



News

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2016 University Health System Go!Kids Challenge™ powered by San Antonio Sports Motivating Thousands of Kids to Be Active, Drink Water & Eat Their Fruits & Veggies

(Jan. 20, 2016) Run, jump, play. Be active every day! Drink water and eat your fruits and veggies! More than 135,000 elementary school students in 220 San Antonio-area schools will participate in a fun program designed to motivate elementary students to be physically active and make water their primary drink of choice. The [2016 University Health System Go!Kids Challenge™ powered by San Antonio Sports](#) got underway Jan.18. The goal of the six-week program, which takes place Jan. 18 through Feb.27 is to educate children about the importance of routine exercise and proper nutrition, which will help in the fight against childhood obesity. This is the 13th anniversary of the program.

Participants track their activity and healthy eating on a special log. If they do five fitness activities every week for six weeks, they will earn two complimentary tickets to SeaWorld San Antonio for Go!Kids Challenge Day on April 10. Activities include jumping rope, jumping jacks, playing sports, playing outside, running and walking, and push-ups.

“It is our mission to transform our community through the power of sport,” said Russ Bookbinder, President & CEO of San Antonio Sports. “Fitness is a big part of that. We want to motivate children to be active every day and embrace an active lifestyle. The Go!Kids Challenge helps children understand that fitness can be fun, and if it’s fun, it can become a daily habit.”

A kickoff press conference was held at Sky Harbour Elementary School on Wednesday, Jan. 20, with special guests including Southwest ISD Superintendent **Dr. Lloyd Verstuyft**, City Councilman **Rey Saldaña**, **12 time track All-American and four-time Big 12 indoor track champion Kendra Chambers**, and Southwest High School cheerleaders and drum line. Students performed a special fitness dance routine to “Uptown Funk.”

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“We encourage parents and guardians to do the University Health System Go!Kids Challenge with their kids, says Bookbinder. “We know that healthy active lifestyles are reinforced by children and parents. Kids motivate their parents to get out and play with them which strengthens family bonds. Parents who encourage their children to be active are great role models and allow them to see that fitness is an important family value.”

“We are happy to support the Go!Kids Challenge because it’s perfectly in line with our own mission to improve the health of our community,” said George B. Hernández Jr., president and CEO of University Health System. “Go!Kids Challenge is all about inspiring young people to become more active and healthier.”

"I enjoy speaking to students about the importance of leading active lifestyles, making healthy and balanced food choices as well as promoting the idea of drinking more water," says District 4 City Councilman Rey Saldaña who is an avid runner. “Demonstrating how students can assume active roles through their choices encourages them to lead healthier lives.”

The San Antonio Sports 2016 University Health System Go!Kids Challenge is sponsored by SeaWorld San Antonio, Mission Foods, H-E-B, Coca-Cola, Gold’s Gym, Frost, Community First Health Plans, Fox 29, CW 35 and News 4 San Antonio, The Mirza Trust, Mix 96.1 and Enterprise Holdings Foundation. It is endorsed by the Mayor’s Fitness Council.

For more information about the University Health System Go!Kids Challenge™ or San Antonio Sports, contact Carolyn Wheat at 210-820-2119 or cwheat@sanantonioposports.org.

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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 \$534 million. San Antonio Sports kids programs, including *i play! afterschool*, the Community Olympic Development Program, Go!Kids Challenge™ presented by University Health System and SUBWAY® Kids Rock marathon training program, *annually* touch the lives of more than 130,000 children. Additionally, San Antonio Sports serves as a catalyst for the development of quality recreational and athletic facilities in our community and manages SPARK, a program that turns school grounds into community park space. To learn more, visit SanAntonioSports.org.