



## PRESS RELEASE

Caitlin Loveitt, *Let's Go!*  
207-662-3825

### **657 Sites Are Recognized for Their Role in Raising a Healthier Generation of Kids**

**Portland, Maine** (October 7, 2016) –5-2-1-0 *Let's Go!* announced today that 657 sites across Maine and a few communities in New Hampshire are being honored for positively impacting children's health. 76 schools, 169 school cafeterias, 107 out-of-school programs, 192 child care programs, and 113 health care practices have adopted healthy eating and active living practices influencing the choices children make.

“More and more communities across Maine are embracing *Let's Go!*'s evidence-based strategies and we're seeing a difference in the health of our children. Kids are shunning sugary drinks, grabbing fruit during lunch, and making better media choices,” said Dr. Victoria Rogers, Director of the *Let's Go!* program. “This is the fifth year we've officially recognized sites for making healthy eating and physical activity a priority and I'm constantly impressed by their energy and hard work.

Introduced in 2012, the *Let's Go!* Recognition Program identifies and celebrates schools, out-of-school programs, child care programs and health care practices for their role in improving the health of all children. The program focuses on sustainable change and therefore recognizes various levels of change leading up to policy change: Bronze reflects a site implementing the program's five, evidence-based priority strategies, Silver acknowledges a site that has communicated these changes to parents and family members and Gold, the highest level of recognition, is reserved for sites that have written all five priority strategies into policy.

For the second year in a row, *Let's Go!* is recognizing school cafeterias for their contributions to cultivating health. “Cafeterias are making enormous strides to improve the health of the student

body and they deserve to be celebrated,” said Amy Bouchard, registered dietitian and *Let’s Go!* Program Coordinator.

In addition to building excitement and momentum, the recognition program quantifies the impact of *Let’s Go!*’s childhood obesity prevention efforts. Of the nearly 1,000 sites, across 229 towns, that *Let’s Go!* collaborates with, 67% met the criteria for recognition. A list of all 2016 *Let’s Go!* recognized sites is available at [www.letsgo.org](http://www.letsgo.org)

###

### About Recognition

Child care, school, and out-of-school sites are recognized for three levels of commitment to *Let’s Go!*’s five priority strategies:

1. Limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations, provide healthy choices.
2. Limit or eliminate sugary beverages, provide water.
3. Prohibit the use of food as a reward.
4. Provide opportunities for children to get physical activity every day.
5. Limit recreational screen time.

Health care sites are recognized for three practice specific, obesity prevention program components:

- 1) Providing consistent 5-2-1-0 messaging in offices.
- 2) Calculating BMI for all patients aged 2 and older.
- 3) Using the 5-2-1-0 Healthy Habits Questionnaire to have a respectful conversation about lifestyles with their patients.

School cafeterias’ recognition status is determined based on how many Smarter Lunchroom strategies they implemented during the school year. All strategies stem from behavioral economics and range from labeling vegetables with creative names to inviting a local “celebrity” to dine with students.

### About *Let’s Go!*

*Let's Go!* is a nationally recognized childhood obesity prevention program that reaches children and families where they live, learn, work and play. *Let's Go!* is committed to changing environments and policies at child cares, schools, out-of-school programs, health care practices, workplaces and communities. The program's multi-setting approach, daily 5-2-1-0 message (five or more fruits and vegetables, two hours or less of screen time, one hour or more of physical activity and zero sugary drinks) and 10 evidence-based strategies are used to effect change across the state of Maine. Strong leadership from The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center and collaboration across health systems and community health coalitions contribute to the program's success.