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**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Nikki Hillier, Program  
Coordinator (217) 531-2914  
Stephanie Beneker, PE/Health  
Instructor, J.W. Eater Junior High School  
(217) 892-2115  
Lori A. Holmes, Public Relations  
(217) 531-2927

## **CUPHD Partners with Local Junior High to Teach Young Women to “Bone Up”!**

*Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Partners with  
J.W. Eater Junior High to Educate Young Women on the  
Importance of Osteoporosis Prevention.*

Champaign, IL – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) has partnered with the J.W. Eater Junior High to educate teenage girls on the importance of Osteoporosis prevention. This 3-session educational program offered during PE class consists of a series of fun-filled activities that encourage the teens to take small steps to make a big difference in the health of their bones. J.W. Eater currently has 207 teens participating in the “Bone Up” – Osteoporosis Prevention Program for Teens.

“The girls have really enjoyed learning about Osteoporosis, even though they struggle to pronounce the word!” said Stephanie Beneker, PE/Health Instructor for J.W. Eater Junior High School. “One student mentioned how she went home after school and drank two glasses of milk so she could take care of her bones. Overall, the students have enjoyed learning about osteoporosis and now have a better understanding on how to take care of their bodies.”

Through “Bone Up” the teens discover:

- Why calcium is so important in their teens
- Ways for “Calcium on the go”
- Talk about caffeine
- Learn how to build bones
- MUCH MORE!

The girls participating in the “Bone Up” program learn to make and enjoy calcium-rich snacks, as well as participating in different exercises that build bone mass. Most importantly, participants are directly motivated to make changes through interactive exercises designed to encourage girls to really start caring about bone health.

“While osteoporosis usually doesn’t happen until we are older, the prevention of osteoporosis has to happen when girls are in their teens and 20’s” said Nikki Hillier, Program Coordinator for Wellness and promotion at CUPHD. “People build bones in their teens and 20’s, and reach peak bone mass by age 30. It’s important for young women to know what they need to do now to prevent bone loss later. That includes increasing calcium intake, decreasing caffeine intake, and increasing weight bearing exercise.”

On the last day of the current program at J.W. Eater Junior High, February 10, 2009, the girls will receive their official “milk mustache” pictures. Each girl will be encouraged to design a poster with their picture commemorating their program experience. Program instructors will also check the girls’ individual calcium and fitness diaries and conduct a follow-up survey.

“We absolutely love working with the staff and students at J.W.Eater,” said Trisha Gillespie, Health Educator at CUPHD. “We are sad that the last day is coming so soon, but we hope we’ve given the girls what they need to build strong bones now to prevent osteoporosis later.”

Osteoporosis or porous bone is a disease characterized by low bone mass and structural deterioration of bone tissue, leading to bone fragility and an increased susceptibility to fractures. About 85-90% of adult bone mass is acquired by age 18 in girls. Building strong bones during childhood and adolescence can help to prevent osteoporosis later in life. 80% of those affected by osteoporosis are women. It is estimated that over eight million women in the United States today have osteoporosis.

CUPHD is currently partnering with other local educational institutions including Centennial, Urbana Middle School: SPLASH (after school program), and Thomasboro. CUPHD can bring the “Bone Up” program to any school or church in Champaign County. Interested organizations should contact Nikki Hillier at 217.531.2914 or [nhillier@c-uphd.org](mailto:nhillier@c-uphd.org) for additional information.

For more information about “Bone UP” – Osteoporosis Prevention Program For Teens, or any other CUPHD programs and services, please call 217-352-7961 or visit CUPHD on the web at [www.c-uphd.org](http://www.c-uphd.org).

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