

Press Release – Kickin’ Ash Splash

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The 4th annual KICKIN’ ASH SPLASH, sponsored by the Licking County Health Department, Licking County Wellness Coalition, Kohl’s, Licking Memorial Health Systems and Time Warner Cable was held at the Heath City Water Park on July 26, 2008 from 5:30pm – 10:00 pm. 1,689 individuals from Licking County attended this event with nearly 1,000 youth. The event encouraged children and adults to be tobacco, alcohol and drug free. It also promoted healthy choices including becoming more physically active, and choosing healthy snacks.

According to Mary Siembida, health educator from the Licking County Health Department, “While kids were riding the water slides and dancing to the music, there was also time for everyone to recognize there are alternatives to using tobacco and other drugs.” Everyday, 3,000 kids will smoke their first cigarette. That is more than 1 million teens a year and nearly one-third of them will die from a tobacco related illnesses. Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death and illness.

Health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, and stroke can result from poor nutrition and lack of exercise. Health Commissioner, Joe Ebel, added, “Based on current overweight and obesity trends, one-third of today’s children will develop diabetes over their lifetime. Promoting healthy lifestyles, including increased physical activity is a priority for the health department and our partners in the Licking County Wellness Coalition.” Ebel and Siembida agreed, “The evening was a success and a great opportunity to spread a healthy message.”

To find out more about the Licking County Wellness Coalition or to join their efforts, please visit www.lcwalc.org or call the Licking County Health Department at 740-349-6535.