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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 24, 2008
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MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN SBLI KIDS FITNESS DAY

Four Commonwealth Schools are Rewarded for Healthy Habits

WOBURN - The Massachusetts Amateur Sports Foundation (MASF) along with the Savings Bank Life Insurance Company of Massachusetts (SBLI) are proud to declare the winners of the SBLI Kids Fitness Day for May 2008. The four recipients of a \$500 grant are Ashby Elementary (Ashby), West Brookfield Elementary (West Brookfield), Alice A. Macomber Primary School (Westport) and Lincoln Hancock Elementary (Quincy).

As usual, the reactions from the schools that participated were very positive. One of the winners, West Brookfield Elementary School, found the SBLI Kids Fitness Day to be a great opportunity to encourage school unity and an active lifestyle.

“We had a great time this year on SBLI Kid's Fitness Day,” said Jean Sweet, physical education/health education teacher at West Brookfield Elementary School. “We split the kids into small groups. All the groups could plan activities to do during the half hour with the older kids being in charge of each group. The groups walked the track, did fitness activities and played different games. The kids had a lot of fun and were excited to be able to get outside as a whole school. It really helped to stress the point to get up and get going.”

The SBLI Kids Fitness Day is designed to motivate the Massachusetts youth to participate in physical activity, to educate them on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, and to promote school spirit. The program has been a staple for the kids at Ashby Elementary School.

“Our school has taken part in Kids Fitness Day from the start,” said Jan Porter. “As the school nurse, the idea was very appealing – a wonderful opportunity to promote physical activity for all of us, students and staff alike – and it doesn't cost a thing! We have been promoting heart health through teaching students about not smoking, eating nutritiously and getting exercise. Kids Fitness Day has fit right into our plans. We chose to do a ‘power-walk’ for our 30 minutes of activity because everyone can take part, from our pre-schoolers to our retiring staff members!”

SBLI Kids Fitness day is a free, one-day event for Massachusetts elementary and middle school students. Participating schools and students engage in a 30 minute segment of physical activity throughout the month of May. Past activities have included neighborhood walks, track and field day and dancing. After the schools completed their activity with 100% student participation, each was entered into a drawing to win one of four \$500 grants. The grant is awarded to the school to support health and physical education programs.

“We plan on getting new playground equipment, a new ball pump and small items that are fitness related for physical education,” explained Sweet.

“We were thrilled to hear that we won \$500 after the most recent Kids Fitness Day,” said Porter. “We have chosen to refurbish our swing set on the playground, which will benefit our school and the community, as well.”

SBLI and the Bay State Games are planning another fitness day in November 2009. For your school to receive more information about SBLI Kids Fitness Days, please call the Bay State Games office (781) 932-6555 or e-mail kidschallenge@baystategames.org.