

C a m p a i g n C o n t a c t

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F o r R e l e a s e : I m m e d i a t e

**Westport Weston Family Y Hosts Event
to Launch 2007 *Strong Kids*
Annual Fundraising Campaign**



Westport CT, September 10, 2007 – Earlier this evening in the Board Room of the Bedford Building, The Westport Weston Family Y marked the start of this year’s *Strong Kids* annual fundraising campaign with a launch event.

Hosted by the Association’s CEO, Helene Weir, and Vice President of Operations, David Cohen, the guests for this event included volunteers who serve on the Family Y boards and staff members as well as donors who have contributed to past *Strong Kids* campaigns. Remarks by Christine DePinto, a vice president on the Board of Directors, and Randee Bok, Senior Director of the Mahackeno Outdoor Center and Community Programs, focused on the importance of this fundraising effort – for those who give as well as those who benefit from the donations.

The event was catered by the popular Westport restaurant and Family Y neighbor, Zest, and featured a dance performance from the movie “Hairspray” by members of the Westport Weston Family Y Dance Center Petite A Company (Evie Chodock, Katie Cion, Caroline Cohen, Emily Korn and Declan O’Hern) under the direction of Marlayne Schaeffer.

Each year, the *Strong Kids* Campaign is the primary fundraising initiative for the Family Y. According to David Cohen, last year’s campaign raised over \$109,000 in charitable donations and matching gifts from individuals and corporations. “More than 75% of the donations received were in the amount of \$1,000 or more. As a result of this generosity, the Family Y was able to grant close to \$150,000 in financial aid to families and individuals so they could participate fully in the many programs we offer.”

Continuing with the theme “Help Us Help Others ... Give to the *Strong Kids* Campaign,” the fundraising goal for this year is \$200,000. Helene Weir notes that “one of our most important



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goals is to positively impact the quality of life in the community we serve. To accomplish this, we work to ensure that every child – as well as every adult and every family – has equal access to the Family Y.”

The Westport Weston Family Y is known as the place where people of different backgrounds, faiths, incomes and abilities come together in a common bond to build strong kids, strong families and strong communities. “Donations to the *Strong Kids* Campaign help us provide financial assistance, maintain a safe and fully accredited facility,” Helene says, “and deliver programs that focus on honesty, caring, respect and responsibility.”

David observes that even a small amount can make a difference. “A contribution of \$125 will provide a 10-week basketball class for a child with special needs, so we hope that people will give what they can.” People interested in contributing to the *Strong Kids* Campaign are encouraged to contact David at 226-8981 x109. “Not all of our costs are covered by membership and program fees. We rely on the generosity of our neighbors to allow us to fulfill our obligations to the community.”

About the Westport Weston Family Y

The Westport Weston Family Y is an affiliate of the YMCA of the USA and a partner agency of the United Way of Westport and Weston. Its mission is to build strong kids, strong families and strong communities. The Westport Weston Family Y is governed by two boards comprised of 43 community volunteers. For additional information about the organization and programs, visit www.westporty.org.