



SOUTHWEST PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

Dougherty County Health Department

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Kids on the Move youth fun run/walk set for July 24 at ASU track

On July 24, youngsters from 2 to 16 will have a chance to win prizes while experiencing healthy activities, say organizers of the fifth annual Kids on the Move 5K walk-run and 1 mile fun walk.

Registration for the event, scheduled at Albany State University's Hampton Smith Sports Complex Track Field, is from 7:30 a.m.-8 a.m. Activities will be from 8-10 a.m.

A release form must be completed and signed by parents for children to participate.

"Kids on the Move began in 2005 as a way to engage youngsters in a more active and healthy lifestyle," said Health Educator Debra Willingham of the Dougherty County Health Department's Adolescent Health and Youth Development Center. "July is National Recreation and Parks Month, so this event seemed like a great way to observe it."

"Our country is experiencing an epidemic of obesity, and unfortunately, the problem of obesity is not limited to adults. Childhood obesity is a significant Public Health concern in Georgia," said Southwest Health District Health Director Dr. Jacqueline Grant. "One of the major factors behind childhood obesity is lack of physical activity."

Grant said obese children are at greater risk of conditions such as sleep apnea, bone and joint problems and poor self-esteem. They are also more likely than children of normal weight to become overweight or obese adults, and therefore more at risk for associated adult health problems, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, several types of cancer and osteoarthritis, she added.

"Healthy lifestyle habits, including healthy eating and physical activity, can lower the risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases," said Grant. "That's why events like Kids on the Move are so important."

Willingham said first place winners will receive bicycles provided by Youth Becoming Healthy, Inc., while Phoebe Putney Network of Trust is donating t-shirts for participants.

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Sponsors include the Dougherty County Health Department, the Albany Recreation and Parks Department, Phoebe Putney Network of Trust, Albany State University, Youth Becoming Healthy, Inc., Southwest Health District, World Vision and the Albany Sickle Cell Foundation.

For more information about Kids on the Move, call 229-430-1989 or 229-430-1992.

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