

FITNESS FACTS

Helping To Raise Healthier Kids

(NAPSA)—Schools and parents are working together to help keep kids fit and in good health. That's why there's now a new program to try to show kids how to avoid joining the nearly one in three Americans between 6 and 19 who are overweight.

In fact, the U.S. has one of the highest obesity rates of any industrialized country. This is affecting kids' health not just later in life, but right now. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, poor fitness in young adults is associated with the development of cardiovascular disease risk factors. In addition, 70 percent of overweight teens could become obese adults.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, treating obesity-related illnesses and complications adds billions of dollars to the nation's health care costs. Prevention, however, is a better investment, and that means teaching children healthy habits as early as grade school.

Now 6th graders across the country are the fortunate targets of a major outreach addressing nutrition and fitness.

Power of Prevention through Fitness and Nutrition is part of an ongoing initiative by the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) to combat the childhood obesity epidemic and encourage students to maintain healthy lifestyles. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has partnered with AACE to produce an important component of the project, a handout called Rx for Physical



Dr. Donald Bergman of the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists and his daughter Melissa teach her 6th grade classroom the importance of physical activity and making healthy food choices.

Activity, which outlines how physical activity can be incorporated into children's lives.

Here are some tips on how to get kids up and running:

- Get a dog or, rather, get your youngsters a dog. Walking the dog means walking themselves.
- Look for ways your children can get exercise outside of organized team competition. For example, hiking, fencing and martial arts may hold some appeal for kids who aren't into basketball or soccer. The important thing is to get them up and moving rather than slumped in front of the television set.
- Set a good example. Your kids learn from you; if they never see you engaging in some form of exercise, or if they see you eating a lot of unhealthy foods, they'll receive the wrong signals.
- Make healthy snacks—such as carrots and ranch dressing—available when kids come home from school hungry.

Learn more at www.powerofprevention.com.