



UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA
Agriculture &
Natural Resources



Walk
Across
Monterey
County!

Walk Across Monterey County

The journey toward health
that began with a single step...
October 2004

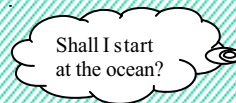




5th Grade Students from Mr. Kolofer's class at Prunedale School step out briskly to kick off "Walk Across Monterey County"

Walk Across Monterey County? Our students? You bet! During the month of October, students from four elementary schools competed in this fun and fitness program to see who could accumulate the most miles.

The local pilot program was inspired by Walk Across Texas which has been in place for several years. The concept seemed to capture everyone's imagination and enthusiasm. The program's design spreads out tasks among collaborators so that it was easy to implement.



It was a good time for this idea to take hold. Monterey County youth are emphatically part of "mainstream America" kids who are increasingly overweight and inactive. In this area 26% of all children are overweight and 30% unfit, and both these numbers and these children continue to grow.

Mr. Kolofer demonstrates a cool-down stretch



King City, Soledad, Prunedale and Marina students are fortunate to have teachers who cared enough to give time to this activity. Janeth Rojas, a CSUMB intern at UC Cooperative Extension, coordinated the pilot program.

Teachers from Marina Vista, Prunedale, Frank Ledesma and Santa Lucia schools conducted the "get up, get moving" program during P.E. time. These teachers are all collaborators with the Youth FSNE program, and regularly teach the benefits of good food and daily physical activity.

New Balance Inc. donated athletic shoes to the winning teams in north, central and south county, and Whole Foods provided water and snack bars to all participants. AMBAG created special maps for schools to use to track team progress. These community partners demonstrated their commitment to reducing the health risks associated with overweight and inactivity.

Do we have a winner? We have three winning teams. In North County, the Tigers were winners, logging 240 miles. No doubt their teacher, tri-athlete Chuck Kolofer, had a hand in their victory. KSBW Sports Anchor Dennis Lehnen awarded prizes to the team on November second.

In "Central County" Mr. Jorge Guzman, Soledad Unified School District Superintendent awarded prizes to the Jaguars of Frank Ledesma School.



Soledad Superintendent Jorge Guzman with the winning Jaguars



KSBW Sports Anchor Dennis Lehnen with Panther team leader



Walkers from Frank Ledesma School

In South County, the Pumas of Santa Lucia School in King City were the biggest winners of all, logging an impressive 374 miles.

School board member Shannon Valaderez awarded prizes to the Pumas team on November 3.



All in all, Monterey County students together walked over 2400 miles! Participants -even those who came from a very sedentary beginning - had a great time with the program. Most reported that they planned to continue their walking, soccer and other physical activities and the new, increased level. They want to be ready for next year! See you then.... And keep on walking!

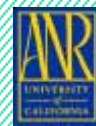
Many thanks to New Balance, Whole Foods, AMBAG and all teachers and administrators who made this happen!

All team results may be found at

http://cemonterey.ucdavis.edu/EFNEP122/Walk_Across_Monterey_County.htm



A very happy principal- Mr. Bob Bilek- with his winning team at Santa Lucia school



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