



# NEWS RELEASE

## Defense Commissary Agency

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‘Let’s Move!’ helps families tackle childhood obesity

*By Lt. Col. Karen E. Hawkins,  
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**FORT LEE, Va.** – Making healthy choices for children and families is getting easier with the newly released “Let’s Move!” campaign. Nearly 20 percent of children and teens in Department of Defense families are considered obese. Across the nation, the numbers are even greater as one child in three is overweight.

To help address this issue, Let’s Move! provides a coordinated effort that involves families, schools, private industry and the government. You are encouraged to join First Lady Michelle Obama and others in this campaign to tackle the challenge of childhood obesity. Let’s Move! is committed to solving the childhood obesity epidemic within a generation through supporting parents; providing healthier food in schools; helping children to be more physically active; and making healthy, affordable food available across the nation.

### **Obese children may become obese adults**

Overweight children and adolescents are more likely to have risk factors associated with heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and Type 2 diabetes. Obese children and adolescents also are more likely to become obese as adults. According to the Centers for Disease Control, one study found that about 80 percent of children who were overweight at ages 10 to 15 were obese adults at age 25. Another study found that 25 percent of obese adults were overweight as children. This study also found that if a child is overweight by age 8, obesity in adulthood is likely to be more severe.

### **Let’s Move! is helping parents**

The Food and Drug Administration is developing and providing guidance for retailers and manufacturers to include new nutritionally sound and consumer-friendly, front-of-package labeling.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, along with members of the medical community, will educate doctors and nurses across the country about obesity. Doctors will regularly monitor your child's body mass index and educate you about healthy eating habits and physical activity.

To help families make healthier food and physical activity choices, U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to revamp the food pyramid. The Web site: <http://www.MyPyramid.gov>, will make available several different tools to put the Dietary Guidelines into practice.

### **Let's Move! is helping schools**

During the next school year, the USDA will work with schools and the private sector to double the number of schools that meet the Healthier U.S. Schools Challenge Program and add 1,000 schools each year for the next two years. The program includes standards for food quality at schools, participation in meal programs, physical activity, and nutrition education. It also provides recognition for schools that meet these standards.

To help meet the goal of increasing the number of schools that meet the challenge, major school food suppliers have agreed to meet the Institute of Medicine's recommendations within five years to decrease the amount of sugar, fat and salt in school meals; increase whole grains; and double the amount of produce they serve within 10 years.

### **Let's Move! with physical activity**

Children need 60 minutes of active and vigorous play every day to grow up to a healthy weight category, according to the Centers for Disease Control and other resources.

The Presidential Active Lifestyle Award is provided through the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. This challenge for children and adults is to build healthy habits by committing to regular physical activity five days a week, for six weeks. The council plans to double the number of children in the 2010 to 2011 school year who earn a Presidential Active Lifestyle Award by engaging in regular physical activity.

### **Let's Move! is helping provide access to healthy, affordable food**

As many as 6.5 million children live in areas that do not have adequate access to a supermarket. These communities – where access to affordable, quality and nutritious foods is

limited – are known as food deserts and can be found on the USDA’s new interactive Food Atlas. So, Let’s Move! is working to ensure that all families have access to healthy, affordable food in their communities.

### **Coming this spring**

As part of the national campaign, Let’s Move! will look for tools and strategies to help increase physical activity and help increase access to healthy, affordable food throughout the nation.

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian’s Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay’s Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the *Commissary Connection*.

**- DeCA-**

**About DeCA:** *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,300 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America’s military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*