

WORLD'S LARGEST EXERCISE CLASS

May 3 is Project ACES Day - All Children Exercise Simultaneously!

Indianapolis - In conjunction with May's Exercise is Medicine® Month, "The World's Largest Exercise Class" is coming to children and schools around the world May 3. Millions of participants across the globe will be celebrating the annual [Project ACES®](#) Day beginning at 10 a.m. This [Youth Fitness Coalition](#) (YFC) signature program, in partnership with American College of Sports Medicine's Exercise is Medicine® initiative, promotes physical activity to children in order to decrease the prevalence of childhood obesity.

Project ACES, an acronym for All Children Exercise Simultaneously, also coincides with National Physical Fitness and Sports Month and National Physical Education Week. According to Olympic Gold Medal Decathlete [Dan O'Brien](#), "Project ACES engages millions of children, parents, and teachers each year to participate in physical activity at their schools and at home. Through Project ACES, children learn the value and importance of good nutrition, adequate physical fitness and healthy decision-making – lessons they can carry well into adulthood."

Schools can choose their activity, from walking or jogging to martial arts or dancing. Students typically exercise for 15 to 45 minutes following an educational component. In the past, schools have incorporated celebrity guest speakers or used music in their Project ACES activities. The program has been recognized by multiple presidents, including Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan, and has inspired events in 50 different countries. As the time zones change, this chain of local events creates a global wave of exercise.

"Project ACES is a great way to teach children how to live a healthy lifestyle through adequate physical activity," said physical education teacher Len Saunders, who created the program in 1989 to motivate children to exercise. "Childhood obesity is an issue plaguing many young people today, and Project ACES is designed to make physical activity and nutrition fun."

Schools and students will celebrate Project ACES Day by making physical activity a priority. [Federal physical activity guidelines](#) recommend children and adolescents do 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Project ACES helps children reach this goal from activities ranging from running to sports and games. Teachers can also make physical activity a priority throughout the year by creating a Project ACES Club at their school to teach and learn healthy lifestyle food and exercise choices.

"We're all in this together," said Shihan H. J. Saunders, president of the Youth Fitness Coalition and an exercise physiologist. "Something magical happens when we synchronize our collective consciousness in the spirit of fun on Project ACES Day."

Parents are invited to participate by joining their kids at school or by celebrating on May 7 for the ninth annual [PACES Day](#): Parents and Children Exercise Simultaneously. PACES Day kicks off a 52-week exercise program with various fun activities parents can enjoy with their children. The PACES website offers resources including a list of family activity ideas for every week of the year.

“If we feel good about ourselves, we can lead by example, and inspire our kids to be their fit best, not just on Project ACES and PACES Day, but every day and toward each other,” said Shihan Saunders.

For more information on Exercise is Medicine® and how to get involved with Project ACES, visit 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, Inc.](#) 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.