

Childhood Overweight

Contact: Claudia Johnson
503.266.1776 or 503.799.2220

Shaping America's Youth Challenges Americans Working to Reduce Childhood Overweight to Participate in Online Registry

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, Office of the U.S. Surgeon General join SAY in calling for unified effort to develop community-based solutions to improve childhood nutrition and physical inactivity

Washington D.C. (November 1, 2006)—Shaping America's Youth® (SAY), the national cross-sector initiative directed at improving nutrition and exercise in America's children, announced today that it is beginning its second survey of programs addressing overweight, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity among today's youth. The survey is available at www.shapingamericasyouth.org.

David McCarron, MD, SAY executive director, challenged "all Americans involved in community programs targeting this health crisis in our young people to register their programs and complete the online SAY survey," in his presentation today at the Department of Health and Human Services' *National Prevention Summit: Prevention, Preparedness, and Promotion*, in Washington DC. National health organizations and initiatives addressing childhood overweight have utilized SAY's first survey of programs, released in September 2004, in their efforts to combat the national childhood obesity crisis.

"The 2,500 programs registered with SAY's online database have not only made an invaluable impact on the nation's effort to combat childhood obesity at the community level. As recently noted by the Institute of Medicine it has provided a critical benchmark of our nation's effectiveness at solving this crisis," said Dr McCarron. "Data from the survey are essential to unifying America's commitment to improving the nutrition and physical activity habits of our children and adolescents."

The Institute of Medicine recently used and evaluated data from the SAY registry to develop its report *Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity: How Do We Measure Up?* The report examines the progress made by obesity prevention initiatives in the US over the past two years, and outlines the next steps for evaluating policies and programs that support obesity prevention goals.

"The SAY program registry has provided an important benchmark as to where our nation's current programmatic efforts stand in terms of effectively addressing childhood obesity," said William H. Dietz, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "We need a complete picture of what's being done by whom and where so that we

can begin to identify effective methods to address this growing epidemic. We urge programs to complete the SAY survey if they have not already done so.”

The easy-to-use Web portal www.shapingamericasyouth.org includes the searchable registry of more than 1,100 childhood overweight intervention programs submitted by schools and community/youth organizations, healthcare providers, and communications, public advocacy and government agencies nationwide. As a centralized resource, the portal also includes information on meetings, news, publications and funding opportunities. By registering their programs, organizations can provide universal access to information that will help fight obesity.

SAY Announces Next Town Meeting®

In addition to its survey and program registry, SAY has also convened town meetings comprising more than 1600 Americans to identify what individuals, families, businesses, government, schools, medical and health institutions and other sectors of the community can do to improve childhood physical activity and nutrition. Town meetings have been held in Memphis (January 2006) and Dallas (April 2006) as the first cities in a national series of interactive, high-tech conferences aimed at developing *The People's Plan: A Community-based Plan of Action to Improve Childhood Nutrition and Activity*. Today, SAY executives announced that town meetings will be held in Philadelphia, Chicago, and at least two cities in California as well as in the state of West Virginia in first half of 2007.

Bringing together the viewpoints and ideas of individuals, public, private and non-profit sectors of society throughout the country, SAY is promoting the dialogue across all boundaries necessary for America to take action to slow and ultimately reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. The ultimate result will be the development of a Community-Based Plan of Action which will be shared with national and local leaders to assist in the development of strategies to solve this crisis.

About Shaping America's Youth®

Shaping America's Youth is an initiative of Shaping America's Health: Association for Weight Management and Obesity Prevention, an organization that seeks to prevent excess weight and obesity and facilitate scientific understanding of weight management. For more information about this organization, visit www.obesityprevention.org or call (703) 253-4808. SAY was launched in 2003 in coordination with the Office of the US Surgeon General, US Department of Health and Human Services, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the University of California at Davis Nutrition Department, and the American Diabetes Association. SAY's corporate partners include Academic Network, Cadbury Schweppes, Campbell Soup Company, CIGNA, ConAgra Foods, FedEx Corporation, McNeil Nutritionals, a Johnson & Johnson company, and Nike. The American Academy of Family Physicians and the American College of Sports Medicine recently joined the SAY initiative.