



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **ARKids Hosts “Get Your Move On” School Assemblies**

*ARKids First Partners with Disney to Encourage Healthy Living*

**November 16, 2010; Little Rock, Ark.** – ARKids First, the state’s CHIP program (Children’s Health Insurance Program), has partnered with Disney to provide educational materials and a series of free active healthy lifestyle and obesity awareness school assemblies. The “Get Your Move On” assemblies will focus on educating kids and their parents about the importance of exercise and healthy eating habits.

ARKids First along with Disney will have two to three assemblies per month between November of 2010 and May of 2011; reaching out to 16 schools in Arkansas in 16 different counties. All events and materials are available at no cost to the schools.

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Trust for America’s Health, the percentage of obese and overweight children was at or above 30 percent in 2009. Arkansas had the second highest amount (37.5 percent) of overweight children from ages 10-17 in the country. Not only does obesity make children susceptible to diabetes, low self-esteem, heart disease, and high blood pressure, it encroaches on the ability of their bones to form properly and the functioning of their heart.

The ARKids First program also encourages parents to establish relationships with primary care physicians and set up well-child check-ups for their children in order to stay current on immunizations and other important screenings. The program serves more than 300,000 kids in Arkansas who might have been uninsured without this option. In addition to a multitude of benefits, ARKids First also covers vision and dental care without a referral from a doctor.

For more information about ARKids First, visit [www.ARKidsFirst.com](http://www.ARKidsFirst.com). For more information about the events, visit [www.radiodisney.com/littlerock](http://www.radiodisney.com/littlerock).

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“The health of Arkansas’ children is ARKids First’s top priority,” says Julie Munsell, Director of Communications for Arkansas Department of Human Services. “We need to arm Arkansans with the information and the capabilities to lead successful, healthy and happy lives,” said Munsell.

According to the CDC, obese children and adolescents are the targets of systematic and early social discrimination, causing psychological stress and inhibited social and academic performance, all of which may even be carried into adulthood.

ARKids First chose to use Arkansas schools as a venue for this educational series to help children in at-risk school settings aware of healthy choices. These assemblies will include games, dancing, as well as prizes and educational information packets; all while learning the many benefits of exercise and healthy living.

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