



# A WORLD FIT FOR KIDS!

**Gold Medal Winner!**

CA Governor's Council Award for Outstanding Organization

## 2010-11 Evaluation Highlights

Following is a summary of key evaluation findings from survey and Fitnessgram® data collected in 2010-2011 for A World Fit for Kids! (WFIT) elementary afterschool participants and high school teen training/internship program participants. It also includes findings from a survey completed with the WFIT team members working at all the elementary, middle and high school sites as well as the administrative office.<sup>i</sup>

This year's findings span adults, teens and young children and help illustrate the effectiveness of WFIT's model, which is to support adults and teens to become healthy mentors for young people and thus create positive changes for all.

### Team Members

- The majority of WFIT team members (83%) made changes to their nutrition and/or physical activity habits since joining WFIT.<sup>ii</sup> More than three-quarters changed their nutrition habits and about two-thirds changed their fitness habits. For example, team members now eat more vegetables / greens, make healthier food choices when deciding what to eat, and drink more water. For activity changes, many added a new type of activity to what they usually do or increased the frequency with which they do their chosen activities.

*"I eat more fruits & veggies, and replaced some unhealthy snacks with WFIT recipes."*

*"I avoid junk food and I eat more veggies. Now that I know how things are made, I'd rather go healthy."*

*"I try to always have my heart rate up. I have healthy goals for myself now. I've taken up hiking and running with my dog."*

- Team members say WFIT helped them to make these changes through a number of ways including through information and training and by creating an environment that supports healthy choices. Many say they changed their own habits in order to be better role models.

*"The workshops really helped to open my eyes to new, fun ways of leading good workouts and teaching about better eating habits."*

*"If I tell kids to do something, I should practice what I teach. If not, they won't take it seriously."*

*"Being surrounded with this info has motivated me more to live a healthy lifestyle."*

### Teen Mentors in Motion<sup>SM</sup> High School Participants

- High school youth who attended WFIT's Teen Mentors in Motion<sup>SM</sup> (MiM) youth leadership training and internship program improved how often they finish their homework, how active they are in school & community activities, and how physically active they are. Close to half (49%) increased how many days a week they do aerobic capacity activities and muscle strengthening & toning.
- Teens described several skills they gained through WFIT including responsibility & patience, leadership and self-confidence as well as practical skills on how to work with children. They also described how they applied the skills and confidence they gained in WFIT to their school behavior. Teens said they are more likely to initiate participating and helping in class and improved how they make presentations, communicate with others, and manage their time.

*"I got to experience what I want to do in the future - something related with kids because I like helping them out."*

*"I learned how to be more active in class and to be more outspoken, taking leadership in my group."*

*"I have focus in my class, do all my work, and treat everyone good."*

2009-10 Update: MiM teens in last year's program were more likely to do regular aerobic & strengthening / toning exercises than indicated for the school district generally that same year. The *WFIT* survey shows that MiM 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade participants improved how often they exercise, so that by the Spring, 92% were doing aerobic activities and 85% were doing strength/toning exercises at least 3 days a week. While the comparison is not precise, the California Healthy Kids Survey for Los Angeles Unified 11<sup>th</sup> graders shows a much lower percentage being active that frequently, with 60% doing aerobic activity and 50% strength/toning exercises at least 3 of the past 7 days.

### Elementary Participants

- Elementary students improved their nutrition knowledge. For example, 60% could identify a healthy snack in the Fall and that percentage improved to 77% by the Spring.
- Elementary students' knowledge about fitness also improved, with more students knowing that children need 60 minutes of physical activity a day and that checking heart rate is how to tell if they are doing moderate-vigorous activity. Students returning to *WFIT* from last year were more likely than new participants to answer these correctly in the Fall, and the percentage answering these correctly further increased by Spring.
- The percentage of elementary students who engaged in moderate-vigorous activity increased between the start of the year and the end, with 59% saying they did an activity that made them sweat/breath hard in the Fall and 68% indicating this in the Spring.
- Elementary students said *WFIT* helped them to learn more about fitness and nutrition, especially about the connection between health and exercising/being active and choosing fruits & vegetables and healthy foods.
  - "I learned that you can run, play sports, or exercise to be healthy."*
  - "I learned that the heart pumps blood, so we need to eat healthy."*
  - "I learned how to make a healthy snack - to cut a banana, put peanut butter on it and eat it."*
- Two-thirds (69%) of *WFIT* 5<sup>th</sup> grade participants increased the percentage of Fitnessgram® tests in which they met the Healthy Fitness Zone (HFZ).
  - The percentage in the HFZ for Aerobic Capacity increased from 61% to 89%.
  - Participants also improved in the Strength measures, for example the percentage in the HFZ for curl-ups increased from 11% to 73% and for push-ups from 24% to 77%.

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<sup>i</sup> Data Sources: Team Spring Survey (83 respondents); 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Participant Fitness/Nutrition Fall-Spring Survey (206 Matched; 318 Spring); Fifth Grade Participant Fall-Spring Fitnessgram® Assessment (55 with at least 1 test at both times; 117 Spring); Teen Fit for Success Participant Pre-Post Survey (43 Matched Pre-Post; 58 Post)

<sup>ii</sup> Of those who did not make changes, almost all said it was due to practicing healthy habits before joining *WFIT*.