



Charlie Crist
Governor

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State Surgeon General

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

January 28, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***200 Students to be Trained by “Kidz Advocates” at the Kick-Off Event
“Kidz Bite Back” to Take on Big Fat Industries and Learn
About Moderation and Healthy Eating Habits***

Who: 200 fourth and fifth graders from Gulfport Elementary School
Kidz Bite Back Student Advocates (will be training)

VIP guests: Michael Aubin, Administrator of St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital
Julie Ryczek, a member of the Governor’s Council on physical activity
Dr. Clayton Wilcox, Superintendent, Pinellas County Schools
Doug Holt, M.D., Director, Hillsborough County Health Department
Ronalda Hobson, MSPH, ARNP Assistant Director, Pinellas County Health Department
Paulette Thompson, D.O., Director of Clinical Services, Pinellas County Health Department

What: ***Kidz Bite Back*** is a peer-to-peer campaign for fourth and fifth graders, teaching them about food marketing manipulation by large companies that stand to make billions nationwide through product sales. Kidz Advocates, who are the peer educators, were chosen from fourth and fifth grade classrooms to lead and share the ***Kidz Bite Back*** message in their classrooms. Kidz Advocates will train 200 of their classmates in the deceptive marketing strategies of the Big Fat Industries. Kidz Advocates will teach their classmates the importance of making healthy choices and moderation in eating habits. Students are trained in “Big Fat Industries 101” and “Couch Potato Companies 101,” which educate them about how these organizations target and take advantage of kids. Invited speakers and sponsors will speak afterwards.

When: Friday, January 25, 2008 – 9:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Where: Gulfport Elementary School – 2014 52nd St. South, Gulfport, Florida

Background:

- The Big Fat Industries™ are the fast food, soft drink and “junk food” companies that target children with billions of dollars of advertising. These industries are a large part of the obesity epidemic facing our nation..
- Today’s generation of children is expected to have a shorter life span than its parents – this is for the first time in 100 years.
- One in three children born after 2000 will develop diabetes unless more people start eating less and exercising more.
- Since 1974, the number of overweight or obese children has increased 258 percent – to 15.5 percent of children in the United States.
- In Tampa Bay, 16 schools are participating in the ***Kidz Bite Back*** – eight in Pinellas and eight in Hillsborough. Kidz Advocates were chosen from fourth and fifth grade classrooms to lead and share the ***Kidz Bite Back*** message in their classrooms.

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