



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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Media Advisory

Walking it Out to Prevent Obesity HEART Coalition of Stanislaus County to Celebrate Students' Achievements in the Walk-It-Out Program

What: The statistics are alarming. Over 60% of adults in Stanislaus County are overweight, whereas more than 34% of the school age children in Stanislaus County are overweight. And it gets worse. Obesity and physical inactivity are the major health risk factors leading to chronic diseases such as heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

The HEART Coalition of Stanislaus County, coordinated by the Stanislaus County Health Service Agency (HSA), is actively addressing childhood obesity prevention by sponsoring the Walk-it-Out Program within five Modesto City Schools elementary after school programs.

The Walk-It-Out Program was developed to teach elementary school students about healthy living and the benefits of being physically active. The program also gives students the chance to let the rubber meet the blacktop as they walk with their classmates during the After School Program times. Students are encouraged to walk at least fifteen minutes a day, three times a week, before they start their after school program activities. Students are awarded with a variety of incentives such as water bottles and/or T-shirts when they reach specific milestones.

This Program was started at the beginning of the school year in September of 2007 and is now celebrating the students' accomplishments at the end of the school year. Over 400 elementary school students from each of the participating schools will gather on Friday for this celebration event.

The participating schools include: Bret Harte Elementary, Orville Wright Elementary, Kirschen Elementary, Marshall Elementary, and Robertson Road Elementary.

When: Friday, May 16, 2008
3:45 p.m. Celebration Event Kickoff
4:00 p.m. Student participation in various games and activities
5:00 p.m. Awards presentation and prize drawings
5:15 p.m. Event ends

Where: Robertson Road Elementary School*
1821 Robertson Road in Modesto

**Student games and activities (from 4 – 5 p.m.) will also take place at the adjacent Kirschen Elementary School campus.*

Visuals: From 4 – 5 p.m. groups of elementary school students will rotate through a series of activity stations including bounce-house obstacle courses, field obstacle course relays, soccer scrimmages and disc-jockey led contests. At 5 p.m. the event will conclude with the presentation of new bicycles to students with the most miles walked, new tennis shoes to students with the best program attendance, and additional prizes will be awarded in a random prize drawing.

About the HEART Coalition of Stanislaus County:

The HEART Coalition was established by the Health Services Agency in 1999 to address the high death rates of cardiovascular disease in Stanislaus County. Its mission is to reduce cardiovascular disease risk factors to improve the health status and quality of life of residents of Stanislaus County. Coalition members include area hospitals, health care providers, health plans, education, community based organizations, local businesses, and concerned residents.

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