

For information, call Marty Lipp: 917-774-8159

Harlem Children's Zone Holds Third Annual Olympics to Promote Children's Health and Well-being

August 9th – In order to bolster its efforts at keeping kids in Harlem healthy, the Harlem Children's Zone, Lehman Brothers and Polo Ralph Lauren are holding an agency-wide Olympics tournament on August 9th and 10th at the armory at 216 Fort Washington Avenue (at 168th Street) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“Harlem has some of the worst rates in the city for obesity, asthma and diabetes,” said HCZ President and CEO Geoffrey Canada. “The Olympics is one of the ways our agency is getting our kids to be more physically fit and to understand how they can improve their own health.”

Approximately 1,000 kids, from pre-kindergarten to high school age, will participate in track and field events, including dashes, hurdles, shot put, jumps and relay races. Children will get medals, ribbons and “bragging rights” for their programs.

In addition, there will be several booths set up to educate children and parents about various health topics. The booths will be run by Harlem Children's Zone program sites and Cornell University Cooperative Extension, as well as by the Harlem Children's Health Project (HCHP). The HCHP staff will set up interactive activities where children can learn about health topics including asthma, obesity and hygiene. The HCHP staff will also work with city Emergency Medical Technicians to assist in case of accident or injury. HCHP is a comprehensive health program housed in the HCZ Community Center building and is a collaboration among The Children's Health Fund, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health and Harlem Children's Zone, Inc.

Volunteers from Polo Ralph Lauren will help coordinate the events on the first day of competition, and volunteers from Lehman Brothers will help on the second day.

The Olympics is part of multi-pronged effort of Harlem Children's Zone to reduce obesity among children and families in Harlem. The agency offer healthy cooking classes for children and adults, as well as running a monthly Farmers Market where families can get 30-40 pounds of fresh vegetables and fruits at a drastically reduced price.

Harlem Children's Zone, Inc., is a non-profit organization that has been based in Harlem for over 30 years. Through a network of education, social-service and community-building programs, the agency works to improve the lives of children and families in Harlem.