

School Wellness Weekly, 04.20.2012

Be a Presidential Champion

Last month, English teacher and CHAMPS track team coach [Shawanda Weems](#) of The Institute for Environmental Learning (PS 15 in the Bronx) was one of ten citizens nationwide to be recognized by the White House as a [Let's Move! Physical Activity Champion of Change](#). With [New York Road Runners](#), Ms. Weems started building a running program in 2004, when she was diagnosed with diabetes. Now, through strong Young Runners and Mighty Milers programs, she shows more than 350 elementary and middle schools students how running based activities can establish long lasting, healthy habits. She aptly summarizes the motivation for schools and communities to prioritize health and wellness programs: "We want the students making healthier choices when they're younger, so they don't have to make hard choices when they're adults."

Like Ms. Weems, you too can be a champion in First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Physical Activity campaign by getting your school involved in the [Presidential Active Lifestyle Award \(PALA+\)](#) challenge. US Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius has challenged the ten largest school districts in the country to focus on students and families by encouraging them to eat healthier and move more. Organized into a six week challenge, from 5/7-6/15, NYC schools can support, promote, and track daily physical activity goals and weekly healthy eating goals among students and families, with results to be compiled and shared for school-wide recognition. Learn how to sign up your school by emailing [Kathleen Walker](#).

Opportunities and Recognition

- **Summer Scholarship for Rising Senior Girls:** NYRR's Run for the Future program is a community service and leadership development opportunity for high school girls entering their senior year with little to no prior running experience and aspirations of attending college. Participants will receive a \$1,000 college scholarship for successful completion of the 8-week program and at least 80% attendance at all practices. Download an [application \(with 4/30 deadline\) here](#), or request a flier for your students by emailing YouthPrograms@nyrr.org.
- **Brooklyn Based Mental Health Opportunity:** Interborough Child Development is expanding Mental Health Screenings to interested Brooklyn middle and elementary schools in zip codes 11229, 11211, 11203, and 11236. In-school screenings, with parental permission, may help identify emotional challenges such as ADHD, Depression, Anxiety, and other forms of psychological stress. If needed, Interborough contacts parents to discuss a plan of action for further assessment or counseling at their agency. For more information, contact [Scott Bloom](#).
- **Bronx Based School Health & Wellness Event:** The Bronx Borough President's Office and Bronx Health REACH will sponsor an expo for school-based staff, parents, and the community, featuring school information and programs addressing health, nutrition, and physical activity. The expo is 5/3 from 2:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. at Bronx UFT, 2500 Halsey Street, in the Bronx. For more information or to RSVP, [click here](#).

Wellness in the News

- [Income Inequality and Teenage Pregnancy](#) (The NY Times, 4/20)
- [New Research Shows a Healthy Recess Can Reduce Bullying, Expand Learning Time in Schools](#) (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 4/16)
- [Why French Parents Are Superior \(in One Way\)](#) (The NY Times, 4/13)
- [Waist Size Helps Predict Heart Risk in Teenagers](#) (The NY Times, 4/6)
- [Only Half of Preschoolers Play Outside with Parents Daily, Study Finds](#) (Education Week, 4/2)

Additional Resources

- **Learn how to Address Public Safety and Childhood Obesity:** Register now for Leadership for Healthy Communities' 4/26 webinar (from 2:00-3:00 p.m.) [Making the Connection: Linking Policies to Improve Public Safety with Preventing Childhood Obesity](#), or read the full report [here](#).
- **Check out the [Let's Move in School April Toolkit](#):** This month has a special focus on [recess and play](#).
- **[NYRR Youth Jamboree](#):** Experience free running fun for K-8 students 4/28 at Icahn Stadium on Randall's Island.

- **Chill Out in Central Park** with more than 500 practitioners at World Tai Chi Day 4/28 at 10 am in Central Park's East Meadow.

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