



▶ *Jump into Action is in 22 Jackson County schools*



▶ *The program is ongoing in 71 classrooms within the county*



▶ *2,236 students participate in the nutrition and fitness plan*



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LINKING NUTRITIONAL AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION TO IMPROVE STUDENT HEALTH



● Fifth-grade students can understand cause-and-effect relationships and are beginning to make independent decisions about food choices and physical activity.

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JUMP INTO ACTION

Jump into Action is a University of Missouri Extension school-based nutrition and physical education program designed to change behaviors of 5th grade students to reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes. Extension provides orientation for school teams, which include the physical education teacher, classroom teacher and school nurse.

Physical education teachers use 13 physical activity lessons and pedometers to help students increase levels of physical activity. Jump into Action is available at no cost to schools; funding is through the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City.

Studies show 5th graders improve their physical fitness levels and dietary intake by participating in the year-long program involving daily pedometer use and classroom nutrition/fitness lessons.

“Kids like gadgets,” says Steve Ball, MU Extension fitness specialist. “Once they start

using the pedometer, the kids start to look at their own activities outside of school.”

That benefit extends to parents, who receive Jump into Action family newsletters. Parents



become interested in the physical education program, and in the number of steps they’re taking, says Ball.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, children need 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per day. Inactivity, along with diet, contributes to obesity. Individuals who are overweight are at greater risk for certain types of cancers, high blood pressure, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes – the sixth leading cause of death in Missouri.