



## **American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR) Announces Partnership with InnerLink, Inc.**

***Collaborative effort to lead to improved reporting tools for health educators***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Reston, VA** – A partnership between two national advocates of physical fitness expects to advance the role of health educators in nurturing the wellness of the students in their care. The American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR) has partnered with InnerLink, Inc., a web-based provider of health, fitness, nutrition and safety resources for teachers.

“This is such a good fit for us, because InnerLink shares AAPAR’s commitment to educating professionals using the latest tools and techniques and to inclusive physical activity for all,” said Mariah Burton Nelson, AAPAR’s Executive Director.

“Our partnership with AAPAR will enable our technology and services to help all students to achieve and improve their physical fitness,” said Martha Lester Harris, Vice Chair and Co-founder of InnerLink, Inc. “AAPAR’s expertise in inclusive physical education and adaptive assessment techniques fits well with our mission to create new approaches to physical education and physical activity that will enable students to adopt healthy lifestyles.”

Now in use by schools throughout Pennsylvania, InnerLink has developed Health eTools for Schools<sup>®</sup>, a unique wellness resource for educators developed for and owned by the Highmark Foundation. Operated over a secure Internet portal, Health eTools for Schools provides the infrastructure to address the health needs of children from all angles. A complete online wellness community, Health eTools provides innovative lesson plans, hands-on activities, programs and interventions to help students make better food choices and become more physically active with the goal of developing lasting healthy habits.

Educators can use the highly customized and sophisticated data collection tools that the system provides to capture information and prepare reports for not only physical education functions, but others involved in the child’s well being, including parents, school nurses, nutritionists, wellness coordinators, administrators and state reporting agencies.

“Based on the Coordinated School Health Model developed by the CDC, Health eTools is designed to encourage best practices and provide a comprehensive approach to physical health,” said Harris. “The program can be used to track student health and fitness levels and motivate students to adopt healthy behaviors for a lifetime.”

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## **AAPAR Announces Partnership with InnerLink/ Add Last**

Through this partnership with AAPAR, InnerLink seeks to determine the effectiveness of the current Health eTools program as well as to identify areas of the fitness assessment and instructional modules of the program that can be improved upon. Health eTools was originally created as a solution to help Pennsylvania schools meet the required state and federal wellness guidelines to improve students' physical activity, health education and nutrition. Over the next few years, InnerLink expects to attract sponsors who will retain InnerLink to design a similar Wellness Community tailored to the needs of individual states.

Through extensive research and collaborative resources, InnerLink and AAPAR will soon begin work to define the needs of physical education professionals in school settings with regards to reporting and interpreting data on each student's physical fitness abilities. Contrary to the standardized measurement tools used in most schools now, Health eTools gathers data with a focus on the individual child, better enabling educators to help students achieve their physical best and optimal wellness.

"InnerLink's enhanced reporting system enables educators to interpret student abilities on an individual basis, catch problems as they arise and measure their improvements against their own physical best." said Harris.

In addition to research, the partnership will provide for AAPAR members to become certified to teach educators how to use the Health eTools for Schools technology. AAPAR will also assist InnerLink in expanding the program's adapted physical education resources to serve students with physical and mental disabilities.

### **About AAPAR**

A national organization, AAPAR serves more than 8,000 professors, teachers, trainers, and community leaders who promote meaningful physical activity and recreation across the lifespan. AAPAR advocates fitness and fun for all forever, with a focus on inclusive community-based programs.

AAPAR is one of five national associations that make up the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD.) AAHPERD is the largest organization of professionals supporting and assisting those involved in physical education, leisure, fitness, dance, health promotion and all specialties related to achieving a healthy lifestyle. AAHPERD provides members with a comprehensive and coordinated array of resources, support, and programs to help practitioners improve their skills and thus further the health and well-being of the American public.

The organization dates to 1885, when William Gilbert Anderson, two years out of medical school and an instructor of physical training at Adelphi Academy in Brooklyn, invited a group of people who were working in the gymnastic field to come together to discuss their profession. Today AAHPERD serves 23,000 members and has its headquarters in Reston, Virginia, 25 miles west of Washington DC.

### **About InnerLink**

Headquartered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, InnerLink, Inc., is an innovative developer of web-based health and safety solutions for schools, communities and healthcare professionals. The organization's mission is to help people live healthier, safer lives through education, collaboration, data sharing and community involvement. InnerLink's software provides the link for knowledge, skills and practical applications across disciplines and communities to improve the health and safety of its users. For more information, go to [www.theinnerlink.com](http://www.theinnerlink.com)