



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Christina Scripps, Discovery Education
240-662-6502, christina_scripps@discovery.com

Emily Cullum, Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation
202-295-2316, ecullum@whwg.com

HEALTHY WEIGHT COMMITMENT FOUNDATION AND DISCOVERY EDUCATION LAUNCH BACK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM FEATURING ALL-NEW RESOURCES TO EMPOWER STUDENTS TO FIGHT CHILDHOOD OBESITY

- Impact Study Reveals Together Counts™ Program Significantly Improves Student Understanding About Importance of Physical Activity, Nutrition and Living a Balanced Lifestyle -

Silver Spring, Md. (September 9, 2014) – The [Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation](#) (HWCF), a CEO-led organization driving a national, multi-year effort designed to help reduce childhood obesity, and [Discovery Education](#), the leading provider of digital content and professional development for K-12 classrooms, announced today the back-to-school launch of the Together Counts™ program. Established in 2009 with the launch of the first ever Energy Balance curriculum in 2010, the Together Counts program is a comprehensive initiative designed to positively impact students to live active and healthy lives, and to understand key concepts of balancing food intake with exercise for energy balance.

The fall 2014 program incorporates updated resources and incentives, giving educators and students across the country access to state-of-the-art curriculum and activities, and the chance to win more than \$75,000 in prizes for their schools. These initiatives include:

- **[Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes](#):** Administrators, teachers, parents and community members can enter this year's Sweepstakes for a chance to win one of two grand prizes for their school, including \$30,000 in cash and sporting goods and two new playgrounds from Playworld Systems, Inc., a leading manufacturer of imaginative playground and fitness equipment, valued at \$15,500 each. The playgrounds feature the company's new Unity Dome, which takes the decades old geodesic dome and makes it meaningful and relevant to 21st century children. The various activities, including sensory panels, and levels of challenge allow every child to be a part of the play. One of the grand prizes will be awarded to a school that qualifies for Title I funding to jumpstart the school's healthy transformation.
- **[Smart From The Start Awards](#):** The Smart from the Start Awards are designed to encourage preschool teachers to create practical, long-term improvements in nutrition and physical activity at their preschools to promote healthy habits at a young age. The grand prize winner will be awarded \$20,000, while 10 runner-up participants will win \$2,500 plus a prize pack of books. Smart from the Start is part of a commitment made to the Clinton Global Initiative. Through the National PTA, additional Pre-K schools, including Head Start programs will be funded this fall.
- **[Energy Balance Curriculum](#):** To help educators and families teach students about the importance of a healthy, active lifestyle, TogetherCounts.com is providing schools and families with free tools that promote energy-balanced lives. This online curriculum, Energy Balance 101, features standards-aligned lesson plans for grades 3-5 that bring to life the concept of Energy Balance: the balance of calories consumed (Energy In) with calories burned (Energy Out). New resources included in this year's curriculum include interactive lesson plans and teacher-to-teacher guides.

- **New Pre-K Portal**: SmartStartPreK.com is a new Together Counts portal designed especially to provide parents and educators of pre-school aged children with age-appropriate content and hands-on activities to teach the importance of a balanced lifestyle. Energy Balance Pre-K, the central curriculum for the initiative, provides non-sequential activities that align to a range of national education standards and government programs including NAEYC, Head Start, WIC, SNAP-Ed, SHAPE America, EFNEP, HealthierUS Schools Challenge and CACFP.

Through TogetherCounts.com, schools and families nationwide gain free access to resources that help to build healthy environments and reduce childhood obesity. Results of a spring 2014 impact study show that students who engaged in the program's Energy Balance 101 curriculum experienced increased understanding of the balance between food intake and physical activity. Further, data revealed students exposed to the energy balance curriculum added one or more physical activities per week to their routine while also making healthier nutrition choices. Additionally, more than 90% of educators who implemented the curriculum in their classroom felt it made an impact and their students had a better understanding of key concepts.

“Together Counts is a fantastic program that engages students in easy-to-understand concepts of energy balance that help them not only comprehend the importance of maintaining a balanced, healthy lifestyle, but also take the necessary steps to adopt lifelong healthy habits,” said Jessica Anderson, teacher at Lake Joy Elementary, Houston County Schools. “I am excited to incorporate this curriculum in my classroom this school year and also enter my school in the Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes.”

“We are thankful for all the teachers and parents who recognize the importance of energy balance education and are incredibly proud of all we have accomplished together over the past five years,” said Lisa Gable, President of HWCF. “When we launched in 2009, we could not have predicted the impact we would have in families and schools all over the country. We look forward to the results of our new and improved programming and are committed to develop even more creative ways to teach children about active, healthy living.”

For additional information on the Together Counts program and these sweepstakes, visit www.togethercounts.com.

About Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation

[Celebrating its Five Year Anniversary](#), the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (HWCF), formed in 2009, is a CEO-led organization whose national, multiyear effort is designed to help reduce obesity—especially childhood obesity. In just five years, HWCF members have already removed 6.4 trillion calories from the marketplace, which represents a 78 calorie reduction per person, per day. It is a first-of-its-kind coalition that brings together more than 250 retailers, food and beverage manufacturers, restaurants, sporting goods and insurance companies, trade associations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and professional sports organizations. HWCF promotes ways to help people achieve a healthy weight through energy balance—calories in and calories out. It focuses its efforts on two critical areas—families and schools—through its Together Counts™ campaign which is used by over 15 million students across the country.

About Discovery Education

Discovery Education is the global leader in standards-based digital content and professional development for K-12, transforming teaching and learning with award-winning digital textbooks, multimedia content that supports the implementation of Common Core, professional development, assessment tools, and the largest professional learning community of its kind. Available in over half of all U.S. schools and primary schools in England, community colleges and in 50 countries around the world, Discovery Education partners with districts, states and like-minded organizations to captivate students, empower teachers, and transform classrooms with customized solutions that accelerate academic achievement. Discovery Education is powered by Discovery Communications (NASDAQ: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK), the number one nonfiction media company in the world. Explore the future of education at www.discoveryeducation.com.

About Playworld Systems

Playworld Systems believes The World Needs Play®. Play is vital to everyone's health and well-being. It's something you are never too young or too old to enjoy. We develop playground environments where creativity is king, belly laughs are welcome and children make the rules. Playworld Systems equipment is designed to unleash the transformational power of play so bodies grow stronger and imagination can take flight. For more than 40 years, Playworld Systems has created innovative, inclusive and meaningful outdoor play experiences for all ages and abilities. Come play with us www.playworldsystems.com.