



Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)
191 Bethpage-Sweet Hollow Road, Old Bethpage, NY 11804
Phone: 516-870-1600 Fax: 516-870-1660

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FROM: Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)
191 Bethpage-Sweet Hollow Road, Old Bethpage, NY 11804

CONTACT: Patrice Radowitz, Tel: [516-870-1621](tel:516-870-1621)/Cell: [631-553-7432](tel:631-553-7432)/
Email: pradowitz@familyres.org
Andy Robles: 516-603-0447
Email: arobles@roblesconsultingservices.com

***Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) Partners with
Fitness PLUS to Recognize National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
this May***

Old Bethpage, NY (June 04, 2014) – In recognition of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month in May, Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) has partnered with Fitness PLUS to raise awareness about the important role physical activity plays in maintaining health.

Since March of 2014, the owners of Fitness PLUS have donated 4 unlimited use gym memberships (the cost of a typical membership is several hundred dollars per year) to FREE's Program without Walls based out of East Setauket. The men and women of FREE visit the gym twice a week to take advantage of the gym's state of the art equipment and enjoy weight training and cardiovascular machines.

“Fitness PLUS understands that the people who receive our services have limited funds, but recognize the benefits that exercise and physical activity can provide to a healthy lifestyle and provided the offer without hesitation,” said Robert S. Budd, CEO, FREE. “The fully integrated opportunity for individuals with and without disabilities has quickly resulted in new friendships and opportunities for socialization. The individuals attending our programs are benefitting from engaging in community fitness with other adults who can provide support and encouragement and help build life skills.”

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“Disabilities touch all our lives,” said Bonnie Liotine, President, Fitness PLUS. “Everyone knows a person with disabilities. We are happy to provide a positive atmosphere here at Fitness Plus.”

Research has shown that adults with developmental disabilities are more likely to lead sedentary lifestyles and seven times as likely to report inadequate emotional support, compared with adults without disabilities¹. Adults with developmental and other disabilities are also more likely to report being in fair or poor health than adults without disabilities. According to a public health report adults with developmental disabilities are at greater risk of having chronic health conditions compared with non-disabled adult’s ².

According to the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, physical activity can help control more than just weight. Regular exercise can improve mental health, and lower the risk for early death, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. However, in 2011 only one in five U.S. adults participated in enough physical activity to gain substantial health benefits.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults:

- Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week. Moderate activity includes things like walking fast, dancing, swimming, and raking leaves.

- Do muscle-strengthening activities like lifting weights and using exercises bands at least 2 days a week.

About Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) founded in 1977 and headquartered in Old Bethpage, benefits and proudly supports more than 3,500 individuals with intellectual disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. It is the mission of FREE to help individuals of all abilities realize their full potential. FREE provides a diverse array of supports and services including: housing, recovery services, transition to work, employment, day, community and family services, respite, crisis services, education and after-school support, primary and specialty health care and advocacy. For more information, please call 516-870-7000 or visit www.familyres.org.

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1 Center for Development and Learning, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC

2 Public Health Report: Health Disparities Among Adults with Developmental Disabilities, Adults with Other Disabilities, and Adults not reporting Disability in North Carolina, 2004