

Our Vision: Healthy People in Healthy Communities
Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties

For Immediate Release: Monday, April 18, 2022
For more information contact: Michele Bever, PhD, MPH, Executive Director
Lauren Shackelford, KFND Coordinator
402-462-6211 / 1-877-238-7595

.....

Nebraska Kids Fitness and Nutrition Day to be Held April 19 in Hastings

Fourth-grade students from Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties will learn about health and wellness at the 16th Annual Nebraska Kids Fitness & Nutrition Day (NKFND), set for Tuesday, April 19th, at the YMCA of Hastings. The day's activities take place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the 18th Street Hastings YMCA. Approximately 320 students will attend this year's event.

The event usually takes place every October, but was cancelled during 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 considerations. Lauren Shackelford, local NKFND coordinator for the South Heartland District Health Department, said that the department is excited to be able to hold this event again. "Fourth-graders are a good age to work with because they are beginning to develop lifelong habits that will inevitably affect their behavior in the future. Helping children learn to eat healthy and be active every day means they have a better shot at being successful both in school and in life."

When the students arrive, they will be divided into two groups, with one group on the basketball courts for physical activities and the second group congregating on the tennis courts to participate in nutrition education activities. The students work in their respective stations and then trade places after a nutritious sack lunch.

The fourteen Physical Activity stations include Step Aerobics, Jump Rope games, and Kick-Boxing. Nutrition stations will teach the youth about energy balance, understanding food labels, how to make healthy snacks, MyPlate, and the importance of food safety and hand-washing.

Shackelford said that the overall purpose of the event is to demonstrate to both students and educators how physical activity and nutrition work together to maintain health. "We know that obesity is not only a national epidemic but also an enormous problem right here in central Nebraska. Our goal is to give the students the tools to enable them to make healthy decisions for themselves - which will hopefully lead to a healthier generation."

Participating schools include St. Michaels, Adams Central, Sandy Creek, Sutton, Hawthorne, Silver Lake, Watson, Lawrence Nelson, Harvard and Red Cloud.

Local sponsors and planners of the event are the South Heartland District Health Department, Hastings Family YMCA and UNL/Adams County Extension Nutrition Education Program. The NKFND program was developed and funded, in part, by the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the Nebraska Beef Council.

##