



Wellspring Fit Clubs and KIPP Houston Partner to Help Local Houston Teens Lose Weight

After-school program teaches teens in Houston how to live a healthy lifestyle

HOUSTON, TX (November 24, 2008) — Wellspring, the leading weight loss program for adolescents and adults, recently partnered with KIPP schools to start an after-school fitness and weight loss program for local students. The 16-week program, offered for free to any student willing to participate, will provide teens with the skills and motivation to live a healthy lifestyle.

"As the obesity trends in our country grow at alarming rates each year, it is so important that we provide ways for every child to get the help they need to make significant changes," said Eliza Kingsford, clinical director of Wellspring Fit Clubs. "In creating Fit Clubs, we now have the opportunity to provide an incredible service to families in need, at no cost to them."

The Fit Club program teaches participants how to eat a low fat diet and easy ways to get active, with four hours per week of physical activity led by a dedicated KIPP fitness instructor. These lifestyle changes are reinforced through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) led by trained Masters or Doctoral level therapists. CBT helps each student understand their biology and why it might be so difficult to lose weight. Once this understanding is reached, teens come up with strategies to be successful in their home environment.

"My daughter has tried so many things to lose weight that have not worked in the past. She was tired of trying," commented Ana Cantu, mother of Mayra Cantu, one of the Fit Club participants. "Wellspring Fit Club provides her with a real opportunity to lose weight and keep it off."

"Fit Clubs have already made a significant impact. I can tell who is participating because they carry themselves differently," commented KIPP Principal, Elliot Whitney. "For instance, one participant who used to be shy and withdrawn now has the confidence to speak to new people."

Fit Clubs provide an avenue for teens struggling with their weight to talk with others in the same situation. This provides an opportunity for the kids to learn from and lean on each other.

"When our Wellspring participants realize that they are not alone in this process of losing weight and leading healthier lifestyles, upon them dawns the idea that they can make a change in their life and have fun at the same time," said Joseph Jimenez, athletic coordinator for Fit Club.

"I am so excited about what Wellspring and KIPP can do for these kids. We can show them that they can change, and we will be here to support them while they do" said Deedrah Harp, Ph.D., Program Director for KIPP's Fit Club.

About Wellspring

Wellspring Academies, Wellspring Camps, Wellspring Fit Clubs, and Wellspring Retreats are recognized as the leading weight loss treatment programs for overweight children, teens and adults. Founded in 2004 as Healthy Living Academies, the organization is now recognized under one name, Wellspring.

Wellspring offers programs for youth and adults, including year-round boarding schools, summer camps, after-school programs and retreats. *Wellspring Academies*, boarding schools include Wellspring Academy of California and Wellspring Academy of the Carolinas; *Wellspring Camps* in New York, North Carolina, California, Texas, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Florida, Hawaii, Vancouver, Canada, and United Kingdom, along with Wellspring Family Camp at Pinehurst Resort; *Wellspring Fit Clubs*, after-school programs for weight loss and behavioral change; and *Wellspring Retreats*, 8 day vacations for adults.

The Sierras Weight-Loss Solution for Teens and Kids (Avery, 2007) was written by the founders and program leaders of Wellspring. The book offers parents a 12-week proven program based on the school's curriculum focusing on healthy eating and making exercise a priority.

To learn more about Wellspring weight loss programs, visit www.wellspringweightloss.com or call 866-364-0808. Wellspring is a division of CRC Health.

About KIPP Schools

KIPP schools are free, open-enrollment, college-preparatory public schools where underserved students develop the knowledge, skills, and character traits needed to succeed in top quality high schools, colleges, and the competitive world beyond. By providing a safe and structured learning environment, more time in school, and high-quality teachers, KIPP schools have helped students make significant academic gains. KIPP schools share a core set of operating principles known as the "Five Pillars": High Expectations, Choice & Commitment, More Time, Power to Lead, and Focus on Results.

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