

WH kicks off summer exercise series on South Lawn

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE (AP) –WASHINGTON —

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First lady Michelle Obama didn't just talk. She moved, too.

After announcing plans for a summer of activity on the South Lawn to encourage kids to exercise more, Mrs. Obama shed her sweater and got down on the plush grass Tuesday with groups of 8- to 10-year-olds to do stretches, squats, lunges, planks and run various obstacle courses.

It was all part of her "Let's Move" campaign against childhood obesity.

"The whole important word in 'Let's Move' is 'move,' right?" she said before the games began.

Mrs. Obama said too many children don't get the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity, and that the lack of exercise is one of many factors contributing to an epidemic of childhood obesity in the United States.

One in three American children are overweight or obese, increasing their risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure and other diseases.

To show youngsters different ways of getting that recommended hour of daily exercise, the White House plans to invite local children, sports leagues, community programs and coaches to play sports and other activities on the South Lawn throughout the summer. Coaches from Washington's major professional sports teams — the Redskins, Capitals, Nationals, Wizards and Mystics — helped out on Tuesday.

Mrs. Obama urged the 84 students, all from Washington public elementary schools, to use what they learned to help get their family members and friends moving too.

"What I want you guys to do is to make a commitment that you will do your best to get that 60 minutes in every single day," she said. "Will you promise me that?"

They promised they would.

After romping with the kids, Mrs. Obama and her aides persuaded some members of the media in attendance to join her in a few exercises.