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UPCOMING OHSU HEALTH FAIR IN ST. HELENS HELPS ATTENDEES LEARN ABOUT THEIR HEALTH WHILE CONTRIBUTING TO SCIENCE

WHAT: Oregon Health & Science University is bringing the Let's Get Healthy! health fair to St. Helens. Middle school students will attend the fair during the school day. The fair will then be open to the general public that day from 3 to 7 p.m. This is a free event.

WHEN: Friday, March 12, 2010

Fair for St. Helens Middle School students: 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Fair for general public: 3 to 7 p.m.

WHERE: St. Helens Middle School, 354 N 15th Street; St Helens, OR 97051

DETAILS: Let's Get Healthy! was developed by OHSU scientists to teach the public about their health while at the same time allowing them to take part in the scientific process. During preparations for the fair, St. Helens Middle School officials selected health issues most important to them, such as student consumption of energy drinks and issues related to diet and physical activity. Organizers of Let's Get Healthy! then tailored the health fair to address their community's health concerns.

The interactive exhibit invites attendees to enroll as research participants where they can learn about the quality of their own diet, body composition, physical fitness and other areas of healthy living. Let's Get Healthy! also features travelling exhibits related to nutrition and fitness developed in partnership with the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry. Additional OHSU and community-based groups will also be present and hosting booths at the fair about various issues related to healthy living.

As the title suggests, the focus of the entire exhibit is healthy living. Participants of any age can get immediate feedback about the quality of their diet by completing a computer-based survey. They can also have body measurements taken and their blood pressure measured. For participants old enough, they can have cholesterol and glucose levels tested as well as donate a saliva sample for future anonymized genetic research on health issues.

Each of these health screens is completely voluntary. Researchers use the data to study the scientific relationships between diet, body composition, genetics and chronic disease. Communities are then invited to use the data to develop programs and write grants that support healthy living in the community. Schools can use the data to conduct scientific inquiry lessons with their students, thereby allowing students to examine information like their own energy drink consumption using real, but completely anonymous, data.

The Let's Get Healthy Health Fair is supported by two grants from the National Institutes of Health. For more information about Let's Get Healthy, visit www.octri.org/letsgethealthy.

About OHSU

Oregon Health & Science University is the state's only health and research university and Oregon's only academic health center. OHSU is Portland's largest employer and the fourth largest in Oregon (excluding government). OHSU's size contributes to its ability to provide many services and community support activities not found anywhere else in the state. It serves patients from every corner of the state, and is a conduit for learning for more than 3,400 students and trainees. OHSU is the source of more than 200 community outreach programs that bring health and education services to every county in the state.

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