games to Promote Physical Activities

Japanese Association of Exercise Epidemiology  
Official Statement Committee

The Japanese Association of Exercise Epidemiology (JAEE) Official Statement Committee made an announcement on August 6, 2016 regarding games to promote physical activity.

### 1. Statement

The JAEE provides support for the development and promotion of games that encourage people to become involved in physical activities, and expects further evolution.

### 2. Summary

Since the release of Pokémon Go, games that promote physical activity<sup>\*1</sup> have been attracting public attention. With the aim of examining the effects of physical activity on the maintenance and promotion of the health of people, as well as developing methods for their promotion, the JAEE has issued a statement to actively support the development and dissemination of games that encourage people to become involved in physical activities and address existing challenges.

### 3. Background of the statement

In 2010, the WHO published an international recommendation on physical activities to promote health, for policymakers at an international level. In 2012, *The Lancet*, one of the world's most respected medical journals, ran a feature article<sup>\*2</sup> on physical inactivity. The article reported that physical inactivity is becoming a global pandemic with detrimental health effects similar to those of smoking, and that 5.3 million people around the world die every year because of physical inactivity. The second report of the feature article<sup>\*3</sup> recently published in *The Lancet* is seriously concerned that there have been little improvement in the situation, and points out that it is necessary to collaborate with financial circles and many different sectors and scale up measures to address this problem.

Various evidence-based measures have been developed around the world to address smoking-related problems, and their positive effects have been confirmed. The JAEE considers it necessary to develop effective public health measures based on exercise epidemiology research and implement various approaches to address the issue of physical inactivity.

In this context, Pokémon Go and other new games that promote physical activities may significantly encourage people of all ages to become involved in physical activities, and markedly improve their health. However, game-related social problems, such as the dangerous behavior of using smartphones while walking on the street and intrusion into restricted areas, have become serious issues. Therefore, the JAEE expects industries to develop and disseminate games to promote physical activities with an emphasis on safety, and issue a statement to address the existing challenges.

### 4. Details of the statement

- 1) The JAEE expects industries and the developers of games to develop software and hardware, so that people can safely enjoy games that promote physical activity.
- 2) The JAEE expects people from various fields involved in city development to create environments—such as parks and sidewalks—that help people safely enjoy games for the promotion of physical activity.
- 3) The JAEE drew strong attention to dangerous behavior such as using smartphones while walking or controlling a vehicle, and issues a warning that such acts must be refrained from.
- 4) The JAEE encourages exercise epidemiologists and public health researchers to assess the health and social effects of activity-promoting games, and conduct research to provide the basic knowledge to help people enjoy these games safely and effectively. We also encourage research to prevent accidents and social problems related to these games.

### 5. Terminology and reference

\*1 Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activities can be classified into daily life activities, such as work and commuting, and exercise performed intentionally and continuously to maintain and improve health and physical fitness.

\*2 <http://www.thelancet.com/series/physical-activity>

\*3 <http://www.thelancet.com/series/physical-activity-2016>