Fuel Up to Play 60 Kicks Off a Healthy New School Year

‘Fins, Bucs, Jags and 3,000 Florida Schools Team Up For Youth Wellness

Orlando, Fla. (PRWEB) September 12, 2011 -- The White House has declared September National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, a reminder to all Americans that instilling physical activity and healthy eating habits among our nation’s youth is more important than ever before. The month also kicks off the third season of Fuel Up To Play 60 and a new school year of motivating students to take charge of their well-being.

Fuel Up to Play 60 is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program that encourages consuming nutrient-rich foods (low-fat and fat-free dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains) and achieving 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Launched by the National Dairy Council (NDC) and the NFL in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), it empowers youth to take action for their own health by providing an opportunity to implement long-term, positive changes for themselves and their schools.

“We need to provide today’s youth with opportunities to own their health decisions and access fun ways to live a healthy lifestyle,” said Jean Ragalie, RD, president of the National Dairy Council. “Fuel Up to Play 60 does just that, connecting students with tangible ways to take a stand against childhood obesity.” Examples include students working directly with their schools to have breakfast offered in new and fun ways or starting walking clubs.

Parents can support Fuel Up to Play 60’s mission by making their children healthy lunches and encouraging exercise throughout the school week. Other tips for busy moms and dads include:

• Don’t Get Hung Up: Don’t allow yourself to be frustrated by trying to create the perfect meal for your kids – as long as you work towards balance. Even the occasional chocolate chip cookie works…especially when served with milk!

• Create a Game Plan: Prepare in advance, plan out the weekly lunches and snack needs for your kids’ busy schedules. With just a few minutes of planning and preparing on Sunday, a well-balanced lunch is only minutes away.

• Make Good Food…the Easy Way: Food does not have to be homemade to be nutritious. Feel free to reach for healthy packaged options like string cheese, yogurt, baby carrots or an apple.

• Have Fun: Making meals together can be a fun activity to teach kids about the value of building a colorful and nutritious meal for themselves, and letting them co-own their own health and wellness.

• Prioritize Family Time: Now that you have cleared up some time in your schedule, plan activities that help you and your child work toward achieving at least 60 minutes daily of physical activity – from taking a walk after dinner to playing catch or dancing in the backyard.

“The National Football League is strongly committed to helping the next generation of youth achieve healthier lifestyles. Entering its fifth year, our NFL PLAY 60 campaign encourages kids to get active and play 60 minutes a day. We are pleased that Fuel Up to Play 60 extends that message to include healthy eating. Through Fuel Up to Play 60, we help young people to discover that healthy habits can be both fun and empowering.”
said NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell.

The Fuel Up to Play 60 program provides participating schools with the resources they need to implement the program including in-school collateral materials, planning tools and grant funding. Together with the involvement of multiple supporting health and nutrition organizations – Action for Healthy Kids, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Dietetic Association, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Medical Association and School Nutrition Association – the program reaches more than 70,000 schools across the country with plans to expand its reach and impact in the years to come.

To learn more about Fuel Up to Play 60 and to join the movement, visit www.FuelUpToPlay60.com

About Fuel Up to Play 60
Launched by the National Dairy Council (NDC) and NFL, with additional partnership support from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the program encourages youth to consume nutrient-rich foods (low-fat and fat-free dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains) and achieve 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

About Dairy Council of Florida
The Dairy Council of Florida works with schools, health professionals and others to build a positive health and wellness environment for dairy as a nutrient-rich food. The Council is one of 18 member organizations of the United Dairy Industry Association and carries out the programs of Dairy Management, Inc., the umbrella organization based in Chicago. For more information, call (800) 516-4443 or visit www.floridamilk.com.

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