



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Children's Hospital Boston Receives \$7 Million Gift From New Balance Foundation**

Landmark Gift Establishes New Balance Foundation Center for  
Childhood Obesity Prevention, Clinical Research and Care

**January 28, 2011 (Boston, MA)**- Children's Hospital Boston announces a \$7 million gift from the New Balance Foundation to establish the New Balance Foundation Center for Childhood Obesity Prevention, Clinical Research and Care (the Center). The Boston-based athletic footwear and apparel maker's landmark gift will help Children's Hospital transform the lives of overweight and obese children nationwide that face a grim uphill battle: poor physical and social health as kids and serious illness and premature death as adults.

Currently, Children's Hospital's multidisciplinary pediatric obesity treatment program, Optimal Weight for Life (OWL), is one of the largest and most prominent in the U.S. It evaluates and treats more than 1,000 at-risk children annually.

"We're tremendously grateful for the New Balance Foundation's generous and historic gift," says David Ludwig, MD, PhD, a pioneering scientist and expert in childhood obesity prevention who will serve as the Center's director. "The funds will help consolidate and expand our clinical research, patient care and community health programs through a new Center to help turn the tide on the childhood obesity epidemic."

### **Prevention is the Goal**

Through the Center, Ludwig and his team will expand and enhance clinical care, continue obesity research, and develop resources to spread knowledge beyond Children's Hospital to a national and global audience. The goal is to promote prevention and to help kids reach a healthy weight and halt obesity-related diseases by teaching good nutrition and fitness habits and supporting research-tested weight loss techniques.

"New Balance Foundation is thrilled to increase our support of Children's Hospital Boston, Dr. Ludwig and his team's world-class work through the establishment of this Center," said Anne Davis, managing trustee, New Balance Foundation. "The Foundation's primary focus is the prevention of childhood obesity, and we will continue to fund initiatives that provide children and families with the tools they need to lead more active and healthy lives."

### **Tipping Back the Scales and Setting Healthy Futures in Motion**

Approximately 50 percent of OWL program patients are from low-income and inner-city backgrounds. Given the higher prevalence of childhood obesity in these communities, the Center will enhance programs and increase the number of kids cared for through the OWL Clinic at Children's Hospital and the New Balance Foundation "OWL on the Road" Program at five community health centers in Boston.

Children's Hospital will grow its program's fitness components for underserved young people through sports, games and dance. OWL clinicians will provide wrap-around services that aren't usually covered by medical insurance, such as group counseling, fitness consultation, gym and fitness memberships, and equipment through the New Balance Foundation Equipment & Fitness Scholarship Fund.



### **From Bench to Bedside**

A key element to building knowledge to prevent obesity is through research. Ludwig will lead a comprehensive study of data collected from thousands of children seen at OWL as well as the hospital's Primary Care, Adolescent Medicine, and Preventive Cardiology clinics.

"Public health oriented clinical research will help guide the development of novel approaches to prevention and treatment in the home, the community and the schools," says Ludwig.

### **Sharing Best Practices**

The Center's team will create a toolkit, community-based health guide, and a Web site that will become go-to resources for kids, families, nonprofit partners, community health centers, schools, and others. The Center will host meetings and nutrition/fitness-focused events each year and a national symposium every two years to bring together experts and other organizations to present obesity research findings and share ideas on best practices in translating research into clinical care.

The New Balance Foundation's \$7 million gift is the most significant gift provided to date in the history of the Foundation's giving. In 2008, Children's Hospital Boston's Optimal Weight for Life (OWL) Program announced a \$1 million grant over three years from the New Balance Foundation.

### **Children's Hospital Boston: [www.childrenshospital.org](http://www.childrenshospital.org)**

*Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard Medical School's primary pediatric teaching hospital, is a leading source of life-saving care and ground-breaking research for children in New England and worldwide. Children's Hospital has the largest research program at a children's medical center. US News and World Report's "Best Children's Hospitals" edition ranked Children's Hospital first in more pediatric specialties than any other children's hospital nationwide and was the only children's hospital to rank in the top three in all ten specialties. Follow us: [www.facebook.com/childrenshospitalboston](http://www.facebook.com/childrenshospitalboston), [www.twitter.com/childrensboston](http://www.twitter.com/childrensboston), [www.youtube.com/childrenshospital](http://www.youtube.com/childrenshospital)*

### **Optimal Weight for Life Program (OWL) [www.childrenshospital.org/owl](http://www.childrenshospital.org/owl)**

*The OWL Program was founded in 1996 to provide multi-disciplinary outpatient care for overweight/obese children and their families, yet there are limited funds available from health insurers for these services. The OWL program has been replicated in other clinics including Martha Eliot Health Center in Jamaica Plain (owned/operated by Children's Hospital). For a biography on Dr. Ludwig, please contact Amy Sweeney.*

### **New Balance Foundation: [www.newbalance.com](http://www.newbalance.com)**

*Established in 1981, the New Balance Foundation has served a deeply held mission: to support charitable organizations whose humanitarian efforts work for the betterment of our children and communities. The heart of our focus is the prevention of childhood obesity.*

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