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## **NFL CHARITIES AWARDS \$1.8 MILLION TO THE COOPER INSTITUTE'S FITNESSGRAM**

### **New Partnership Adds FITNESSGRAM Assessment Tool To NFL PLAY 60 In-School Outreach**

NFL Charities, the charitable foundation of the National Football League, has awarded a three-year, \$1.8 million grant to The Cooper Institute to support youth health and prevent childhood obesity as part of NFL PLAY 60, it was announced today.

The grant will go to The Cooper Institute's FITNESSGRAM® program, a physical fitness assessment tool measuring student health. NFL PLAY 60 FITNESSGRAM will be made available free of charge to 1,120 schools throughout each of the 32 NFL markets. Data will be collected from student fitness assessments over the course of three years to form a youth longitudinal study tracking health-related fitness results and analyzing how best to intervene. The resulting data will be provided to local, state, and national policy makers.

FITNESSGRAM measures overall health through six tests looking at aerobic capacity, body composition, muscular endurance, strength and flexibility. Results, based on age and gender, are available in a report that physical education teachers can use to educate parents and students and encourage healthy behaviors. As part of the partnership between NFL Charities and The Cooper Institute, the PLAY 60 message will be included in all FITNESSGRAM materials, currently used in 85,000 schools.

"We are pleased to work with a respected institution like The Cooper Institute on youth fitness, a cause that is important to us at NFL Charities," said **ALEXIA GALLAGHER**, Director of NFL Charities. "The FITNESSGRAM is an important element of our NFL PLAY 60 initiative."

"We are honored to team up with NFL PLAY 60," added **KENNETH H. COOPER, M.D., M.P.H.**, "father of aerobics" and founder of The Cooper Institute in Dallas. "Our studies have shown that, overall, fit and healthy students are more successful in school. Together with schools and parents we can be part of the solution in an effort to that may help shape healthy bodies and minds, simply by increasing physical activity."

Designed to tackle childhood obesity, NFL PLAY 60 brings together the NFL's long-standing commitment to health and fitness with partner organizations. The program challenges youth to become physically active for at least 60 minutes each day. PLAY 60 is also implemented locally, as part of the NFL's in-school, after-school and team-based programs.

Results from two major 2009 studies of more than 2.4 million public school students in Texas and 1.1 million students within the New York City Department of Education show an association between higher physical fitness scores and higher academic test scores among students.

For more information, visit [www.NFLPlay60Fitnessgram.com](http://www.NFLPlay60Fitnessgram.com).

#### **About NFL Charities**

Formed in 1973, NFL Charities is a nonprofit organization that enables the league to contribute collectively to charitable causes on a national level. NFL Charities, which has approved more than \$120 million in grants to more than 600 different organizations, approves grants annually to support sports-related medical research, youth health programs, and the charitable work of current and retired NFL players

**About FITNESSGRAM**

FITNESSGRAM, released nationally in 1982 by The Cooper Institute and now in its 9<sup>th</sup> edition, was created to increase parental awareness of children's fitness levels by developing a practical way for physical education teachers to report the results of physical fitness and physical activity assessments. The Cooper Institute is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to preventive medicine research and education. For more information, visit [www.CooperInstitute.org](http://www.CooperInstitute.org) or [www.Fitnessgram.net](http://www.Fitnessgram.net).

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