



Press Release

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Houston Parks and Recreation Department Receives \$10,000 Grant for Local Out-of-School Time Programs

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (N.R.P.A.), has received a \$10,000 grant to support its out-of-schooltime healthy food access and nutritional literacy programs. The gift is part of a \$2.3 million grant N.R.P.A. received from the Walmart Foundation to support out-of-schooltime programs in 80 park and recreation agencies. The purpose of the grant is to:

- Increase the number of healthy meals children in low-income communities receive through the Summer Food Service Program (S.F.S.P.) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (C.A.C.F.P.) during out-of-school times;
- Provide evidence-based, age-appropriate nutrition literacy to children that create behavior change by teaching the importance of healthy eating;
- Implement nutrition and physical activity standards that increase access to healthier foods and increase opportunities for physical activity; and
- Promote meal and program efficiencies that will reduce costs, maximize existing resources, decrease food waste, and lead to more sustainable meal programs.

H.P.A.R.D.'s grant will help increase access to healthy foods and improve opportunities for physical activity. The department will also receive additional support for meals provided through U.S.D.A. after school and summer food programs, as well as nutritional literacy materials, to help ensure life-long healthy habits for Houston's youth.

This grant supports N.R.P.A.'s Commit to Health campaign, which encourages the implementation and evaluation of Healthy Eating, Physical Activity (H.E.P.A.) standards in park and recreation sites across the country. N.R.P.A.'s goal is to have at least 2,000 participating sites in five years. Within the first year of the program, 486 sites have pledged to Commit to Health and 51,382 children now have improved access to healthy foods and increased opportunities for physical activity.

According to Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry Campaign, one in five children in America struggles with hunger. Over 21 million low-income children receive free or reduced-cost meals during the school year to help them meet their daily nutrition needs, but only 3 million of these children are getting these meals during the summer. During summer months, these children may not have access to quality, healthy food to help them grow, making H.P.A.R.D.'s work during out-of-school times that much more critical.

"The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of our city's youth," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "Our After School Meal and Summer Food Service Programs are having a positive effect on many young lives, and we are very grateful to the N.R.P.A. and the Walmart Foundation for this grant."

"Thanks to a successful first year with Commit to Health and the Walmart Foundation, 51,382 children now have improved access to healthy foods and physical activity," said Barbara Tulipane, President and C.E.O. of N.R.P.A. "Parks and recreation are proving their critical role in the health of their communities and we can't wait to see the impact this year's grants will have on fostering life-long healthy habits in children across the country."

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,851 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.

The National Recreation and Park Association (N.R.P.A.) is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation, and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 47,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, N.R.P.A. encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.NRPA.org. For digital access to N.R.P.A.'s flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.