

## Remarks of American Heart Association President Alice Jacobs, MD May 3, 2005

Good morning and welcome.

Today, the American Heart Association embarks on a journey unlike any other we've ever taken. We are proud to be standing here with Former President Clinton and Governor Huckabee as we forge a new alliance to ensure that today's youth grow up to be one of America's healthiest generations.

The American Heart Association is concerned that the growing rate of obesity is putting the health of our nation's children at risk. And we realize that we must act now if we are going to spare them the consequences that come with poor lifestyle choices.

One example of the American Heart Association's commitment to educating Americans on obesity is the new statistical sourcebook that we are releasing today along with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It's called *A Nation at Risk: Obesity in the United States*. Copies are available for each of you today.

The American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation share common priorities and interests in reaching children and other stakeholders with important messages on preventing childhood obesity. There is great synergy among our organizations. We are striving to achieve the same goals for American children, and we bring many complementary assets to the table that will serve us well as we work together over the next decade.

President Clinton and Governor Huckabee are natural advocates for this issue.

President Clinton's passion was evident during his administration when he worked on many levels to advance the battle against heart disease and stroke. And his personal experience with heart disease drives him even further to ensure that our nation's children make wise lifestyle choices that prevent them from developing chronic diseases such as heart disease.

Gov. Huckabee has been instrumental in creating policies in his state that promote healthy lifestyles and he has been an excellent personal example of what can be accomplished when one takes steps to adopt heart-healthy habits.

We are honored to be working with such distinguished partners.

Now I'd like to introduce Dr. Robert Eckel. Dr. Eckel is President-Elect of the American Heart Association and a foremost expert in the issue of nutrition, physical activity and metabolism. He is Professor of Medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. He has served on and chaired many committees within the American Heart Association including the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism committee. His research focuses on the impact of nutrition and hormones on lipid and carbohydrate metabolism and has examined the nutritional/metabolic predictors of weight change, lipid disorders and atherosclerosis.

Dr. Eckel...

DR. ECKEL SPEAKS



(AFTER DR. ECKEL'S REMARKS)

Before we get started on our questions, I'd like to extend a special thanks to Principal Rosa Arredondo, the students of P.S. 128 and the New York City Schools for hosting us today. P.S. 128 is an example of a school that is providing its students with opportunities to learn about and adopt healthy behaviors, including the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart program.

We've been talking about encouraging healthy habits among kids. It is a fitting ending for this event to actually see some of the kids who we are talking about in action. We have with us today students from the Lincoln Elementary School Jump Rope For Heart Demonstration Team from Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey. Jump Rope for Heart is an American Heart Association program in 30,000 schools that educates children about heart health.

