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***Snack It Up* Helps Out-Of-School-Time Programs Upgrade Their Snacks New Program from ChildObesity180 at Tufts University Helps to Combat Childhood Obesity**

[Boston, MA and Dallas, TX] – January 7, 2013: Children’s out-of-school-time programs in the Dallas area are getting healthier snacks this school year as part of the *Snack It Up* pilot program, which connects leaders from select out-of-school-time programs with grocery stores to expand access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The Kroger Co., one of the nation’s largest grocery retailers, is the first to sign on to the *Snack It Up* pilot program in its Atlanta and Dallas markets, and is providing product discounts to programs such as Pop Warner and 4-H. *Snack It Up* was created by [Healthy Kids Out of School](http://HealthyKidsOutofSchool.org), an initiative of ChildObesity180 at Tufts University, as part of an effort to develop innovative and collaborative approaches to preventing childhood obesity.

Obesity rates in the U.S. have more than doubled in children and tripled in adolescents in the past three decades. Tens of millions of children are enrolled in out-of-school activities, notably urban, rural, and low-income children who are at greater risk of childhood obesity and the poor health outcomes that follow. The *Snack It Up* program seeks to address childhood obesity by identifying out-of-school programs as a promising area for promoting healthy habits and encouraging grocery retailers to offer discounts on fresh produce to out-of-school-time programs.

“We developed *Snack It Up* in response to out-of-school-time program leaders telling us that fruits and vegetables were not easily accessible,” says Christina D. Economos, PhD, Vice Chair & Director of ChildObesity180, New Balance Chair in Childhood Nutrition, and Associate Professor at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University. “With the participation of Kroger and support from Newman’s Own Foundation, we have been able to help such programs provide healthier snack options for children while still staying within their budgets.”

Kroger is offering a five percent discount on select healthy snack items. “As a company, health and wellness is one of our key focus areas. We support programs and food manufacturers that promote healthy lifestyle choices. Kroger is thrilled to support the *Snack It Up* pilot program in the Dallas-Fort Worth area,” says Gary Huddleston, Director of Consumer Affairs, Kroger Southwest Division. “We realize *Snack It Up* will educate children and parents about how to make healthy choices at our stores that are affordable.”

With the *Snack It Up* pilot successfully underway, coaches, parents, and other leaders are praising the program. According to Elizabeth Thomas, a parent-volunteer for four Pop Warner teams in Arlington, Texas, “This program really influenced what I bought for the teams, and being part of it really helped open the kids’ eyes to healthier foods. The program got parents talking to kids about healthier options and about what healthy foods would energize them.”

Financial support from Newman’s Own Foundation is helping to make this partnership a reality. “We are pleased to support the *Snack It Up* program, which addresses challenging issues around nutrition,” says Lisa Walker, Managing Director of Newman’s Own Foundation. “This is a good example of an innovative program that can make a meaningful difference.”

Out-of-school-time leaders who are looking to develop similar partnerships in their own community can visit the Healthy Kids Hub website (www.HealthyKidsHub.org) “What’s New” page to get tips for inviting local grocery stores to engage in this effort.



About ChildObesity180

ChildObesity180, based at Tufts University, is an organization committed to cross-sector collaboration to reverse the trend of childhood obesity. Using an evidence-based approach and business-minded practices, ChildObesity180 is developing and carrying out innovative initiatives to prevent childhood obesity. ChildObesity180 is comprised of national leaders from the public, nonprofit, academic, and private sectors who use their reach and expertise to drive an integrated national effort. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The JPB Foundation are strategic funders.

Healthy Kids Out of School, an initiative of ChildObesity180, works with leaders around the country to promote three principles for healthy out-of-school time: Drink Right, Move More, and Snack Smart. The Healthy Kids Hub website (www.HealthyKidsHub.org) provides resources to support the implementation of these principles. Support for the *Snack It Up* program is provided by Newman's Own Foundation. Regional support for Healthy Kids Out of School is provided by the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation.

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