

Contacts:

Charles Griggs, Duval Co. Health Dept.,
charles_griggs@doh.state.fl.us, (904) 253-1004
 Jacqui Lowe, ruckus.,
jacquelyn@createaruckus.com, (904) 302-5469



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTHY JACKSONVILLE CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION COALITION CELEBRATES DUVAL COUNTY'S HEALTH HEROES

JACKSONVILLE, FL - September 24, 2012- This September, in honor of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, the Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (HJCOPC) recognized 11 Duval County Health Heroes with a "Heart of the Community" Award at the inaugural *Celebrating Healthy Kids and Active Communities Awards Breakfast*.

The awards were presented to youth, adults and organizations that are affecting real and positive change by removing the barriers that stand between children, healthful food choices and physical activity.

"The real impact of these programs will be realized through improvements in our children's health," said Michael D. Aubin, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital and THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health. "Together, we will continue to succeed in creating a healthier community that enables our children to reach their full potential."

According to the latest Duval County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, one in four children ages 10 to 17 are overweight or obese. A 2009 report from United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association and Partnership for Prevention estimates that, by 2013, Florida residents will spend \$10 billion addressing obesity-related conditions unless changes are made now.

"No one child experiences the same journey to becoming overweight or obese," said Dr. Donald George, co-chair of the HJCOPC and division chief of pediatric gastroenterology at Nemours Children's Clinic, Jacksonville. "The award ceremony is an important milestone in our community because it highlights the work that citizens, business leaders and nonprofit organizations are doing to create change through advocacy, education and outreach programs."

Heart of the Community Award Winners

Community Leadership Awards

- Susan Burns, R.V. Daniels Elementary School
- Lori Boyer, City of Jacksonville
- Valerie Feinberg, Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida
- Barbara Merton and Marshall Butler Stockton Elementary School

Organizational Leadership Awards

- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation
- Early Learning Coalition of Duval County and Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.
- Sulzbacher Center
- St. Vincent's HealthCare

Youth Leadership Awards

- Deonshai Spivey, Biltmore Elementary School
- Mrs. Burns' Second-Grade Class (2011-2012 School Year)
- Empowerment Resources

About Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition

The Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (HJCOPC) is a public-private partnership, comprised of citizens, business leaders and community organizations devoted to reducing and preventing childhood obesity by establishing healthy environments for children and their families in Duval County. We work to create, support and implement efforts that address childhood obesity through advocacy, education, policy development, and environmental and cultural changes.

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