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Tampa Y's Healthy Kids Day® Aims to Help Kids Exercise Minds and Bodies

Tampa, FL (April 8, 2013) – On Saturday, April 27, the Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA is celebrating [YMCA's Healthy Kids Day](#)® with a free community event that encourages kids and families in the Tampa Bay area to get moving and learning. Healthy Kids Day, the Y's national initiative to improve families' health and well-being, takes place at 1,900 Ys and kick-starts healthier behaviors now and throughout the summer, a critical out-of-school time for children's health.

Many U.S. children do not get the daily recommended hours of physical activity and reading, and daily amounts of healthy foods. According to the latest findings of the YMCA's Family Health Snapshot – a survey of parents that gauges their children's activity levels during the school year – **only 19-percent** of children get 60 minutes of physical activity, **only 17-percent** read books for fun, and **only 12-percent** eat at least eight fruits and vegetables daily.

"At the Tampa Y, we know parents struggle to keep their kids physically and intellectually active every day. We want to help ensure fewer kids are at risk of childhood obesity and more kids excel in school," said Lalita Llerena, communications director for the Tampa Y. "YMCA's Healthy Kids Day will get kids moving and learning while also helping families get a jump on creating a healthier summer, and ultimately a healthier future."

Research shows without access to out-of-school physical and learning activities, kids fall behind academically and gain weight twice as fast during summer than the school year. On April 27th, YMCA's Healthy Kids Day will help parents begin thinking early about what their kids need to grow and achieve all summer long.

The [Tampa Y's Healthy Kids Day](#) takes place at **Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park on 600 N. Ashley Drive from 10am-1pm on Saturday, April 27th**. The free event features fun, active play and educational activities, such as bounce houses, fitness demonstrations, arts & crafts, water safety tips, healthy snacks and sports giveaways. Back by popular demand is the Y's annual [local mascot challenge](#). Local media will not want to miss the unique opportunity to catch well-known mascots competing in an entertaining dance-off. Local mascots competing this year include the Tampa Bay Rays' Raymond, Tampa Bay Lightning's Thunderbug, Tampa Yankees' Blue, Clearwater Threshers' Phinley, Plato the Publix dinosaur, Chuck E. Cheese, Sparky the Fire Dog, Y Guy and Y Gal, plus many others! Attendees can also expect special appearances by professional athletes.

YMCA's Healthy Kids Day is supported by our local media partner, Publix, which is committed to encouraging kids to lead a healthy lifestyle.

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About the Y

The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA is one of the area's leading nonprofits, strengthening Hillsborough and East Pasco communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the Association, 19 facilities engage more than 142,000 men, women and children — regardless of age, income or background — to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve our community's health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. The Tampa Y has long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. www.tampaymca.org