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Fit Families Rock Wins WHA Honors
Childhood Obesity Intervention Program Honored With Global Vision Award
St. Mary's Janesville Hospital Proud to Continue Wellness Program

JANESVILLE, WI – Fit Families Rock is being honored with WHA's 2015 Global Vision Community Partnership Award. "This innovative and comprehensive, community partnership program to combat childhood obesity was selected for the honor because it successfully addresses a documented community health need, and produces measurable outcomes," says WHA Executive Director Jennifer Frank.

One in four children in Rock County are obese or overweight. The county ranks 67th out of Wisconsin's 72 counties in poor health behaviors. Working intensely with a small group of children and parents from ten to 12 families at a time, Fit Families Rock helps to reverse this trend through a comprehensive approach to diet, exercise and education about appropriate screen time and stress reduction behaviors.

"Over the course of this intensive, 11-week program, children and parents learn healthy eating habits and get fit together," says Fit Families Rock Creator Angela Sullivan, community education specialist for St. Mary's Janesville Hospital. "They access the latest research on weight loss and meet with a variety of experts who coach them on facing any challenges associated with adopting a healthier lifestyle."

Since its inception in 2013, Fit Families Rock has yielded several measurable outcomes, according to Sullivan. "Both children and adult participants reported a decrease in screen time and fast food consumption, and an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption," Sullivan says. "The adults also decreased their body mass index, and posted an average weight loss of approximately four pounds."

The program's success is a direct result of the community partnerships behind it, Sullivan says. In addition to St. Mary's Janesville Hospital, Fit Families Rock is supported by Dean Clinic, UW Extension, YMCA of Northern Rock County and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

"It has been a wonderful collaboration, and rewarding to be able to make a difference in people's lives," Sullivan says, "Not only to see the weight loss, but how parents and kids come together to have fun and become more active as a family."

The WHA Foundation's Global Vision Community Partnership Award is accompanied by a \$2,500 unrestricted grant to be used to continue the program in the coming year, according to WHA Executive Director Jennifer Frank.

The honor is a competitive grant award created in 1995 to recognize the efforts of WHA members in meeting the documented health needs in their communities through creativity, innovation, partnership, and collaboration. To date, the Award has honored 40 innovative programs in communities throughout Wisconsin.

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About St. Mary's Janesville Hospital

St. Mary's Janesville Hospital (www.stmarysjanesville.com) opened its doors in January 2012 to provide a full range of health services for Janesville, WI and the surrounding communities of Rock County.

In addition to its nationally recognized Obstetrics and Emergency Services departments, the 50-bed, not-for-profit, acute-care hospital provides general surgery, orthopedics and other women's and children's services. Sharing a campus with Dean Clinic- Janesville East, the hospital is committed to strategically identified opportunities for community health improvement in healthy living behaviors and tobacco cessation –important in reducing cancer risk. A recipient of the 2012 Forward Janesville Business of the Year and Build Wisconsin Awards, the hospital is a member of SSM Health, one of the nation's largest Catholic health care systems.

About SSM Health

SSM Health (www.ssmhc.com) is a Catholic, not-for-profit health system serving the comprehensive health needs of communities across the Midwest through one of the largest integrated delivery systems in the nation.

With care delivery sites in Illinois, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin, SSM includes 20 hospitals, more than 60 outpatient care sites, a pharmacy benefit company, an insurance company, two nursing homes, comprehensive home care and hospice services, a technology company, and two Accountable Care Organizations. With more than 1,300 employed physicians and nearly 30,000 employees in four states, SSM is one of the largest employers in every community it serves. An early adopter of the electronic health record (EHR), SSM is a national leader for the depth of its EHR integration.