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Contact: Mamie Moore
YMCA of the USA
312-419-8325
mamie.moore@ymca.net

YMCA Supports White House's 'Let's Move' Campaign to Combat Childhood Obesity

Chicago, IL (February 11, 2010) — On behalf of the nation's 2,687 YMCAs, YMCA of the USA expresses its wholehearted commitment and support for the White House's nationwide campaign "Let's Move," an effort being led by First Lady Michelle Obama to fight childhood obesity.

"YMCAs are committed to building communities where all kids learn, grow and thrive," says Neil Nicoll, President and CEO of YMCA of the USA, "and we join the White House and community leaders to fight childhood obesity, an epidemic that does so much harm to our children."

Each day YMCAs help kids and families make healthy choices by mobilizing communities to encourage physical activity and improve healthy eating. As part of Y-USA's Healthier Communities Initiative, YMCAs have worked in 140 communities nationwide to:

- *Increase access to clean and safe parks and facilities so that more kids can have the opportunity to participate in physical activity*
- *Reduce health disparities, and increase access to fruits and vegetables in underserved areas through making community gardens and farmers' markets more accessible*
- Provide guidance and support to help families make healthy lifestyle changes
- Influence policies to ensure the requirement of sidewalks and countdown pedestrian signals in neighborhoods, and that school lunches include more fruits, vegetables and whole grain foods

YMCA of the USA and Eli Lilly have been working together to reduce childhood obesity through the YMCA Healthy Family Home initiative, which is based on the principle that families who support each other are more likely to make positive lifestyle behavior changes. YMCA Healthy Family Home, which provides free resources devoted to helping families adopt healthy behaviors through small sustainable changes, is featured on the "Let's Move" campaign web site, www.letsmove.gov.

Nationally, YMCAs serve more than 9 million kids through programs like childcare, afterschool, camps, youth leadership, youth sports and aquatics. Through this programming, young people are valued at the YMCA and are given the opportunity to learn responsibility, try new things, enhance leadership skills, and develop their unique abilities in order to become whole and healthy adults.

About YMCA of the USA

YMCA of the USA is the national resource office for the nation's 2,687 YMCAs, which serve 21 million people each year, including more than 9 million children under the age of 18. YMCAs respond to critical social needs by drawing on their collective strength as one of America's largest not-for-profit community service organizations. Through a variety of programs and services focused on the holistic development of children and youth, family strengthening, and health and well-being for all, YMCAs unite men, women and children of all ages, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels. From urban areas to small towns, YMCAs have proudly served America's communities for nearly 160 years by building healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Visit <http://www.ymca.net> to find your local YMCA.

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