YMCA of Greater Louisville Gets Funding to Expand Summer Food Program

Walmart Foundation and Y partnering on program that serves meals to kids

Louisville, KY (June 24, 2013) - To ensure that more children and teens know about and use the federal Summer Food Service Program, the YMCA of Greater Louisville is expanding its healthy food promotion efforts at 18 of its summer-camp sites. With a $45,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation, the Y will add more fruits and vegetables to the snacks and meals provided through the federal program.

The YMCA of Greater Louisville has been taking a leadership role for nearly a decade in combating obesity and helping children develop lifelong, healthy habits.

In addition to enhancing the nutritional value of the Summer Food Service program meals, the new funds will also allow the Y to provide family activities focused on nutrition and education, and purchase equipment designed increase physical activity of children attending the camp sites. The Summer Food Service Program runs through August 9.

The YMCA of Greater Louisville’s expanded food program is part of a national partnership between YMCA of the USA and the Walmart Foundation to enhance awareness of the United States Department of Agriculture’s Summer Food Service Program and address childhood hunger in communities. While more than 30 million children in low-income communities across the country receive free or reduced-cost meals during the school year, only 2.3 million of them have access to free meals when school is out. The YMCA of Greater Louisville will serve more than 1,000 free meals daily at 18 of its summer-camp sites throughout the summer. Nationally, the Y will strive to serve 4 million healthy meals and snacks to 100,000 kids this summer.

"In order for kids to maintain good health, they need proper nourishment as well as activities to keep their minds and bodies active," said Steve Tarver, CEO and President of the YMCA of Greater Louisville. "The Summer Food Program will help kids stay well-nourished, active and energized, and also provide some relief to families who need support in providing more nutritious food when school is out.”

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The YMCA began developing new policies and practices for improving childhood nutrition at its 60-plus School Age Child Care sites and summer camps almost a decade ago. Responding to alarming growth in childhood obesity and also the lack of healthy foods available in some of Louisville’s “food deserts,” the School Age Child Care program adopted healthy guidelines, including:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables are served daily.
- One whole-grain food item is served daily.
- Water is served instead of sugar-sweetened drinks in most cases.
- 15 minutes of vigorous exercise is required during before- and after-school sessions and one hour of vigorous activities during summer camp.
- Screen time is limited to one hour during summer camp, and that is only for educational purposes.

In recent years, the YMCA has been awarded grant funds to work with child-care centers locally and across the state to improve their standards for providing healthy food and physical activity.

This summer, the YMCA is providing an array of health-related activities for children attending its summer camp sites. The Y is also sponsoring two events to promote more active lifestyles and teach the principles of physical training:

**YMCA Summer Track & Field Event 2013** takes place July 29-August 2 at the Oldham County YMCA Indoor Soccer Arena in Buckner. Hundreds of children participating in the Y’s summer camps train for the event and compete for prizes in their age group.

**Kids Finish First Marathon** kicks off Saturday, September 21, at the Louisville Water Tower on River Road and Zorn Avenue. Kids ages 5-14 are encourage to track their mileage in training for the Louisville Sports Commission’s half-marathon event on Nov. 10. They are then able to run the last 1.1 mile of the half-marathon along with the participating adults.

The Y summer camp sites will also bring a variety of health enrichment programs to their sites over the summer. A list of the events and schedule is included below.

**Norton Health Care** will visit 14 of the Y’s summer camp sites and present a program about the human body. Dates and times are as follows:

- June 21: Kerrick Elementary (9:30-11:30) and Olmstead Elementary (12:30-2:30)
- June 25: Thomas Jefferson Middle School (9:30-11:30) and Watterson Elementary (12:30-2:30)
- June 28: Chenoweth Elementary (9:30-11:30) and Coleridge Taylor Elementary (12:30-2:30)
- July 1: Blue Lick Elementary (9-11), Farmer Elementary (12-2) and Tully Elementary (3-5)
- July 5: Highland Middle (9:30-11:30) and Greathouse Elementary (12:30-2:30)
- July 22: Hite Elementary (9-11), Lowe Elementary (12-2) and English Station Elementary (3-5)

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The University of Louisville Athletics Nutrition Program, sponsored by YUM Brands, will visit Cane Run on July 11 from 9:30-12:00 to talk about good nutrition and initiate a two-week food journaling project with the kids.

Kosair National Travel Health Expo will have demonstrations of summer safety and an appearance from Batman on Tuesday, July 23, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Tully Elementary School.

NOTE: All YMCA events listed are open to the media with advance notice. Please contact YMCA Marketing and Communications Director Nina Walfoort at 376-4988 to arrange media coverage.

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About the Y
The Y is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 Ys engage 21 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors.

About Philanthropy at Walmart
Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are committed to helping people live better through philanthropic efforts. Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are leading the fight against hunger in the United States with a $2 billion commitment through 2015. Walmart has donated more than 1 billion meals to those in need across the country. To learn more about Walmart’s giving, visit foundation.walmart.com.