



## Communications & Marketing Update

March 18, 2004

### From the Active for Life National Program Office

#### *New Active for Life® Web site is online*

The National Program Office is pleased to announce that the newly redesigned AFL Web site is online at [www.activeforlife.info](http://www.activeforlife.info). Among the features of the Web site are expanded sections that include detailed descriptions of each of the grantees with links to their organizations' Web site(s), a larger resource section with information about funding opportunities and upcoming meetings and events, and more tools and tips.



If you have suggestions for the Web or would like to have information posted, contact Brigid Sanner at 214-553-0621 or e-mail [Brigid@sannerandcompany.com](mailto:Brigid@sannerandcompany.com).

#### *AARP research on physical activity*

AARP, in partnership with The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has conducted extensive research into the health knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of people age 50 and over, about physical activity. This work has been part of AARP's *Active for Life*® Social Marketing project. Findings indicate that knowledge levels about factors that contribute to health are very high, yet healthy behaviors are far from commonplace.

If there is an overall message, it is that most 50 plus Americans - regardless of race, gender, income, education level, or where they live - recognize the value of physical activity and are not only aware of the value but are taking active steps to preserve and improve their own health and fitness. But, for a variety of reasons, significant numbers are not.

After synthesizing data from all the studies, AARP identified several major themes that may help guide program development and research in this important area:

1. **Lack of knowledge is not the primary challenge**; indeed knowledge levels are high but acting upon knowledge is at low levels. Many barriers, real and perceived, deter people from action.



2. **Imagery and tone are very important in motivating people to be physically active.** People 50 and older are motivated by images they can relate to, not by elite senior athletes that make them feel discouraged or overwhelmed. For a variety of reasons, a “no pain, no gain” message often used to motivate younger audiences to exercise is not motivating to this age group. Similarly, a confrontational or critical “get off the couch” approach is not effective.
3. **People view increasing physical activity as an extremely difficult, even daunting task,** and need affirmation of their struggle and acknowledgement for any amount of effort.
4. **A very large majority want more information** about how to exercise safely, stay motivated, and set realistic goals.
5. **Exercise activities that can be done at home are appealing** to more than half of those who want to be more active. Walking is the preferred exercise of a large majority, and for many it is their only form of exercise.
6. **Community services and programs help people 50 and older engage in physical activity.** Although a majority prefers exercising at home, 30 percent of people take advantage of physical activity offerings in the community.
7. **The terms “physical activity” and “exercise” convey different things to different people.**
8. **Physicians and other health professionals can play a critical role** in the decision to be physically active.
9. **Being physically active in the community as part of a daily routine is a relic of the past.** Many public health officials and experts recognize the importance of community design that facilitates and encourages “walkability.” Many consumers, however, do not make the connection between physical activity-friendly environmental features and their level of physical activity, and in fact they cannot imagine a life or community that includes walking to achieve daily errands. This reflects a need for basic education, unlike the health benefits of physical activity, which are well known among consumers 50 and over.

For more information, see the full article on the Active for Life Web site at [www.activeforlife.info](http://www.activeforlife.info).

### ***Upcoming meetings of interest***

- On April 15, 2004, the *American Society on Aging* will host a special program on health disparities and older adults as part of the ASA-NCOA Joint Conference in San Francisco (April 13-17). Bringing together the aging network and public health systems, this special program will address the crucial goals of Healthy People 2010 to increase quality and years of healthy life and eliminate health disparities. For information, see <http://www.agingconference.org/jc04/getsp.cfm?spid=7735&confid=5687>.

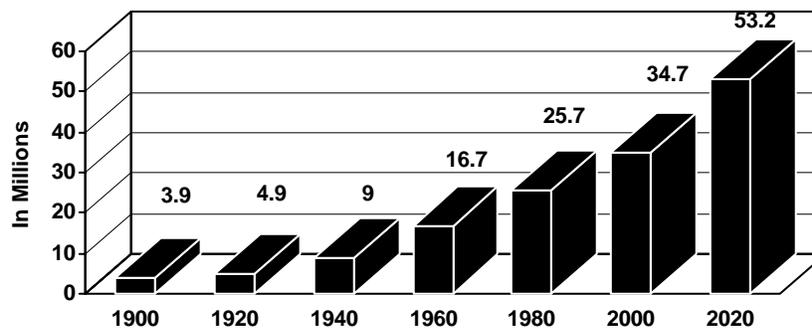


- 2004 National Association for Health and Fitness (NAHF) Conference: Translating Research to Practice, April 12-14, 2004, Orlando, Florida. Sponsored by the *National Association for Health and Fitness*, this conference will provide the audience with evidence-based strategies to reduce chronic disease and assist community coalitions to work more effectively and more efficiently. For more information, go to [www.physicalfitness.org](http://www.physicalfitness.org).



## Marketing Facts, Figures and Ideas

- “During January 2004, the total U.S. Internet population was 152.4 million users, who spent an average of 28.9 hours online,” notes the February 18 issue of *DIRECTnewsline*. January Internet use was up five percent from December. Tax, political, diet and travel sites ranked highest among the top sites.
- Among people age 75 years or older, 30 percent report difficulty with stairs, 40 percent cannot walk one-half mile, and 7 percent need assistance to walk. (source: Mayo Clinic Geriatric Medicine)
- Dramatic illustration of the growth in the age 60 and older population between 1900 and 2020 is provided in the following graph from the *Administration on Aging*.



### *Music can play an important role in engaging adults in activity*

According to the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association’s (IHRSA) *Trends Insight*, the five most popular music types among Baby Boomers and Matures are:

Baby Boomers (Age 39-57)	Matures (Age 58 and older)
1. Oldies (43%)	1. Oldies (52%)
2. Classic Rock (43%)	2. Country/Western (44%)
3. Country/Western (33%)	3. Easy Listening (32%)
4. Rock (30%)	4. Classical (28%)
5. Easy Listening (26%)	5. Big Band/Swing (25%)

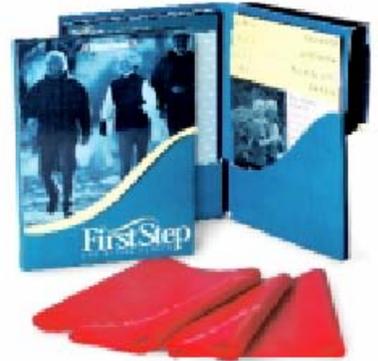


## **Tips, Tactics & Tools**

### ***Active Aging Toolkit: Promoting Physical Activity in Older Adults***

This program was developed to help healthcare providers prescribe physical activity programs for older adults. The Toolkit was developed by researchers and clinicians involved in the National Blueprint Project and was supported by member organizations including the American College of Sports Medicine, National Center on Physical Activity and Disability, American Geriatrics Society, American Physical Therapy Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, and Thera-Band® Products.

The Web site, [www.FirstStepToActiveHealth.com](http://www.FirstStepToActiveHealth.com), provides patients and providers with information on increasing physical activity in older adults.



### ***Finding services for seniors***

Assist Guide Inc. and the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) have formed a national partnership to help seniors and individuals with disabilities and service organizations, find out about services available to them. The partnership ties Assist Guide's technology for secure data storage and electronic forms with NCOA's tools to help people find benefit programs available to them. Together, the partners believe they can help people move swiftly and easily from simply finding benefits to actually applying for those benefits. For more information, see [www.assistguide.com](http://www.assistguide.com).

### ***Dealing with fear of failure***

Fear of failure stops many people from exercising or trying new activities notes *IDEAFit.com*. According to David E. Conroy, Ph.D., assistant professor of kinesiology and director of the sport psychology lab at Pennsylvania State University, people may specifically fear the shame and embarrassment that come with failure. The thought of not doing well at exercise may make them anxious that they are not as competent as they believed and lower their self-esteem. For motivational tips, see [www.ideafit.com/backnews1b.htm](http://www.ideafit.com/backnews1b.htm).

### ***Book offers help recruiting under-represented groups into studies***

A new book, published by the Gerontological Society of America (GSA), addresses a broad range of considerations in the recruitment and retention of historically under-represented groups, including identification of barriers to participation in research and strategies for overcoming them in clinical, health services and survey research.

The book, *The Science of Inclusion: Recruiting and Retaining Racial and Ethnic Elders in Health Research*, edited by Leslie Curry and James Jackson, was supported by a grant from the National Institute on Aging. It is available for \$20 at <http://www.geron.org/inclusion.htm>.

## ***Checklist to boost your confidence when dealing with the media***



“Dealing with the media can be intimidating. But if you understand journalists' objectives, the fear disappears and you can recognize media management as an opportunity to tell your organization's story,” says Al Rothstein of *MeetingsNet* ([www.meetingsnet.com](http://www.meetingsnet.com)).

- One of the first questions to ask a reporter is, “What is your deadline?”
- Look at each contact with the media as an opportunity.
- Release information to the media quickly and accurately. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so and try to find it.
- Be as open as possible. This will help develop a long-term relationship.
- Return reporters' calls promptly, preferably within 30 minutes.
- Show concern for the reporter's questions.
- Make efforts to refer the reporter to the source where they
- can get the information needed.
- If you can't release information, explain and document why.
- Don't pit one local station or newspaper against another.
- Let your media contact know about positive stories.



### ***In the News***

## ***Even small increases in physical activity may prevent weight gain***

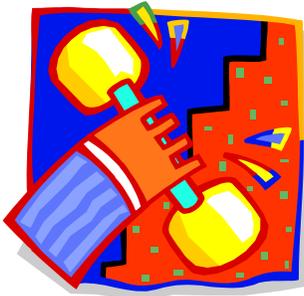
Forget 10-mile runs and excruciating aerobics sessions at the gym - even small increases in a person's physical activity may prevent weight gain in most people, according to a study of 6,000 adults. Researchers studied 1997-2001 physical activity data among some 3,000 men and 3,000 women. A daily 15-minute walk would be enough to improve the overall health of the population, according to the study. But 30 minutes of moderate or brisk walking or 60 minutes of slow walking is required for weight control. The study's authors are using the data to promote brisk walking among city residents as a means to achieve better health across a broad population.

## ***Inactivity and poor diet account for more than 16 percent of deaths***

About half of all deaths in the U.S. can be attributed to largely preventable behaviors and exposures, with tobacco use and poor diet/physical inactivity accounting for the majority of preventable deaths, according to a study in the March 10 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*. Ali H. Molded, Ph.D., and colleagues from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conducted a study to identify and quantify the leading causes of death in the United States. They found that in the year 2000 the leading causes of death were tobacco (435,000 deaths; 18.1 percent of total U.S. deaths), poor diet and physical inactivity (400,000 deaths; 16.6 percent of total U.S. deaths), and alcohol consumption (85,000 deaths; 3.5 percent of total U.S. deaths).

“The rapid increase in the prevalence of overweight people means that this proportion is likely to increase substantially in the next few years. Our findings indicate that interventions to prevent and increase cessation of smoking, improve diet, and increase physical activity must become much higher priorities in the public health and health care systems,” say CDC researchers.

## ***Small percentages of older adults meet CDC strength training goals***



Only 12 percent of persons aged 65-74 years and 10 percent of persons aged  $\geq 75$  years meet strength-training or resistant exercise goals, and women are less likely than men to meet goals, according to a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analysis of the 2001 *National Health Interview Survey* (NHIS). The findings underscore the need for programs that encourage older adults to incorporate strength training into their lives along with regular physical activity.

According to the CDC, in order to increase strength training among older adults, programs should address multiple factors, including:

- Increasing awareness of fitness benefits,
- Affordability,
- Physical limitations,
- Accessibility (e.g., transportation), and
- Fear of injury.

“Strength or resistance training enables adults to improve their overall health and fitness by increasing muscular strength, endurance and bone density and by improving their insulin sensitivity and glucose metabolism,” CDC reports in the January 23 *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

To view the entire article, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5302a1.htm>.

## ***Regular exercise is one of the keys to healthy living***

According to a study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, and reported on *CNN Headline News* (February 20), new research suggests physical activity may be significant for people to stay independent longer as they age. Over a period of 14 years, researchers looked at 229 women whose ages averaged 74 at the beginning of the study. The researchers found those women who were most

active, in terms of sports or leisure activity, were most likely to be living independently nearly a decade and a half later - which would mean that many of the participants were in their mid-to late 80s by then.

### ***Fitness regimen as simple as brisk walks reap greater focus***



Researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign used functional magnetic resonance imaging to measure changes in brain activity in adults ranging in age from 58 to 78 before and after a six-month program of aerobic exercise. The study was conducted and led by Arthur F. Kramer, a professor of psychology and researcher at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology at Illinois. The team identified specific functional differences in the brain that changed with improved aerobic fitness. These changes allowed researchers to predict improvements in performance on a decision-making task.

Participants of the aerobic-exercise intervention reduced their level of behavioral conflict in completing a computer-based task by 11 percent from pre-exercise levels, while the control subjects who performed stretching and toning activities achieved a statistically insignificant decrease of two percent.

The study appeared in the February 16-20, 2004 *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences PNAS Online Early Edition*.



### **Grants and available resources**

#### ***Funding available to implement “You Can! Steps to Healthier Aging”***

The National Policy and Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging at Florida International University, with support from the Administration on Aging, announces the availability of funds to locally implement *You Can! Steps to Healthier Aging*, a nutrition and physical activity program for older adults.

Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs are eligible to participate in this multi-center study for the first year award cycle. Approximately \$100,000 is available to fund 8 to 10 awards with a maximum of \$10,000 each. Awards will be made for a project period of 9 months. **Applications must be mailed to the National Policy and Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging with a postmark deadline of April 2, 2004.** Applicants will be notified of award decisions by April 30, 2004.

Details regarding the application, content, requirements, submission process, and review are available at <http://www.fiu.edu/~nutreldr>.

For further information, contact Nancy Wellman, [Nancy.Wellman@fiu.edu](mailto:Nancy.Wellman@fiu.edu) or Dian Weddle, [Dian.Weddle@fiu.edu](mailto:Dian.Weddle@fiu.edu) or the National Policy and Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging.

### ***Public Welfare Foundation***

Letters of inquiry are being accepted for grants from the Public Welfare Foundation. The foundation makes grants in the areas of community and economic development, criminal justice, disadvantaged elderly people and youths, environment, health, human rights, population and technology assistance. Most grants range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and may be for general operating support, particularly at smaller organizations, or for a specific project that is consistent with the foundation's mission and programs.

For additional information, visit [www.publicwelfare.org](http://www.publicwelfare.org).

### ***Foundation grant giving down***

According to the *Foundation Center's* new report, *Foundation Giving Trends: Update on Funding Priorities*, most fields - from the arts, to education, to human services - received generally consistent shares of grant dollars. Nonetheless, in a sample of over 1,000 of the largest private and community foundations, giving decreased five percent between 2001 and 2002. Funding for programs targeted to the economically disadvantaged captured a record-high share of grant dollars for the first time since 1990. Foundations in the sample directed about two-fifths of grant dollars and nearly half of grants to benefit specified population groups in 2002. Among specified beneficiaries, the economically disadvantaged ranked first by share of overall grant dollar commitments - just overtaking children and youth for the first time (16.7 percent vs. 16.4 percent).

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