

2008 -
2009

Iowa Kidstrong, Inc.
Annual Report





Looking Back...

At the end of every program year, Iowa Kidstrong reflects on the lessons, successes, and challenges of the past year and then plans for the year ahead. This annual report documents what we have done, what we have learned, and what we are planning for the 2009 – 2010 program year.

During the 2008 – 2009 school year, Iowa Kidstrong partnered with 22 elementary schools in the Des Moines area to facilitate KidStriders. Through our KidStriders program we have again celebrated the success of hundreds of children. We celebrated not only a well-earned Victory Lap on that big blue track in Drake Stadium, but also the everyday effort toward an improved quality of life and a newfound ability for some to identify with success that they may not have had the opportunity to achieve elsewhere. Over 750 children completed the KidStriders marathon goal or beyond. Over 350 joined us at the 100th Drake Relays for the Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield Victory Lap. Thousands more children participated at some level and so a seed has been planted.

Iowa Kidstrong also continued to build and strengthen its partnerships and collaborations. Of particular mention is the Boys and Girls Club of Central Iowa at the Ellis I. Levitt site where children from Carver Elementary School in Des Moines were able to enjoy success through the KidStriders program as an additional after-school opportunity.

KidStriders was recognized in September, 2008 by the Surgeon General of the United States in regards to the wellness environment it has helped create specifically at Hubbell Elementary. Hubbell was the recipient of the Surgeon General's Community Champion award and is listed on the Surgeon General's website along with a link to the KidStriders program.

The following pages are dedicated to what we've accomplished and also to what lies ahead. We look forward to our continued work in the community and to the advancement of our organization in sustaining our mission-driven endeavors.



Our Victory Lap Celebration was held at the 100th Drake Relays on April 24, 2009.

Our Mission

The mission of Iowa Kidstrong, Inc. is to promote healthy, active lifestyles to children.

Iowa Kidstrong, Inc.'s KidStriders initiative supports elementary school physical education and health programs and is designed to target children at an early and impressionable age.

We are also committed to reinforcing the goals of children in the home and broader community setting by reaching out to adults as parents, mentors, role models, and decision makers for their families and to older youth as they acquire autonomy in personal decision making and as role models for younger children. It is our vision to interrupt the controllable patterns that lead to poor health creating a wellness culture that recycles itself for generations to come.



Iowa Kidstrong, Inc. KidStriders Partnering Schools

KidStriders, first piloted in spring 2006, has been our feature program since. This is a primarily school-based incentive program which revolves around the goal of running and/or walking a minimum cumulative marathon distance of 26 miles during recess KidStriders sessions. Students are recognized with a plastic foot token to tie on their shoelaces for every five miles they complete, a T-Shirt for reaching the 26-mile goal along with the opportunity to participate in a “Victory Lap” held at the Drake Relays, as well as “Beyond the Marathon Incentives” which continue to reward students persisting beyond the 26-mile minimum goal.

KidStriders is a unique fitness program in that it is offered during the school day so it is accessible to all students. It is not a “one-size-fits-all” program and can be defined to fit the needs of the individual school implementing it by way of time and manpower available to put toward it – we know these resources will vary from school to school, but feel that all children within a school should enjoy equal opportunity to participate. Accessibility to success for as many students as possible is the key to making “motorless motion” desirable and therefore habit-forming as students continue to strive to reach new goals.

Each participating school is provided with a program toolkit outlining procedures for implementing the program as well as foot tokens and other program incentives. Each school is responsible for designating a program coordinator for their school as well as volunteers to help run the program. Several of our program schools garner the support of their PTA/PTOs while others find willing volunteers within their staff. Overall program coordination and support is provided by Iowa Kidstrong, Inc.

Thank you to our 2008 – 2009 partnering schools, their coordinators and volunteers for making the KidStriders program possible for so many children:

Edmunds Fine Arts Academy
Carver Elementary
Findley Elementary
Garton Elementary
Jackson Elementary
Howe Elementary
Morris Elementary
Brubaker Elementary
Perkins Academy
Windsor Elementary
Park Ave Elementary

Wright Elementary
Hubbell Elementary
Karen Acres Elementary
Pleasant Hill Elementary
Hanawalt Elementary
Olmsted Elementary
Downtown School
Cowles Elementary
Jefferson Elementary
Webster Elementary
The Academy

I like KidStriders because it is fun, enjoyable physical fitness. I also like it because everybody wins and nobody is disappointed.

~Curtis, The Academy



The Victory Lap

Over 38,000 miles! That's how many miles students in the greater Des Moines Area participating in Iowa Kidstrong's KidStriders program logged. Students in 22 elementary schools in the Des Moines area worked to accumulate 26 miles, nearly the distance of a marathon, as part of the KidStriders program. Over 750 students have reached that goal and were invited to run with other KidStriders during a 1/4-mile "Victory Lap" sponsored by Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa taking place at the Drake Relays on Friday, April 24 at 6:55 p.m.

Iowa Kidstrong, Inc. proudly continued its partnership with the 2009 Drake Relays as the host of the KidStriders finale event capping off their 2008 - 09 program year. Participation in the Victory Lap is not a program requirement, but provides an opportunity for the students to be recognized for and to celebrate their accomplishment. Over 350 students completing the program took the track Friday night under the lights to the tune, "I Like to Move It, Move It."



My favorite thing about KidStriders is getting to run my last lap. It feels AMAZING!!

~Samantha Watson, Brubaker Elementary



KidStriders Praised by Surgeon General of the United States **Acting U.S. Surgeon General Galson Visits Des Moines** *Efforts to combat childhood obesity are honored*

IDPH Press Release — 09/05/2008: Acting Surgeon General Steven Galson met with Iowa health advocates in Des Moines today as part of his "Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future" program. The effort targets prevention of childhood overweight and obesity and the promotion of healthy lifestyles for young people.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to visit Des Moines, and meet firsthand with people who are actively finding ways at the community level to prevent childhood overweight and obesity," said Galson, who is traveling the U.S. to showcase communities that address childhood obesity through nutrition and fitness initiatives.



Cindy Elsbernd stands with Surgeon General General Steven Galson at the State Capitol.

While in Des Moines, Galson presented Hubbell Elementary School with a "Champion Award" for its commitment to fighting childhood obesity. Programs such as KidStriders and Pick a Better Snack encourage good eating habits and regular exercise. Students who participate in KidStriders are rewarded for each five miles they walk or run. The Pick a Better Snack program educates students about healthy snack options.

"It's not easy to combat childhood obesity in this age of remote controls, computers and video games," said Iowa Department of Public Health Director Tom Newton. "A national or state program is useless without the support and involvement of businesses, schools and communities. We are lucky to have that kind of involvement in Iowa."

According to Iowans Fit for Life, nearly 38 percent of Iowa 3rd, 4th and 5th graders are overweight or at risk of being overweight. The total annual health care cost attributed to adult obesity in Iowa is estimated at \$783 million.



Looking Ahead to the 2009 – 2010 Program Year

Iowa Kidstrong looks ahead to the next program year with exciting new plans and partnerships.

- Our KidStriders program continues to grow and will be kicking off in 29 schools in Des Moines and surrounding areas in the fall. In addition to the physical activity portion of the program, Iowa Kidstrong will offer nutrition education information and material via our website under “KidStriders Tools for Schools and Families.” This information can be dropped into a school’s already existing newsletter, drawn on by teachers to use in the classroom setting as a supplement to their health curriculum, or used for discussion at home. Other ideas for physical activity will also be included in the “KidStriders Tools for Schools and Families” section. We anticipate that this component of our program will have a positive impact in regards to awareness and potentially in modifying participant (student) and facilitator (teacher/parent/mentor) behavior.
- The Des Moines Marathon will feature the Iowa Kidstrong Kids Run at their October 2009 event. We are working with the Des Moines Marathon to offer the cumulative marathon experience to children from all over Iowa and the country who may be coming along with their parents on marathon weekend and participating in the kids run. This program, “The KidStriders Mile-A-Thon,” features not only a running log and incentives, but also nutrition modules for children to complete with their families. Iowa Kidstrong will also be featuring a special “Kids’ Expo” in conjunction with the Des Moines Marathon’s Sports and Fitness Expo during marathon weekend with kid-friendly, health related activities and speakers on Saturday, October 17 from 10:00 a.m. – noon. We are excited to partner with the Des Moines Marathon and advance our mission of promoting healthy lifestyles to children.
- Iowa Kidstrong will pilot its Students Run Des Moines (SRDM) program at Roosevelt High School beginning in the 2009 – 2010 school year. SRDM is a program that offers marathon training to help young people succeed in life by connecting students with a corps of caring adult mentors who help them imagine and accomplish goals beyond their dreams, including the completion of a marathon, a feat less than 1% of the population in the U.S. has achieved. SRDM is an adaptation of the successful Students Run L.A. (SRLA) program which has been in operation since 1989 and helps young people train safely and sanely to complete a 26.2 mile marathon. Similar to its parent program, SRDM will be a school-centered, non-competitive program with life-changing potential. We anticipate positive impact on physical health, academic performance and aspirations, anti-social behavior, and emotional health.
- Iowa Kidstrong is also in the process of developing a “5K Club” for youth ages 9 to 14. This will be a virtual training program for youth offering various benefits as they train for and complete 5k races and fun runs in the community. The club will focus mainly on participation although club members will self-determine their level of competitiveness. We are in the process of forging a partnership with the online magazine, “Youth Runner” to facilitate this program.
- Iowa Kidstrong also anticipates growing their Board of Directors over the coming year.



Our Sponsors and Partners

Iowa Kidstrong continues to be indebted to the many organizations, partnerships, and networks that support our work through financial contributions, in-kind contributions, collaboration, and shared resources. None of the work described in this annual report could have happened without them.

Non-Profit Grant support comes from:

- Variety-The Children's Charity

Our Corporate sponsors include:

- Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa
- The Living History Farms Race
- Capital Striders Running Club
- IMT Insurance

Our partners include:

- The Drake Relays
- Drake University
- The Des Moines Marathon
- IDPH – Iowans Fit for Life
- Our program schools
- Fryguyimages. Photos by Steve Fry
- ING Insurance
- SCRC Running Club

We appreciate the commitment of these foundations, organizations, and all of the individuals involved in making our 2008 – 2009 program year successful and memorable for all of the children involved.

Thank you!

Financial Report

**Income and Expenses:
July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009**

Income

Foundation and Trust Grants	-
Nonprofit Organization Grants	18,500.00
Corporate Contributions	5,500.00
Individuals, Business Contributions	1,275.43
Miscellaneous Income	-
Program Service Fees	500.00
Total Income	25,775.43

Expenses

Business Expenses	1,942.00
Operating Expenses	895.88
Program Expenses	36,213.28
Total Expenses	39,051.16

Net Income (13,275.73)

Note: Expenses appear to exceed income because of the timing of receiving grant and sponsorship payments and the incurrence of the majority of program expenses in the fourth quarter of our financial year which coincides with the school year.



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**Join us in making a healthier tomorrow for our children
and teens by contributing to Iowa Kidstrong programs.**

Iowa Kidstrong is a 501(c)3 organization and your donation is tax deductible.

Yes! I'd like to support Iowa Kidstrong programs. Enclosed is my gift of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other _____

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail my receipt to: _____

Your privacy is important to us. We will not give, share, sell, or rent your contact information to any other organization for any reason.

Please send your donation to:

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or give online at
www.iowakidstrong.com

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Thank you!