



For Immediate Release

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**LOCAL PRESCHOOL AHEAD OF THE CURVE
ON FIGHTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY**

A School for the Mind and Body Supports Obama Administration's "Let's Move" Initiative, but Wonders What Took the Federal Government So Long

Clarkston, Mich. (Mar. 10, 2010) — According to a 2007 *New England Journal of Medicine* study, the number of overweight children ages 6 to 19 has tripled since 1970. The problem has become so severe across the United States of America that President Barack Obama recently signed a memorandum establishing a federal task force to combat childhood obesity. In support of the task force, First Lady Michelle Obama introduced the "Let's Move" campaign, urging parents to make subtle changes in their children's eating and exercise patterns to promote healthy living.

While Nanci Canine, founder and director of A School for the Mind and Body (SFMB) in Clarkston, applauds the Obama administration for their initiative, she wonders why it has taken the federal government this long to tackle childhood obesity and if "Let's Move" is aggressive enough in making a substantial difference.

"I'm thrilled that childhood obesity finally appears to have captured the attention of the federal government, but with about one-third of the country's children overweight or obese we need to be much more vigilant about this problem," states Canine. "The time to reach children about the importance of healthy living is at their earliest stages of development, when they are in preschool. For this reason, when we opened our doors five years ago we implemented a comprehensive health, nutrition and exercise curriculum that focuses on teaching the total child."

Believing that teaching children their ABC's and 123's isn't enough, SFMB places a special emphasis on nutrition to develop well-rounded, healthy preschool students. At the preschool, youngsters learn to make sound eating choices by understanding what is in their foods as well as the caloric intake of those foods.

Teaching children how to feed their bodies is critical to promoting healthy living, but SFMB also stresses the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy body. Each day, students participate in an exercise unit that relates to the school's concept of the week, and once a month the students work with an exercise and fitness expert, Jacklyn Rzepecki. Additionally, the school has implemented SFMB Fit Families, a program to encourage healthy lifestyles at home as well as in school. Both students and parents have embraced the program.

“We’re truly impressed with the academic segment as well as the importance placed on developing well-rounded, healthy preschoolers at A School for the Mind and Body” states Kristi Hehl, a Lake Orion resident who sends her 4-year-old and 3-year-old sons to the Clarkston preschool.

“It’s important to our family to make healthy choices when it comes to eating and exercising,” Hehl continues. “A School for the Mind and Body has really created a program that grows the total child into a conscientious and physically strong young adult. We couldn’t find a better fit for our family”

As the country waits for the results of President Obama’s task force on childhood obesity, Canine hopes this is just the tip of the iceberg in raising children who are not only book smart, but health smart as well.

“The earlier we teach children to eat and exercise properly, the sooner we’ll see a decline in those frightening childhood obesity statistics,” states Canine. “At A School for the Mind and Body, we will continue to offer our preschool students the tools they need to become healthy adults.”

About A School for the Mind and Body

Believing that parents everywhere are looking for an educational environment that will encourage the same life skills and values taught at home, A School for the Mind and Body (SFMB) in Clarkston/Lake Orion offers preschool programs for children ages 2-4 that are dedicated to intellectual, social and personal development. They are a Character Education based preschool with a strong emphasis on nutrition and exercise. In addition to its preschool program, SFMB offers an academically-focused Young 5’s and Kindergarten program and provides tutoring services to meet the specific needs of its students. For more information, visit www.schoolforthemindandbody.com or call 248-814-7100.

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