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**National Association for
Sport and Physical Education**
an association of the American Alliance for Health,
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

NASPE Sets the Standard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**Head Start Centers Celebrate Inaugural Take It Outside! Week, October 19-23, 2009**

RESTON, VA, September 3, 2009 – To increase outdoor play while celebrating the environment, early childhood education and care centers are invited to join Head Start Centers across the country in participating in the Inaugural *Take It Outside! Week*, October 19 – 23, 2009. Presented by Head Start Body Start National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play (HSBS), the national initiative is sponsored by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR). Its purpose is to get children outside, connect with the natural world, and increase physical activity.

First Lady Michelle Obama has been invited to join in the festivities. NASPE/AAPAR members and HSBS Master Trainers Clersida Garcia, Meg Greiner, Kristi Mally, Rae Pica, and Steve Stork will join hundreds of other NASPE and AAPAR members who will visit Head Start Centers around the country and participate that week in Take It Outside! activities.

According to Center Director Karin Spencer, Ed.D., "Outdoor play is associated with greater amounts of physical activity in children, and research has shown that opportunities for whole body exercise has a long lasting influence as preschool physical activity tracks throughout childhood.

"Unfortunately children today spend less time playing outdoors than any previous generation," added Spencer. "We want to help early childhood education and care staff discover the benefits of outdoor play across developmental domains and learn about the features of high quality outdoor play spaces that promote movement opportunities for children of all ability levels. When adults model and teach the importance of physical activity, young children are more likely to adopt a lifetime of healthful practices and behaviors."

HSBS will provide programs with everything they need to celebrate *Take It Outside! Week* including activity ideas, tips for facilitating play, and suggestions for enhancing the environment. From *Books That Move You* to *15 Simple Ways to Get Moving*, the activities are designed to increase physical activity for young children and promote family involvement. Head Start Centers serve over 900,000 children and their families. For a wonderful array of free resources about *Take It Outside! Week*, visit www.headstartbodystart.org.

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) recommends that children get a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity every day. To help early childhood programs establish and maintain movement as an integral part of the overall learning process, NASPE has recently published these two new resources. *Appropriate Practices in Movement Programs for Children Ages 3-5* and *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children From Birth to Age 5*. To order, call 1-800-321-0789, or order online at www.naspeinfo.org.

Head Start Body Start National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play (HSBS) is a project of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR), which are associations of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD). Funding for HSBS is provided by the Office of Head Start (OHS), Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose of HSBS is to increase physical activity, outdoor play and healthy eating among Head Start and Early Head Start children, families and staff. HSBS is assisting Head Start programs in creating healthy learning environments, both in and outside the classroom, through structured and unstructured physical activity that leads to the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of young children and reduces obesity and its associated costs.

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