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ProMedica Health System Introduces Health Education Program to Combat Childhood Obesity

TOLEDO, OH--(Marketwire - January 7, 2010) - ProMedica Health System (PHS) has launched a preventative health education program for children in grades four through six and their parents called The Healthy Kids *Conversation Map*® Program. The program is designed to raise awareness about childhood obesity and empower participants to make lifelong, healthy choices about food and exercise.

Trained PHS employees will lead discussion groups with children and adults in various community settings throughout PHS' 27-county service area in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Each trainer will use an educational tool kit that consists of a map visual, activity cards and a facilitator guide that are designed to initiate discussions about childhood obesity and promote positive behavior change. The map visual is a large tabletop, graphic illustration with a series of images and metaphors to engage participants. The activity cards help create a fun game-like atmosphere, and the guide includes facilitator instructions, and tips.

The kids' map experience is divided into six, 30-minute sessions for six to 30 children. It addresses the food guide pyramid, the digestive system, label reading, media literacy, challenges to eating healthy, portion control, and physical activity. The parents' map experience is designed for four to 10 parents. It includes one, two-hour session about the benefits of proper childhood nutrition, the challenges to eating healthy, strategies for creating a healthy eating environment at home, and advocating for children's health and nutrition.

President and chief executive officer Randy Oostra states, "As northwest Ohio's leading health care provider, we feel that our role in encouraging healthy lifestyles, solid nutrition and exercise habits will have a lasting positive effect on those individuals and families we are privileged to serve. We want the *Conversation Maps*, along with our other health and wellness programs, to be part of a journey that leads to healthier kids and families."

PHS worked with Chicago-based Healthy Interactions, Inc. to develop The Healthy Kids *Conversation Map*® Program. Healthy Interactions, Inc. builds partnerships with leading medical and disease associations, not-for-profit organizations, corporations, and trained health care professionals, thus enabling millions of people to take control of their health and live their best lives.

For more information about PHS, visit www.promedica.org.

ProMedica Health System, ranked among the Top 5 most integrated health systems in the U.S. for the fifth year, was formed in 1986 and is a Toledo, Ohio-based, not-for-profit health care organization with 15,000 employees, 71 corporations and joint ventures, 2,900 physicians and more than 283 facilities in Ohio and Michigan. ProMedica facilities treat more than 2.4 million patients annually and includes 10 hospitals; ProMedica Continuing Care Services with senior, rehabilitation and integrative services; ProMedica Physician Group, a large network of primary care, obstetrics, and specialist physicians; Paramount Health Care, the largest HMO in northwest Ohio; and the Health, Education and Research Corporation, with more than 200 academic relationships. For more information, please visit www.promedica.org.