PRESS RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard today announced a citywide wellness initiative aimed at encouraging healthy lifestyles for kids and families who stay active and eat nutritiously. More than a dozen community partners joined Mayor Ballard in launching Get Fit Indy! Mayor’s Ballard’s Kids Fitness Challenge.

“I challenge all children living in Indianapolis to be active 60 minutes a day and eat healthy foods. Maintaining an active lifestyle and eating from the five food groups are great ways to be healthy,” said Mayor Ballard. “You can do this by participating in organized programs like summer day camps or creating recreational activities of your own such as playing in a park or riding your bike.”

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Recognizing the community-wide need to emphasize healthy, fun alternatives to sedentary behavior, Mayor Ballard launched Get Fit Indy! to promote healthy activities and encourage Indianapolis youth to become part of a fit generation. Partners operating successful programs aimed at encouraging physical activity and healthy eating will deliver the Get Fit Indy! challenge.

“Too often we, as adults, pass our unhealthy habits to our children. We can no longer afford to do this. A household and a community that emphasizes healthy eating and physical activity are more likely to have healthier children,” said Virginia A. Caine, M.D., director, Marion County Health Department.

The initiative’s Web site, www.indy.gov/kidsfitnesschallenge, will highlight community partners’ programs, activities, and events throughout the summer, and newsletters distributed by Get Fit Indy! partners will promote the challenge. Get Fit Indy! community partners include:

- Purdue Extension
- St. Vincent Health
- Clarian Health
- Fit City
- Marion County Health Department
- IndyGo
- Indianapolis Indians
- YMCA of Greater Indianapolis
- Indiana Pacers and Indiana Fever
- Butler University
- Indianapolis Public Schools
- Mayor’s Office of Education and Innovation
- City of Indianapolis Office of Sustainability
- Indy Parks & Recreation
- Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library
- Keep Indianapolis Beautiful
- Westview Healthplex

Today’s announcement at Sahm Park Aquatic Center showcased highlights of the $6.5 million in improvements the City of Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation is investing in city pools, including a new three-story enclosed slide and two new spray features at Sahm Park. Mayor Ballard also announced that Indy Parks’ Summer Food Service Program will serve more than 160,000 nutritious meals each summer.

“Being active is just one part of a healthy lifestyle for our children,” said Dr. Jeff Sperring, chief medical officer for Riley Hospital for Children. “Healthy eating is also critically important, and parents in particular need to pay attention to food labels and serving sizes, so they know what’s going into their children’s bodies.”

Upcoming Get Fit Indy! Mayor Ballard’s Kids Fitness Challenge events include the Second Annual Mayor’s Bike Ride at 10 a.m. June 5 at Allisonville Elementary School and the Indy Parks Summer Kickoff event at 11 a.m. June 9 at White River State Park’s Celebration Plaza, followed by First Lady of Indianapolis Winnie Ballard’s “Walk with Winnie” at the Downtown Canal at noon.

For more information on accepting the Get Fit Indy! challenge or becoming involved with the initiative, visit www.indy.gov/kidsfitnesschallenge or call (317) 327-3219. Then, visit the Get Fit Indy community page on
Facebook to let us know you’ve accepted the challenge and share your story of commitment to health and wellness.

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