



TEEN PROGRAM IS A SUMMER SUCCESS!

LIFESTYLE FAMILY FITNESS LEADS THE PACK

G Geoff Dyer began a Teen Fitness Membership campaign in 2005, before launching Teen Fitness Connection in his clubs last year. Now, in year two of the Teen Fitness Connection, Geoff and his 55 **Lifestyle Family Fitness** centers are ready to see this program go global!

"We have always been committed to fighting teenage obesity," said Geoff Dyer, Lifestyles' Founder. "Our objective has always been to get teens off the couch and introduce them to fitness. Now, we have a chance of seeing this program really take hold.

"With the full support of **IHRSA (International**

Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association) this year we can expect a majority of clubs nationwide to join in, offering free memberships to teens in nearly every major metropolitan area. That's the kind of saturation that will make a huge impact.

"If each participating club can get a dozen kids interested in fitness, or in taking up a sport, and these kids take that excitement back to school in the fall, this program could grow exponentially. As we grow, so will the number and type of locations, until the entire fitness industry worldwide is actively reaching out to the teenagers in their community."



Special Programs for Teens

As in years prior, Lifestyle clubs will cater new summer programs for the teens. Their popular *BodyJam*® classes are always being updated with new music, and the hour-long dance-based workouts are laced with cool hip-hop moves. A variety of personal trainers in each of the clubs will also be offering special classes and “camps” for teens interested in weight loss and/or sports performance.

Most importantly, there will be plenty of variety so teens can discover that there’s a lot more fun to fitness than simply running on a treadmill or bouncing on giant ball.

Over the past decade, obesity rates among teenagers have skyrocketed to record levels. According to the Center for Disease Control’s National Health and Nutrition Examinations Survey, the number of obese adolescents in the U.S. has increased more than 70% from just ten years ago.

A teenager is considered obese when they reach the 95th percentile of the Body Mass Index chart. The BMI combines height and weight to determine mass. BMI is considered the most accurate obesity measurement.

Sad Side Effects

Overweight teenagers are more likely to become obese adults. They are also at a higher risk for diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and sleep apnea.

“Obesity has roughly the same association with chronic health conditions as does twenty years’ aging,

which greatly exceeds the associations of smoking or problem drinking,” said Roland Sturm, Sr. Economist, RAND Corporation. The CDC estimates that the medical cost of obesity in the U.S. is more than \$75 billion.

The rise in adolescent obesity can be linked to newer lifestyle habits, which include parents keeping kids indoors more due to rising crime rates. Other factors include increased portion sizes, ease and availability of fast foods, drinking sugary beverages and excessive time spent watching television or computer gaming.

Recently much has been made of computerized fitness programs, but like most games, it’s been found that kids and adults abandon these programs. There is nothing to match the inspiration that trained fitness professionals can bring in helping people begin, and stick with, a program aimed at better health.

If you’d like to learn more about teen obesity and ways you can join the fight, or if you’d like to sign up your club, or find a participating club, go to www.TeenFitnessConnection.org. The program is available nationwide to teens between the ages 13-17 (some clubs include up to 19 years.)

Geoff Dyer founded Lifestyle Family Fitness in 1982 in Lakeland, Florida, later branching out into Ohio. A tireless promoter and dedicated fitness professional, Geoff was awarded the **Dale S. Dibble Distinguished Services Award** last year by IHRSA, the largest trade association for the health and fitness industry. Geoff was the seventh-ever recipient of the award in its 27-year history. **TFC**