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NFL Network Launches 2009 National *Keep Gym in School* Campaign at New York City Middle School; Effort Will Give More U.S. Students Access to Quality Physical Education

NFL Network expanding 'Keep Gym in School' program in year two as latest studies show youth facing alarming rates of obesity and related diseases

Public can nominate middle schools for \$1,000 *Keep Gym in School* grants at www.keeptogyminschool.com

NEW YORK, NY – Responding to warnings that record rates of childhood obesity and related diseases could mean the next generation will be the first in 200 years to have shorter life-spans than their parents, NFL Network today kicked off the second year of *Keep Gym in School* at PS/IS 126 Manhattan Academy of Technology on Manhattan's Lower East Side. As part of the league's NFL PLAY 60 youth health and fitness campaign, *Keep Gym in School* is NFL Network's comprehensive national program to boost fitness and Physical Education in America's middle schools.

"It's more important than ever to give every student the opportunity to participate in quality physical education," said Dena Kaplan, Senior Vice President of Marketing for NFL Network. "NFL Network is dedicated to the long-term success of physical education. That's why we are expanding the reach of our successful *Keep Gym in School* program to help more kids have access to physical activity in school."

In the 2009-2010 school-year, NFL Network is expanding its reach and will work directly with more than 150 schools across the country -- more than double the number of schools it served in the inaugural year of the program -- through school adoptions, grants, and in-school fitness programs. In partnership with the New York Giants, Baltimore Ravens, New England Patriots and Chicago Bears, *Keep Gym in School* will refurbish Physical Education programs and host NFL minicamps at four select middle schools. In addition, NFL Network is inviting the public to nominate their local middle schools for one of ten \$1,000 *Keep Gym in School* grants at www.keeptogyminschool.com; and is engaging middle school students from across the country in the NFL Network In-School Fitness Program.



NFL Network is expanding its *Keep Gym in School* efforts in response to the latest childhood obesity statistics. Nationwide, childhood obesity has more than tripled since 1980. According to a new study released in 2009 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Trust for America's Health (TAH), the percentage of obese and overweight children is at or above 30% in 30 U.S. states.

At the same time, schools have cut back on Physical Education requirements leaving children less active during the school day than they were in previous years. A joint study by the American Heart Association (AHA) and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) found that the percentage of students who attend daily PE dropped from 42% in 1991 to 28% in 2003. The same experts found that fewer than 8% of U.S. middle schools provide daily physical education for the entire school year.

In *Keep Gym in School's* inaugural year, NFL Network's Jamie Dukes, Scott Hanson, Solomon Wilcotts and Hall of Famer Rod Woodson joined the NFC Champion Arizona Cardinals, Kansas City Chiefs, New Orleans Saints, and Washington Redskins with support of standout players from each organization including "Man of the Year" Kurt Warner and Antwaan Randle El. The program provided 3,000 students with refurbished fields, facilities and faculty for PE; 300 PE teachers with training and state-of-the-art lesson plans to educate 60,000 students; and reached millions of fans with public service announcements encouraging people to get involved in the cause.

During the 2009-2010 school-year, *Keep Gym in School* will help even more schools expand and improve PE with the following:

- **National School Adoption Grants.** Middle schools throughout the country can compete for ten \$1,000 grants that will be awarded in the spring of 2010 to fund physical education program improvements. The public can nominate their local middle school at <http://www.keepgyminschool.com>
- **School Adoptions & Minicamps.** Once again, four deserving middle schools across the country will receive \$50,000 grants to help refurbish facilities, fund physical education instructors and add or update equipment. NFL Network hosts a pep rally and minicamp at each adopted school with on-air talent and players to motivate students.
- **NFL Network In-School Fitness Program.** Students from every middle school in the adopted schools' districts will compete in an In-School Fitness Program to assess student fitness, encourage students to stay active and allow teachers to monitor student progress throughout the year.
- **Continuing Support Grants.** Middle schools from the four districts that participated in last year's adoption program will again participate in the In-School Fitness Program, with the most-improved school in each district winning a \$2,500 grant to continue providing quality PE.
- **Public Service Campaign.** *Keep Gym in School* Public Service Announcements (PSAs) featuring NFL players and raising awareness about the importance of Physical Education will be broadcast by NFL Network and its network distribution partners.
- **Lesson Plans.** *Keep Gym in School* developed in-school instructional material in partnership with National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) to get kids excited about PE. Football-inspired lesson plans and activity guides are available to PE instructors for free at <http://www.keepgyminschool.com/educators.html>.
- **Keep Gym in School National Honors at NFL Draft Week 2010.** NFL Network will host a national honors event in New York City during NFL Draft Week to recognize teachers and top-performing students from adopted school districts.

For more information about *Keep Gym in School*, visit www.KeepGymInSchool.com.

About NFL Network:

NFL Network airs seven days a week, 24 hours a day on a year-round basis and is the only television network fully dedicated to the NFL and the sport of football. For more information, log on to www.nfl.com/nflnetwork. NFL.com is the exclusive Internet home of NFL Network.

About NFL PLAY 60:

Designed to tackle childhood obesity, NFL PLAY 60 brings together the NFL's long-standing commitment to health and fitness with partner organizations like Kellogg. NFL PLAY 60 is also implemented locally, as part of the NFL's in-school, after-school and team-based programs. For more information, visit www.NFLRUSH.com.

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