



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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For Immediate Release

Think about Your Heart Health during American Heart Month

(New Haven, CT February 11, 2013) February is American Heart Month and as a leading nonprofit dedicated to strengthening community through healthy living, the CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA urges everyone to take steps to prevent chronic diseases, such as heart disease, so they can lead longer, healthier lives.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), heart disease is responsible for one in four deaths each year in the United States. To address the prevalence of heart disease, the Y made a commitment to the *Million Hearts* campaign, an initiative spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, CDC and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that aims to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over five years.

The root causes of many chronic diseases are unhealthy behaviors such as physical inactivity, unhealthy eating and tobacco use. With a presence into more than 10,000 communities across the nation, the Y has the ability to address the root causes of chronic disease at both the individual and community level and improve health and well-being.

The Y offers community-based healthy living and chronic disease prevention initiatives that support people in changing their lifestyles, encourage organizations and communities to adopt behaviors that promote healthy living, and promote the public's health through advocacy.

One of the ways the CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA encourages heart health is through the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program – which is part of the CDC-led National Diabetes Prevention Program. The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program helps adults at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles in order to reduce their chances of developing the disease. Type 2 diabetes is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease and people with diabetes are twice as likely to have heart disease or a stroke as those who do not have it.

The program provides a supportive environment where participants work together in a small group to learn about eating healthier, increasing their physical activity and making other behavior changes with the goal of reducing body weight by 7 percent in order to reduce their risk for developing diabetes. The program, which is led by a trained Lifestyle Coach in a classroom setting, is delivered over a 12-month period, beginning with 16 weekly sessions followed by eight monthly sessions. Increased physical activity and moderate weight loss not only reduce diabetes risk, but also have an impact on lowering blood pressure and cholesterol.

The CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA offers our community support for all individuals in meeting their health and well-being goals. Learn more by visiting cccyymca.org or by stopping into your local Y branch to learn more.

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About the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA

The Central Connecticut Coast YMCA is a community service agency dedicated to addressing community needs that enrich families, promote health and wellness, develop youth and build self-esteem for all. YMCA membership and participation is open to everyone regardless of race or ethnic background, religious preference or ability to pay. In 2011, the CCC YMCA served 3,000 families daily in child care programs; 10,000 kids participated in youth sports programs; 15,500 children took advantage of the Y's instructional swimming lessons; 4,693 kids attended one of our day camps, 776 youth experienced the magic of resident camp; and 1,685 people were served through one of our housing programs. The CCC YMCA also provided \$3.37 million in direct financial assistance to more than 6,000 children, individuals and families. The Central Connecticut Coast Y is based in downtown New Haven with eleven Y branches in Greater New Haven and Greater Bridgeport while also operating YMCA Camp Hi-Rock, a 1,000 acre residential and day camp in Mt. Washington, Massachusetts. **W** cccyymca.org **P** 203 777 9622