

**“WHOA, SLOW, GO! Foods”:** Putting the Brakes on Childhood Obesity  
*Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation Grant Helping Adults 50-Plus  
Teach Youngsters How to Eat Healthier*

**Las Vegas, Nevada – December 6** – It’s an age-old problem. You know your children should be eating more fruits, vegetables and lower-fat foods, but how do you convince them to push away the French fries and doughnuts in favor of an apple or carrot sticks?

The answer? Increasingly, adults 50 and older are volunteering their time and knowledge to teach kids the difference between WHOA foods, SLOW foods and GO! foods. They are part of “CATCH Healthy Habits”, a unique intergenerational health program which pairs adults age 50-plus with children to encourage healthier eating and physical activity. The volunteers work with children in kindergarten through the fifth grade in weekly one-hour sessions to play active games, make healthy snacks and learn about food choices like WHOA, SLOW and GO foods.

WHOA foods are those that contain a lot of salt, unhealthy fats or added sugars—sometimes all three. Examples include whole milk, ice cream, butter, French fries, candy bars, fried meats and potato chips.

GO foods contain very little salt, unhealthy fats or added sugars—sometimes none at all. Examples include fruits and vegetables, fat-free or 1 percent plain milk, foods made with whole grains, broiled fish, baked chicken and lean meats.

SLOW foods are in between GO foods and WHOA foods and may include 2 percent plain milk, fat-free or 1 percent flavored milk, white bread and rice, pancakes, baked chicken nuggets and fruits canned in light syrup.

“CATCH Healthy Habits” is being offered in at Boys & Girls Clubs in Las Vegas this fall thanks to a \$59,030 grant from the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

“Every parent’s goal should be to help their children eat fewer WHOA foods and more SLOW and GO foods,” said Linda Lagoy, CATCH Healthy Habits Coordinator with the OASIS Institute (OASIS), a national education organization that runs the CATCH Healthy Habits program. In Nevada, OASIS partners with Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada to administer the program. “CATCH Healthy Habits is an evidence-based, nationally recognized physical activity/nutrition curriculum that has been proven to increase healthy behaviors in children. It has been kid-tested and approved, because it shows children that healthy eating choices can be both delicious and fun.”

CATCH Healthy Habits uses simple but innovative recipes with catchy names to convince children to try healthier foods. Celery stick topped with low-fat cream cheese and raisins becomes Ants on a Log. Cubes of cheese and cut-up fruit are speared on toothpicks to become Dynamite Sticks. Graham crackers, low-fat cottage cheese, raisins and a touch of cinnamon are combined to create Cracker Delight.

“Most kids are reluctant to try a new food, especially if it’s presented as something healthy,” said Lagoy “The key is to make it fun by combining different tastes and giving snacks fun and unusual names. What child wouldn’t be intrigued to try Ants on a Log?”

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), nearly one-in-three children in the United States are overweight or obese, increasing their risk of becoming overweight adults with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and asthma. Additionally, obesity rates for older adults have doubled in the last 30 years, increasing rates of chronic disease and reducing quality of life for millions of Americans. Approximately 60 percent of adults age 50-plus do not meet the CDC's recommended physical activity standards.

“Too much time on the couch and too much junk food are the major reasons children and adults in the United States are becoming overweight and are encountering major health problems,” said Mike Murphy, president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Nevada. “Through programs like CATCH Healthy Habits, we hope to reverse this trend and teach children and their parents that they can improve their food choices and still enjoy what they are eating.”

“The program also benefits the adults who volunteer, as studies have shown that those who participate in volunteer activities live longer, healthier lives than those who do not.”

Support for CATCH Healthy Habits is part of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield’s ongoing commitment to addressing health disparities and improving public health across the country. Through its State Health Index – a compilation of public health measures – and Healthy Generations program, the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation works to identify the issues most in need of attention and directs its charitable support and volunteer efforts toward improving health in those areas. Promoting healthy lifestyles and addressing increasing rates of obesity are focus areas of the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

The \$59,030 in grant funds for CATCH Healthy Habits in Las Vegas are part of a \$2.7 million grant from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield’s parent company’s Foundation to OASIS that is expanding the program across the country. Other cities with CATCH Healthy Habits program sites include: Atlanta; Escondido, Calif.; Indianapolis; Los Angeles; Madison, Wis.; Portland, Maine; Richmond, Va.; St. Louis; and San Diego.

To learn about the Las Vegas CATCH Healthy Habits program, please contact Linda Lagoy, CATCH Healthy Habits coordinator, at 702-382-0721, or [llagoy@catholiccharities.com](mailto:llagoy@catholiccharities.com)

Initially, Catholic Charities will have two CATCH Healthy Habits sites:

James Boys & Girls Clubhouse  
2530 E Carey Ave  
North Las Vegas, NV 89030

Wednesdays and Thursdays 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays will be grades K-2 and Thursdays grades 3 – 5. Beginning December 14 and 15 and then returning after the first of the year.

The second site is:

Lied Memorial Boys & Girls Clubhouse

2850 Lindell Rd  
Las Vegas, NV 89146

Fridays, grades K-2 at 3:15 and grades 3 – 5 at 4:15. Beginning Friday, Dec. 9.

### **About the OASIS Institute**

OASIS is a national education organization dedicated to enriching the lives of adults age 50 and older through lifelong learning and service. Offering stimulating programs in the arts, humanities, health, technology and volunteer service, OASIS brings people together to learn, lead and contribute in their communities. Las Vegas is part of a national network that serves a diverse audience through educational centers and community partners. The OASIS Institute is nationally headquartered in St. Louis, Mo. For more information, visit [www.oasisnet.org](http://www.oasisnet.org).

### **About Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada**

Catholic Charities is one of the largest nonprofit social service providers in the state, offering the most comprehensive range of human services. Catholic Charities includes diverse programs designed to help people, from infants to seniors, regardless of race, religion, or creed. For more information about Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada please visit <http://www.catholiccharities.com/>

### **About the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation**

Through charitable grant making, the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation LLC, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, promotes Anthem's inherent commitment to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield serves. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease states and medical conditions. These include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company's annual associate giving campaign and its parent foundation provides a 50 percent match of associates' campaign pledges. ®ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

### **About Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Nevada**

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[www.youtube.com/healthjoinin](http://www.youtube.com/healthjoinin).

**About the Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas:**

Started in 1961, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas currently serves more than 14,000 youth ages 5 –18 in eight facilities throughout the Valley. With the belief that every child has the potential to “be great”, the Clubs’ full-time professional staff emphasizes character and leadership development, education and career development, health and life skills, the arts, sports, fitness and recreation. For more information, please contact the Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas at 702.367.2582 or visit [www.bgclv.org](http://www.bgclv.org).