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ACSM PARTNERSHIP WILL COMBAT CHILDHOOD OBESITY, GET KIDS ACTIVE

ACSM and Youth Fitness Coalition join to promote youth fitness

INDIANAPOLIS – In an effort to decrease the prevalence of childhood obesity and promote physical activity to children, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) has announced a partnership with the Youth Fitness Coalition (YFC). This partnership will feature ACSM's [Exercise is Medicine™](#) initiative, designed to encourage America's patients to incorporate physical activity and exercise into their daily routine, and YFC's signature program, [Project ACES](#) (All Children Exercise Simultaneously).

Created in 1989 by physical education teacher Len Saunders as a method of motivating children to exercise, Project ACES Day takes place on the first Wednesday each May as part of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month and National Physical Education Week. In the past, it has been labeled as "the world's largest exercise class." Project ACES Clubs continue to promote physical activity all year long by pledging to create youth fitness programs in their schools.

"For 23 years, Project ACES' programs have been organized and conducted by the YFC and have involved millions of children, parents and teachers in every state and more than 45 countries," said H.J. Saunders, YFC Founder and President.

Project ACES Day on May 4 coincides with Exercise is Medicine™ Month, a time for physicians, health and fitness professionals, the public, and supporting organizations and their constituents to recognize, emphasize and celebrate the valuable health benefits of exercise on a national scale.

In 2010, many states, including Florida, Nevada, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Connecticut and Iowa proclaimed May as [Exercise is Medicine™ month](#). Several cities also have pledged support by creating events featuring the initiative's principles, including Indianapolis; Tallahassee, Fla.; Eugene, Ore.; and several cities in Texas.

"The principles of Exercise is Medicine center around the importance of physical activity," said Robert Sallis, M.D., FACSM. "Project ACES really fits well with the goals of Exercise is Medicine, and I think this will be a very valuable tool in our effort to reach out to children and their parents worldwide."

The [2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#) recommend that children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 engage in 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day, including aerobic, muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening exercises.

"This partnership is an important action item in a long list of steps we're taking to address the issue of youth fitness and health, and is indicative of our commitment to the issue at large," said James R. Whitehead, ACSM Executive Vice President. "Exercise is Medicine is the perfect venue for our involvement with Project ACES."

For more information on Exercise is Medicine™ and how to get involved with Project ACES, visit www.exerciseismedicine.org and www.projectaces.com.

The [American College of Sports Medicine](#) is the largest sports medicine and exercise science organization in the world. More than 35,000 international, national, and regional members and certified professionals are dedicated to advancing and integrating scientific research to provide educational and practical applications of exercise science and sports medicine.

The [Youth Fitness Coalition](#) is a New Jersey-based non-profit organization committed to combating childhood obesity by making exercise programs fun and by educating children, parents and teachers about the importance of lifelong fitness and making healthy lifestyle choices.