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Young Children in Arizona are Eating Less Fast Food

Result is Among Many in the 2010 Arizona Health Survey Results

PHOENIX – Jan. 31, 2011 – Young children in Arizona are eating less fast food according to the latest analysis from the 2010 Arizona Health Survey conducted by St. Luke’s Health Initiatives (SLHI).

The number of children younger than six years of age who ate fast foods at least once a week declined by 14 percent from 2008 to 2010. In 2008, 76 percent ate fast foods at least once a week. In 2010 that number dropped to 61 percent.

“This finding is very encouraging,” says SLHI Associate Director Kim VanPelt, “as is the potential reason for the change. It appears that Arizona children and their parents may be listening and heeding the education they are receiving about healthy food choices.”

Data analysis found that the decline is correlated to a higher incidence of physicians stressing the importance of eating healthy when speaking with parents. In 2010, 78-percent of parents said their child’s physician talked to them about the importance of “eating healthy” compared to 68 percent in 2008.

The uptick in education efforts likely reflects the practice of stated American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) priorities. According to the 2007 *AAP Policy Statement: Prevention of Pediatric Overweight and Obesity*, “Families should be educated and empowered through anticipatory guidance to recognize the impact they have on their children’s development of lifelong habits of physical activity and nutritious eating.”

Findings will continue to be released regularly over the coming months. Results, details and the opportunity to request data files can all be found at www.arizonahealthsurvey.org.

About Arizona Health Survey

One of the most comprehensive statewide efforts ever undertaken to inform health, health care and well-being, the 2010 Arizona Health Survey collected data on 8,200 adults and 2,100 children across more than 100 data points. It was funded by SLHI, First Things First and The Governor’s Office of Children, Youth and Families. www.arizonahealthsurvey.org

About SLHI

St. Luke’s Health Initiatives (SLHI) is a Phoenix-based public foundation focused on Arizona health policy and strength-based community development. www.slhi.org.

About First Things First

First Things First is a voter-approved initiative to expand and enhance early education and health services for Arizona children 5 years old and younger.

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