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**AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION AND NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE EXPAND
BACK TO SPORTS PROGRAM**

Events slated across the country and include new, robust curriculum

DALLAS – September 16, 2015 – The American Heart Association (AHA) and the National Football League (NFL) have teamed up to launch a program that is designed to help promote physical activity and safe sport participation among youth.

The program, titled *Back to Sports*, is geared towards the parents and caregivers of upper elementary, middle and high school aged students who actively participate in sports or are considering it as an extra-curricular activity. Through an additional grant program that has been established, *Back to Sports* will engage with athletic trainers who will serve as expert facilitators to deliver sports safety information in up to 100 communities across the country this year.

The goal of *Back to Sports* is to increase awareness of the benefits of sports participation as a positive way for children to achieve the recommended 60 minutes or more of daily physical activity, while addressing key safety concerns including concussion awareness, heat and hydration, cardiac arrest and proper response and the prevention of pediatric overuse injuries. The program provides credible, easy-to-understand information and ongoing resources and education for parents and caregivers, teachers, coaches, youth sports leagues and others, which also includes information about nutrition and healthy snacks.

Content created for the toolkits uses the most relevant, evidence-based information to date. The AHA, along with strategic alliance experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Korey Stringer Institute and the National Athletic Trainers' Association, were all involved in helping develop and review the content and curriculum that lies at the core of this program.

“The AHA is excited to work with the NFL on this important program,” stated Kim Stitzel, Senior Vice President of Preventive Health Markets for the American Heart Association. “Participation in youth sports has certainly declined in recent years. We believe the *Back to Sports* education focus can help

address safety concerns around youth sports and create more opportunities for youth to get physically active and develop positive life-long habits.”

“Getting kids active and healthy continues to be a priority for the NFL and all 32 teams and making sure parents are educated about sports safety is a critical component of these efforts,” said Charlotte Jones Anderson, chair of the NFL Foundation and executive vice president of the Dallas Cowboys. “The NFL Foundation is dedicated to improving the health and safety of sports and we are pleased to partner with American Heart Association to provide important resources to communities across the country through the *Back to Sports* program.”

Back to Sports is an expansion of a nearly 10-year relationship between the American Heart Association and the National Football League to promote physical activity in youth. For more information on this new program visit heart.org/BackToSports.

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About the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association:

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based American Heart Association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

About The NFL Foundation:

The National Football League Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those touched by the game of football – from players at all levels to communities across the country. The NFL Foundation represents the 32 NFL clubs and supports the health, safety and wellness of athletes, youth football, and the communities which support our game. For more information on The NFL Foundation, visit: www.NFLFoundation.org.

About NFL PLAY 60:

Designed to tackle childhood obesity, NFL PLAY 60 brings together the NFL’s long-standing commitment to health and wellness with partner organizations. PLAY 60 also is implemented locally, as part of the NFL’s in-school, after-school and team-based programs. Since the program was launched in 2007, the NFL has committed more than \$325 million to youth health and fitness through programming, grants, and media time for public service announcements. The NFL and its teams have built more than 175 NFL Youth Fitness Zones and integrated programs into more than 73,000 schools nationwide since the campaign launched. All 32 clubs activate PLAY 60 locally, with more than 2,000 NFL PLAY 60 events held annually. For more information, visit www.NFLRUSH.com/play60.