Youth Fit Fest Addresses Health and Wellness

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In 2011, a public health indicators report ranked Grady County as 124 out of 159 Georgia counties with a high percentage of obese adults. Local chronic disease levels also outpaced both state and national averages in areas such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer rates.

To address these critical needs, the Grady County Archway Partnership Executive Committee formed a Community Health and Wellness issue work group. Stakeholders included public and private healthcare providers, school nutrition staff, physical education teachers, clinic nurses, chiropractors, massage therapists, fitness trainers, public library staff, recreation department staff, Extension staff, weight loss coaches, Boys & Girls Club representatives, health department staff, and state agency representatives.

From many possible strategies to positively impact the community, the group chose to create a Youth Fit Fest – Family Health & Wellness Expo. This event was envisioned to address childhood obesity and promote healthy lifestyles prior to adulthood through wellness education, physical activity, nutritional information, and health screenings.

For the second consecutive year, this kick-off to summer featured free family-oriented activities and information for both youth and their parents. The event showcased kid-friendly work-out activities with local trainers, hands-on fitness demonstrations, kid’s games, group Zumba and Yoga classes, nutrition information, health screenings, and more. Screenings included blood pressure, Body Mass Index (BMI), heart rate, spinal chiropractic, and blood glucose levels.

Over 20 local, regional, state, and national health and wellness related groups and organizations come together to offer this annual event to the community.

“We are very proud of our role in the community as a resource for health and wellness information as well as fitness classes. It is wonderful to see how an initiative such as the Archway Partnership brings so many different providers together for the benefit of the youth in Grady County. This event really shines the light on the fact that we all have a role to play in our community wellbeing,” said Librarian Pamela Grigg, Roddenbery Memorial Library.

Advancing Community Priorities: Based on the community’s need to address alarming health indicators and trends, the Grady County Archway Partnership formed a Community Health and Wellness issue work group. The work group created a youth fitness festival, now in its second year, to begin the process to improve the community’s overall health and wellness.