

For Immediate Release

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BATTLING DC'S CHILDHOOD OBESITY EPIDEMIC ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

YMCA of Metropolitan Washington to teach families and children that it is fun, easy and free to lead a healthy lifestyle in Washington, DC

Washington, D.C., December 21, 2010 – As the nation scours for ways to reverse and hinder childhood obesity, it is increasingly evident that after-school exercise alone will not resolve this issue. With the recent signing of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, we are becoming aware that a more holistic approach to healthy living must be taken in order to truly have an impact. The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington and the MEND Foundation (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition... Do it!) are fighting this battle in Washington, DC by providing a structured program that offers fitness, nutrition education and support to the whole family.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington has been at the forefront of the battle against childhood obesity, especially with the nationally renowned PHD program. Starting in January 2011, they will be partnering with the MEND Foundation and Children's Hospital to offer the MEND 7-13 program, a fun and interactive course for families and children aged 7-13 who are above their ideal weight. This ten week workshop will inspire everyone in the family to exercise more, enjoy preparing and eating healthy food, read food labels and shop for healthy foods on a budget. This program, available for the first time in the United States, has proven immediate and long-term success the world over.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 70 percent of DC's children do not meet recommended levels of physical activity with one out of four being either overweight or obese. The physical effects, such as diabetes, heart disease, and asthma are more apparent, but the psychological effects can be just as devastating. Not only will the region's youth discover easy practices to maintain a healthy lifestyle, but they will experience higher self-esteem, less anxiety and stress, and deeper bonds within their family.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is committed to combating these staggering statistics regardless of inability to pay. This program is being offered free of charge so that all of our region's at-risk families and youth have an opportunity to get healthy and have fun. These two-hour sessions, being held twice a week at the Capital View YMCA (2118 Ridgecrest Ct., SE, Washington, DC), will include a one-hour interactive workshop for children and parents followed by one hour of exercise for the children while the parents meet for support.

For more information or to take part in this program, please contact Patricia Taylor at (202) 464-1080 or at Patricia.Taylor@ymcadc.org. It is never too early for your child to take charge of their health. Come experience how fun and easy it can be to lead a healthy lifestyle!

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