

For Immediate Release
September 10, 2012

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**President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition Announces
New Fitness Program Aimed at Helping Kids Stay Active**

*The New Presidential Youth Fitness Program encourages positive experiences and teaches skills for
lifelong physical activity*

Washington, D.C. – The President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition today announced they are phasing out their Youth Fitness Test which dates back to 1966 and replacing it with the Presidential Youth Fitness Program. The comprehensive school-based program employs the latest science and promotes health and physical activity for America's youth. This voluntary program represents a significant change in how schools and parents approach kids' physical fitness. Instead of recognizing athletic performance, the new program assesses students' health-related fitness and helps them progress over time. The Presidential Youth Fitness Program is available for free to all schools at www.presidentialyouthfitnessprogram.org.

Physical activity is critical to our children's health and well-being. There is a growing body of research that suggests a link between physical activity and improved attendance rates, higher self-esteem, and greater ability to learn. Modernizing the Youth Fitness Test was a recommendation of the President's Council's Science Board and included in the 2010 White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity Report to the President, which has served as a blueprint for First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative.

"We have a better understanding of what it means to be a healthy kid," said First Lady Michelle Obama. "One of the reasons I'm excited about the new program is because kids won't be measured on how fast they can run compared to their classmates, it'll be based on what they can do and what their own goal is. This is important because we want physical activity to be a lifelong habit."

The Presidential Youth Fitness Program includes three components: research-based assessment tools; professional development, training and resources for teachers, parents and students; and recognition for participation in the program.

A key change to the new program is the adoption of the Fitnessgram® assessment. Fitnessgram® was developed by the non-profit The Cooper Institute. Unlike the Youth Fitness Test, Fitnessgram® helps minimize comparisons between children and instead supports students as they pursue personal fitness goals for lifelong health. It assesses cardiovascular fitness, body composition, muscle strength, muscular

endurance, and flexibility. Fitnessgram® is currently used in 67,000 schools in all 50 states. Teachers can download the program materials at www.presidentialyouthfitnessprogram.org.

Critical to the success of the program is the expertise and resources of the partnering organizations, which include:

- **The Cooper Institute**, providing access to the fitness assessment components,
- **American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance**, leading professional development and training,
- **Amateur Athletic Union** administering the youth fitness recognition program, and
- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** developing a plan to track and evaluate the Presidential Youth Fitness Program.

“I am thrilled to see these organizations coming together on the new Presidential Youth Fitness Program,” said Dr. Jayne Greenberg, district director of physical education and health literacy for Miami-Dade County (Fla.) Public Schools and President’s Council member. “Promoting the health of students and ensuring our teachers have the resources they need for successful programming is key. It will go a long way in helping kids get the skills they need to be physically active for a lifetime.”

About the President’s Council

The President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition educates, engages and empowers all Americans to adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes regular physical activity and good nutrition. Through its partnerships with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, the President’s Council promotes programs and initiatives that motivate people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to lead active, healthy lifestyles. For more information about the President’s Council, visit www.fitness.gov and follow the President’s Council on Twitter @FitnessGov.

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