

## **Resolution to Endorse Health-Promoting Activity and Healthy Foods in Vermont Schools**

*Endorsed by Vermont Medical Society Council  
January 29, 2004*

### **WHEREAS:**

- ?? Physical inactivity and poor nutrition are major risk factors for developing heart disease, cancer and diabetes and increase the risk of stroke, obesity, high blood pressure and low HDL.
- ?? 26% of Vermont children are at risk for or currently are overweight.
- ?? Only 17% of Vermont students take Physical Education classes five days a week, down from 28% in 2001.
- ?? 35% of Vermont students spend three or more hours per school day watching television, playing video games, or using the computer for fun.
- ?? Only 27% of Vermont students eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables.
- ?? Physical inactivity and poor diet account for at least 300,000 deaths among adults each year in the U.S. Obesity and excess weight in children and teens has tripled over the past four decades.
- ?? Research has shown that overweight children become overweight adults.
- ?? Poor nutrition and lack of physical activity lead to lower academic achievement. When children's basic nutritional needs are met, they learn better. Studies have shown that students who participated in school PE programs did not experience a harmful effect on standardized test scores even when less time was available for other academic subjects.
- ?? 90% of Americans believe there should be more physical education in schools; 85% of parents favor requiring students to take physical education every day at every grade level; and 92% of teachers and 91% of parents favor converting the selections in vending machines to healthy foods and beverages.

### **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Vermont Medical Society endorses:

- o Legislation that would: encourage and assist schools in increasing physical activity, encourage healthier choices in school vending machines and ensure that nutrition policies exist in all schools; and
- o The creation of model policies to assist schools in achieving the above goals, and the dissemination to schools of specific examples of age-appropriate physical activity and health food programs that can be realistically implemented.

### Additionally, the Vermont Medical Society agrees to:

- o Inform its members and, if possible, the general public of its endorsement of this Resolution; and
- o Inform the Governor and members of the Legislature of its endorsement of this Resolution, to the extent permitted by law, and urge its constituency to do so.