

A new front gets moving on the war against obesity

As a member of a community coalition whose main purpose is to address the obesity epidemic, I want to thank *The Californian* for the recent editorial on obesity. Combating this epidemic through public information and education is imperative.

Get Moving Kern: A Nutrition and Physical Activity Community Coalition was formed in December 2004 when three existing groups merged.

The Nutrition Task Force of the American Cancer Society, the Kern County Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition and the Bakersfield Vision 20/20 Obesity Prevention Committee were all working on variations of nutrition and physical activity promotion in Kern County.

As one coalition, Get Moving Kern has set a goal to educate the community and promote nutritious eating and appropriate physical activity to combat the growing overweight/obesity problem in Kern County.

The mission of Get Moving Kern is to enhance the health of children and adults of Kern County utilizing community participation and education to foster healthy eating habits, appropriate physical activity and positive lifestyle changes.

The public is invited and encouraged to get involved in our efforts to promote healthy eating and physical activity. We have a new Web page: www.getmovingkern.org.

It is our hope that it can become a clearinghouse for parents, children, professionals and the public in locating needed information on nutrition and physical activity. It is in its infant stage and growing.

Get Moving Kern is open to suggestions from the public on how to make it better in order to serve our county's needs.

An event that is being sponsored by Get Moving Kern at the Kern County Fair is a Healthy Snack contest. We encourage any 11- to 14-year-old to enter the contest. Information can be found in the Kern County fair



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booklet that will be distributed to all residents.

In the spring of 2006, Get Moving Kern is planning a walking event during "TV Turnoff" week. If anyone is interested in helping Get Moving Kern organize the event, or wants to

participate, please give us a call.

Questions regarding our coalition, the web page or upcoming events can contact me at 868-0247. Get Moving Kern also has a speakers bureau and members are available to come to your meeting or event.

Let's all get moving Kern!

Kathy Van Reusen is a health educator for the Kern County Department of Health and a member of the Get Moving Kern Steering Committee. Community Voices is an expanded commentary that may contain up to 500 words. The Californian reserves the right to reprint commentaries in all formats, including on its Web page.