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James Carbone Correspondent

Dietitian Wendy Crump is the founder of "Kids on the Run," an after-school program that teaches kids the importance of diet and exercise.

## Dietitian battles child obesity epidemic

By Robert S. Hong  
Staff Writer

For South Pasadena dietitian Wendy Crump, it's all about the kids.

The ambitious mother of four has spent the last 15 years showing clients how to be healthy. And with her "Kids on the Run" program, she is reaching more people than ever before.

Crump, who has been operating a private practice for the last seven years, noticed a negative trend with the children she worked with.

"I began noticing how critical it was to start a program for children because the epidemic of childhood obesity is so prevalent," she said.

A contributor to multiple publications and former author of a popular health blog at Capessa.com, Crump decided to take matters into her own hands.

"I thought ... how can we make a difference with our children and really impact their lives?" she said. "There's really nothing around that offers both a fitness and nutrition component."

In 2005, she sought to change that and combat childhood obesity in a way that would appeal to both children and their parents.

She developed an eight-week program that incorporated both diet and exercise, wherein she would work with the entire family to reach their children's fitness goals.

Each week, new goals were set for the children, who were taught how to make healthy decisions in their day-to-day lives.

"What I wanted to do was remove the parent from being the 'food police' and really put the children in charge and give them the tools to empower themselves," she said.

Her diet programs are tailored to the individual child, covering topics from basic nutrition to what to eat when out at a restaurant, she said.

But she still had dreams of bringing healthy lifestyles to more children, and saw schools as a way to do that.

This school year, the Kids on the Run program was implemented at St. Philip the Apostle school in Pasadena, she said.

The school incorporates the basic principles of her program with a healthy lunch program and a health-conscious curriculum, Crump said.

She hopes to expand the program to more schools.

For anyone who wants to start making changes in their children's health habits, Crump offers this advice: "Recognize that your children follow your lead. So if you make healthy food choices and exercise on a regular basis, your children will follow."

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