



CONTACT: James Andersen

City of Green Bay Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Department

Office: 920-448-3384

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2016

Community Partnership Kicks Off 2nd Year of Green Bay Parks Prescription Program
June 24 at 12:00 pm at the Green Bay Kids' Day Mayor's Luncheon located at Green Bay's Leicht Park

The City of Green Bay Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department is announcing new initiatives for the Green Bay Parks Prescription Program (GB Parks Rx), an effort to encourage balanced, healthy lifestyles and physical activity in youth in the Greater Green Bay Area. The program is sponsored through a \$25,000 grant from the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America and the Wisconsin Beverage Association (WBA).

The GB Parks Rx program is a local, clinically-based collaborative effort between Live54218, The City of Green Bay, Prevea Health, and the WBA. The program links the healthcare system and public lands, such as local parks, to foster more balanced and active lifestyles for residents through increased connections to Green Bay's parks and recreation facilities.

Physical activity, poor nutrition, and rising obesity rates have been a pervasive public health problem locally, contributing to a growing burden of chronic disease. The Green Bay Metropolitan Area was recently named in the top ten most obese cities in the United States, while one out of every three third-graders statewide is cited as being overweight or obese.

"We are working together to address these health concerns in our community," said Jen Van Den Elzen, executive director of Live54218. "Through Parks Rx medical providers are encouraging youth to spend more time in the parks, and in turn, the City of Green Bay is making sure their parks provide a safe and active environment."

All children and teens ages 6-18 are introduced to the GB Parks Rx program when they have an appointment with their pediatrician or family medicine doctor at Prevea Health. The program was introduced to the Green Bay community in 2015.

"We want to show our local youth just how much fun an active lifestyle can be, especially in a community that offers so many beautiful parks," said Dr. Ashok Rai, President and CEO of Prevea Health. "An active lifestyle leads to a healthier, happier life and we are proud to partner with LIVE54218 for the GB Parks Rx program."

In addition, local children can learn about the GB Parks Rx program through the Summer Playground Program, which is a free 10-week program available in 36 City parks. All participants in the program can fill out activity logs to document their activity in the program. By filling out and turning in the activity logs, up to 8 participants in the months of June, July, and August will have a chance to win prizes. During the 10-week Summer Playground Program, all 36 playground sites will be recording activity with the goal of having 1 million minutes of physical activity during the summer program. Fortunately, high participation in the Playground Program has allowed the GB Parks Rx program to expand with a new FIT Kids program.

The GB Parks Rx program, available to local youth with the goal of increasing physical activity, focuses on encouraging the use of city parks as a means for getting kids and families moving. The City of Green Bay Parks Award Winning Playground program is uniquely established and has been supported for over 90 years by our community.

“We feel the City of Green Bay Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Department plays a vital role in promoting and improving public health within our community” said James Andersen, Recreation Superintendent for the City of Green Bay. “Collaborating with our community’s public health advocates is a unique opportunity. This partnership places Green Bay on the forefront in tackling current public health problems through innovative and bold approaches.”

“Wisconsin’s non-alcoholic beverage industry is a vibrant part of local communities across the state where we live, work and play and are committed to being a part of meaningful solutions to societal challenges,” said Kelly McDowell, executive secretary of the Wisconsin Beverage Association. “We are proud to support Live 54218 and Mayor Schmitt as they strive to make Green Bay the healthiest community in the country.”

- ### -

About Live54218:

Born out of the community’s desire to address the ongoing childhood obesity epidemic, Live54218 was created around simple recommendations we could all live by every day. As the Greater Green Bay Area’s Healthy Eating, Active Living initiative, we strive to create environments in the community that support and promote all residents daily in consuming 5 fruits and vegetables, drinking 4 bottles of water, having less than 2 hours of screen time, participating in at least 1 hour of physical activity, and sleeping 8 hours a night. The goal is to make the Greater Green Bay Area the healthiest community in the nation. Learn more at www.Live54218.org

About the City of Green Bay Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department:

The City of Green Bay Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department’s mission is to enrich the quality of life of all people by creatively providing and enhancing leisure opportunities. It is a municipal agency that provides a comprehensive and progressive quality management system in the following divisions: Recreation and Pools, Parks, Forestry, Design & Development, Administration, Wildlife Sanctuary, Bay Beach and Triangle Hill.

About Prevea Health:

Prevea Health’s mission is to care for people with passion, pride, and respect. Founded in 1996, Prevea Health partners with HSHS St. Vincent Hospital and HSHS St. Mary’s Hospital Medical Center in Green Bay, HSHS St. Nicholas Hospital in Sheboygan, HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital in Oconto Falls, HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire and HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital in Chippewa Falls, to provide access to more than 200 physicians in more than 60 specialty areas. Prevea has more than 40 locations throughout Northeast Wisconsin and Western Wisconsin’s Chippewa Valley region. For more information, visit www.prevea.com.

About the Wisconsin Beverage Association:

The Wisconsin Beverage Association (WBA) represents Wisconsin’s non-alcoholic beverage industry, including beverage producers, distributors, and franchise companies. Together, they bring to market hundreds of brands, flavors and packages, including regular and diet soft drinks, bottled water and water beverages, 100 percent juice and juice drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks and ready-to-drink teas.

About the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America:

The American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America seeks to make a significant contribution to the health of local communities by providing grants to support charitable programs at community organizations that work to advance both the physical health of their local citizens and the environmental health of their communities. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) created and funded by America’s non-alcoholic beverage industry and is a reflection of the industry’s long-standing tradition of giving back to communities.