

## NEWS RELEASE

March 27, 2013

For Immediate Release

Contact: Denise Ringenberg, Health Educator & Helena T. Janousek – 308-345-4223

### **Over 1,000 Students Participate in SWNPHD TOUCAN Program**



Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) brought their TOUCAN program to 1,079 students for K-3<sup>rd</sup> grades in southwest Nebraska elementary schools this winter and spring.

“TOUCAN is Teaching Our yoUth Choices: Activities and Nutrition”, explains Helena T. Janousek, TOUCAN coordinator at SWNPHD. “Our goal is to reduce childhood obesity by providing education to children at a young age. We use stories, puppets, and activities specific for each grade to help students learn about MyPlate, food groups, calories, and staying active.”

This is the sixth year for the TOUCAN program. “We started with McCook Elementary School our first year and have expanded to eight schools,” explains Janousek. “We also coordinate Nebraska Kids Fitness Day at McCook for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in the health district. TOUCAN is a great introduction that builds each year on making healthy choices.”

Elementary schools participating in the 2012-2013 school year include: Chase County, Dundy County/Stratton, Hitchcock County, McCook, Medicine Valley, Perkins County, Southwest, and Wauneta/Palisade. TOUCAN was taught during physical education classes.

“I was very pleased with the outstanding PE teachers that we worked with at each school,” shared Janousek. “We appreciate their teamwork that allows us to bring TOUCAN to their gym. Students were great with their enthusiasm and energy to learn.”

Each student received a bag to take home containing a bookmark, pencil, sticker, TOUCAN pin and MyPlate information to share with their parents.

SWNPHD serves the counties of Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins, and Red Willow. For additional information, please contact Janousek at email: [respice@swhealth.ne.gov](mailto:respice@swhealth.ne.gov) or call 308-345-4223. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, McCook – one block north of Arby’s. You can also follow us on Facebook & Twitter or our website at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov).



####