



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**UT School of Public Health's Program to Curb Childhood Obesity  
Garners "2006 Secretary's Innovation in Prevention Award"**

HOUSTON – (10/26/2006)—A University of Texas School of Public Health program that successfully tackles childhood obesity has received a prestigious 2006 Secretary's Innovation in Prevention Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The award was presented today at the National Prevention Summit: Prevention, Preparedness and Promotion Luncheon in Washington, D.C.

The program, CATCH (Coordinated Approach To Child Health), part of the school's Michael & Susan Dell Center for Advancement of Healthy Living, is a proven, school-based effort promoting physical activity, healthy food choices and tobacco prevention in elementary age children.

"CATCH is an example of how health education for children can be interesting, sustainable and highly effective," said HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt. "Their comprehensive approach to teaching and increasing general childhood health on this scale is a blueprint for success."

The award is part of "STEPS to a HealthierUS," an HHS initiative that advances President George Bush's goal of helping children live longer, better and healthier lives. It celebrates outstanding organizations that have implemented innovative and creative chronic disease prevention and health promotion programs.

"The honor recognizes that CATCH has taken research and translated that into a proven program in communities across Texas," said Deanna M. Hoelscher, Ph.D., director of the Dell Center for Healthy Living and associate professor of health promotion/behavioral sciences and nutrition in the UT School of Public Health.

The CATCH program reaches approximately 900,000 children in 1,911 elementary schools across Texas. It is the largest school-based health promotion study ever funded in the United States (through the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute).

Steven H. Kelder, Ph.D., co-principal investigator of CATCH and professor of epidemiology and behavioral sciences at the UT School of Public Health, accepted the award on behalf of CATCH.

A launch of the CATCH program is currently underway in Travis County with funding from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.

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