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Coollest Summer Fitness Program:

Fit Family Challenge Gets Families Moving Together This Summer

San Antonio Sports launches 7th annual challenge with FREE D4 Heroes 5K

SAN ANTONIO (May 11, 2016) – Every summer since 2010, San Antonio Sports has provided families the chance to play, exercise and develop healthy habits through the Fit Family Challenge presented by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas. Councilman Rey Saldaña joined San Antonio Sports officials in challenging families to get active and learn about their health and fitness at the kickoff for the 2016 Fit Family Challenge at City Hall on May 11.

Organized by San Antonio Sports, the seventh annual Fit Family Challenge will offer free fitness activities and health screenings, as well as incentives to San Antonio families between May and August. Incentives consist of \$25,000 in cash and fitness prizes, including sports and movie tickets, \$1,000 drawings every three weeks at family-friendly Saturday Big Events, and a grand prize drawing at the end of the summer for a \$1,000 gift card.

A grant from the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation supports the free family fitness program aimed at motivating families to break away from a sedentary lifestyle, get out of the house and come together for fun, fitness-focused events.

“San Antonio Sports Fit Family Challenge has a track record in helping families get healthy together,” said Councilman Rey Saldaña. “District 4 is proud to be part of this program with our free D4 Heroes 5K launching it every summer. Both are free, fun and accessible to everyone.”

The San Antonio Sports Fit Family Challenge, presented by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, is comprised of four three-week sessions that run from May 16-August 13. It promotes a healthy lifestyle by encouraging people to make changes, such as integrating a walk into everyday routines and choosing water over sugary beverages and eating more fruits and vegetables. There are weekly free fitness events located throughout the city that include Zumba® for adults and teens, and fitness classes for children three-13 years of age.

Participants are asked to 1) exercise as a family, at least 60 minutes a day, 5 days a week, 2) make healthy food choices 3) keep a fitness journal through a tracking log that can be downloaded at fitfamilychallenge.com and 4) take a health screening four times over the summer. If they attend at least three weekly fitness events during any of the four sessions and

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take a health screening, they are eligible for a prize drawing of \$1,000 at that session's Big Event. They also earn cumulative points towards rewards including sports and movie tickets and \$1,000 gift cards.

The program is open to all families in Bexar County. However, it focuses its message in the ten zip codes in San Antonio that have the highest rates of diabetes and obesity (**zip codes listed below*). Within those zip codes are six school districts— San Antonio Independent School District, South San Antonio ISD, Harlandale ISD, Southside ISD, Northside ISD and Southwest ISD. In an effort to eliminate barriers to participation, the weekly events take place at schools in the target neighborhoods. A grant from the Baptist Health Foundation provides funds for faith-based outreach. New this year, Baptist Temple Church will serve as a weekly site. Additionally, San Antonio Sports is reaching out to churches and other faith communities near each site to invite their congregations to be a part of this free summer fitness program.

Approaching physical activity and healthy eating as a way of life increases your chances of success in making changes and sticking with them, says Russ Bookbinder, President and CEO of the nonprofit San Antonio Sports. "Our Fit Family Challenge program is designed to get the whole family involved. We know that being active, enjoying regular family meals and finding an activity that you enjoy are all keys to influencing behaviors that will reduce the risks associated with diabetes, cancer, obesity and a lifetime of low self-esteem. The Fit Family Challenge offers free fitness activities and health screenings, along with incentives that will keep families motivated throughout the summer."

Yvonne Hernandez has been participating in the Fit Family Challenge for four summers. She started because of health issues. "Fit Family Challenge has motivated me and has provided me with the resources to lead a healthy lifestyle," explains Hernandez. "Zumba has become part of my daily routine, an extension of my work day with a strong supportive crew with my friends and workout buddies, the Zumba Chicks. A quote I saw recently perfectly describes why I continue to participate in Fit Family Challenge activities: 'I work out because I love my body, not because I hate it.'"

More than 2,000 people have registered to run the Fit Family Challenge kickoff event, the D4 Heroes 5K, a free, chipped and timed race offered through the Fit Family Challenge on Saturday, May 14. The remaining sessions' Big Events are:

- June 4, D6 Fitness 5K at Gustafson Stadium
- June 25 D8 Get Healthy at Hardberger at Hardberger Park
- July 23 D3 Jump into Fitness at Harlandale Park
- August 13 Fit Family Challenge Finale, location TBD

Each Big Event will feature a fitness activity for families, a Kids Fit Zone and numerous community resources for families interested in leading healthy, active lifestyles.

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Weekly schedule (May 16-Aug. 13):

Every Monday:

- McAuliffe Middle School (SWISD) 5:30 p.m. (9390 SW Loop 410)
- Dwight Middle School (SSAISD) 5:45 p.m. (2454 W. Southcross Blvd.)

Every Tuesday:

- Rayburn Elementary (HISD) 5:45 p.m. (635 Rayburn Dr.)

Every Wednesday:

- Whittier Middle School (SAISD) 5:15 p.m. (2010 Edison Dr.)
- Linton Elementary School (NISD) 5:45 p.m. (2103 Oak Hill Rd.)
- Baptist Temple Church 5:45 p.m. (901 E. Drexel Ave.)

Every Thursday:

- A.C.E.S Early College High School Gym (SISD) 5:45 p.m. (1460 Martinez Losoya Rd.)

* Zip codes in San Antonio with the highest rates of diabetes and obesity: 78201, 78207, 78210, 78211, 78221, 78223, 78227, 78228, 78237 & 78242.

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About Fit Family Challenge

Fit Family Challenge, presented by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, is a 12-week summer program motivating San Antonio families to learn about and increase physical activity and healthy nutrition. Fit Family Challenge is a program conducted by San Antonio Sports, with funding from the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation, Baptist Health Foundation United Way, BBVA Compass Foundation, and Medtronic Foundation and participation from sponsors, area school districts and volunteers. Key sponsors include Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, Valero Energy Foundation, H-E-B, Community First Health Plans, Subway, Frost, CommuniCare Health Centers, Golds Gym and The San Antonio Orthopaedic Group. It is endorsed by the San Antonio Mayor's Fitness Council.

About San Antonio Sports

San Antonio Sports is a nonprofit organization whose mission is *to transform our community through the power of sport*. San Antonio Sports bids on and hosts premier sporting events such as NCAA® championships, which have generated a local economic impact of more than \$569 million. San Antonio Sports kids programs, including our *i play! afterschool* program, the University Health System Go!Kids Challenge™ and Kids Rock marathon training program, *annually* touch the lives of more than 150,000 children in San Antonio through sports training and fitness programs. Additionally, San Antonio Sports serves as a catalyst for the development of quality recreational and athletic facilities in our community, including SPARKs. To learn more, visit SanAntonioSports.org