TAKING ACTION, CHANGING ODDS
LIVESTRONG® AT THE YMCA

Fact Sheet: September 2015

PROGRAM OVERVIEW
LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is an evidence-based program that helps adult cancer survivors reclaim their health and well-being following a cancer diagnosis. Participating YMCAs create a welcoming community in which survivors can improve their strength and physical fitness, diminish the severity of therapy side effects, develop supportive relationships, and improve their quality of life. Since 2007, the LIVESTRONG Foundation has been the YMCA’s partner in developing and delivering LIVESTRONG at the YMCA.

DESCRIPTION AND GOALS
- Small group, supportive environment
- 12-week program with two 90-minute sessions per week
- Includes cardiovascular conditioning, strength training, balance, and flexibility exercises
- Held in YMCA “Wellness Centers”
- Evaluation includes Functional and Quality of Life assessments before and after participation
- Facilitated by YMCA-certified Instructors

WHO QUALIFIES?
Any adult 18 years old or older who is living with or beyond cancer treatment.

PROGRAM REACH:
- More than 33,116 SURVIVORS SERVED
- More than 2,426 STAFF CERTIFIED as Instructors
- Offered by 174 Y associations in more than 453 COMMUNITIES IN 37 STATES

PROGRAM IMPACT:
LIVESTRONG at the YMCA has to proven to:
- help survivors MEET OR EXCEED the recommended amount of physical activity
- help survivors SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE their cardiovascular endurance
- IMPROVE cancer survivors’ overall quality of life and DECREASE their cancer-related fatigue.

PARTICIPANTS REPORT:
- High levels of SATISFACTION
- STRONG CONNECTIONS with other group members
- PLANS TO CONTINUE EXERCISE after the program
PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

Michelle Lavitt participated in the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program at the Huntington YMCA in Huntington, NY. Read how she thanked Y director Tina Graziose:

"Dear Tina,

Thank you so very much for offering the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program here in Huntington... Less than a year ago, I was a healthy, somewhat fit 38-year-old living a perfectly normal life. I was happily married with two kids, living in the suburbs. One day I noticed a lump in my breast, and then my life turned upside down. I had Stage 2 breast cancer and needed a double mastectomy. And chemotherapy. And radiation. And hormone therapy. And more surgery. So I went through all of the treatments as I was instructed to do. And they were miserable, as everyone knows they are. During this time, I kept telling myself that when everything was over, I'd start exercising again (I used to go to an aerobics class two times a week) and I would get my health back. Only it wasn't, or should I say, isn't that simple. I gained 10 pounds during chemotherapy, which actually is quite common. But the treatments slowed down my metabolism, so losing weight is extra difficult. Two minutes into the warm-up, my heart was pounding and my muscles burning. I did what I could, which wasn’t much. It was so frustrating and scary that I spent most of the classes fighting back tears. I frequently overdid it, and felt sick as a result. Then a friend told me about LIVESTRONG at the YMCA.

I am halfway through the program now, and already I feel like a different person. I have the energy to make it through the day without napping. I can make it up a flight of stairs without stopping to rest. I can carry my daughter again. And I feel confident that I am strong enough to do these things, because I am getting back in shape in a very safe way. The LIVESTRONG at the YMCA instructors took time to show me how to gradually build up my strength without overdoing it. They showed me how to safely work the part of my body where I had lost muscle during my surgery. They taught me different types of exercises, stretches and training techniques. Instead of being frustrated about what I cannot do, I am proud of what I can do. The instructors are all patient, kind, and understanding, and the survivors in the group all are very warm and friendly. It is an extremely enthusiastic and encouraging group of people. LIVESTRONG at the YMCA has made an incredible difference in my recovery from breast cancer. I can’t thank you enough for offering it, and I hope you continue this program so that others can heal.

Sincerely,
Michelle Lavitt"

PLANS FOR PROGRAM GROWTH

YMCA of the USA (Y–USA) has pledged to expand its support of LIVESTRONG at the YMCA in its 2014–2017 strategic plan, “Delivering our Cause” and is working to accomplish four strategic objectives to ensure the program’s growth and quality:

1. INCREASE NUMBER OF ASSOCIATIONS OFFERING THE PROGRAM

Currently 174 corporate associations offer the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program, and we are striving to reach 250 by 2017. In 2015, 34 new Ys were selected to become providers and new opportunities for growth are expected for 2016.

2. INCREASE NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

As cancer treatments improve, the number of people living beyond a cancer diagnosis continues to grow rapidly. With our presence in more than 10,000 communities, the Y is uniquely positioned to support this growing population and has pledged to increase the number of cancer survivors served to at least 10,000 per year. To do so, we are preparing new YMCA Associations to implement the program while encouraging current providers to recruit more participants and spread the program to additional branches.

3. INCREASE PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHO BECOME Y MEMBERS

Participation in LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is often a cancer survivor’s first step in the journey toward recovery. Y membership can provide the support a survivor needs to continue their pursuit of health and wellness. Y–USA is working to identify and deploy strategies and tools to help Ys increase the number of program participants who become Y members.

4. ENSURE PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCE IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

In order to become a LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program site, Ys go through a rigorous but transformational organizational capacity-building process to help them serve cancer survivors with knowledge, empathy and skill. Staff who seek to become certified Instructors for the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA exercise program must complete over 16 hours of training on cancer, communication skills, exercise modification and safety to ensure that the program experience is effectively tailored to the abilities and personal goals of each participant. A recent research study demonstrated that these efforts are working: cancer survivors who participated in the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA exercise program exhibited improvements in physical activity, fitness and quality of life.

TO LEARN MORE: Contact livestrongattheymca@ymca.net
PROGRAM PROVIDERS

ALABAMA
Birmingham Metropolitan YMCA, Birmingham

CALIFORNIA
Channel Islands YMCA, Santa Barbara
YMCA of Greater Long Beach, Long Beach

COLORADO
Ed & Ruth Lehman YMCA, Longmont
YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, Colorado Springs

CONNECTICUT
Greater Waterbury YMCA, Waterbury
New Canaan Community YMCA, New Canaan
Southington-Cheshire YMCA, Southington
Wallingford YMCA, Wallingford
Wilton Family YMCA, Inc., Wilton
YMCA of Greater Hartford, Hartford

FLORIDA
Central Florida Metro YMCA, Orlando
SKY Family YMCA, Venice
Tampa YMCA, Tampa
Volusia/Flagler YMCA, DeLand,
YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg
YMCA of the Suncoast, Clearwater
YMCA of West Central Florida, Lakeland

GEORGIA
Metropolitan Augusta YMCA, Augusta
Moultrie YMCA, Moultrie
Tiftona YMCA, Inc., Tifton
YMCA of Coastal Georgia, Savannah

IOWA
Burlington Area Community YMCA–YWCA, Burlington
Scott County Family YMCA, Davenport
YMCA of Greater Des Moines, Des Moines
YMCA of Marshalltown, Marshalltown
Cedar Rapids Metro YMCA, Cedar Rapids

IDAHO
Treasure Valley YMCA, Boise

ILLINOIS
Kishwaukee Family YMCA, Sycamore
Prairie Valley YMCA, Elgin
Two Rivers YMCA, Moline
YMCA of Berwyn–Cicero, Berwyn
YMCA of Rock River Valley, Rockford

INDIANA
YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne
YMCA of Greater Indianapolis, Indianapolis
YMCA of Michiana, Inc., South Bend
YMCA of Southern Indiana, New Albany
YMCA of Valparaiso Indiana, Inc., Valparaiso

KANSAS
YMCA of Southwest Kansas, Garden City
YMCA of Wichita, Wichita

KENTUCKY
YMCA of Central Kentucky, Lexington
YMCA of Greater Louisville, Louisville

LOUISIANA
YMCA of Greater New Orleans, New Orleans

MASSACHUSETTS
Athol Area YMCA, Athol
Cape Cod YMCA, West Barnstable
Hockomock YMCA, North Attleboro
MetroWest YMCA, Framingham
Old Colony YMCA, Brockton
Tri–Community YMCA of Southbridge, Southbridge
YMCA of Attleboro, Attleboro
YMCA of Central Massachusetts, Worcester
YMCA of Greater Boston, Boston
YMCA of Greater Springfield, Springfield
YMCA of Metro North, Peabody
YMCA of the North Shore, Beverly
YMCA of the Southcoast, New Bedford

MAINE
Bath Area Family YMCA, Bath
YMCA of Southern Maine, Portland
Kennebec Valley YMCA, Augusta
Boothbay Regional YMCA, Boothbay Harbor
Mount Desert Island YMCA, Bar Harbor
Penobscot Bay YMCA, Rockport

MICHIGAN
Ann Arbor YMCA, Ann Arbor
Greater Marinette–Menominee YMCA, Menominee
Niles–Buchanan YMCA, Niles
YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids
YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo
YMCA of Marquette County, Marquette

MINNESOTA
Itasca County Family YMCA, Grand Rapids
YMCA of Mankato, Mankato
YMCA of Rochester, Rochester
YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities, Minneapolis

MISSOURI
Greater St. Louis YMCA, St. Louis
Jefferson City Area YMCA*, Jefferson City
Ozarks Regional YMCA, Springfield
Tri–State Family YMCA, Neosho
YMCA of Greater Kansas City, Kansas City

MONTANA
Billings Family YMCA, Billings

NORTH CAROLINA
Blue Ridge Assembly YMCA, Black Mountain
Cleveland County YMCA, Shelby
Gaston County YMCA, Gastonia
Greensboro YMCA, Greensboro
Stanly County Family YMCA, Albemarle
YMCA of Greater Charlotte, Charlotte
YMCA of Northwest North Carolina, Winston–Salem
YMCA of the Triangle, Raleigh
YMCA of Western North Carolina, Asheville
YMCA of Wilmington, Wilmington
PROGRAM PROVIDERS con’t

NORTH DAKOTA
Grand Forks YMCA Family Center, Grand Forks
Missouri Valley Family YMCA, Bismarck
YMCA of Cass & Clay Counties, Fargo

NEBRASKA
Siouxland YMCA, Sioux City
YMCA of Greater Omaha, Omaha

NEW HAMPSHIRE
YMCA of Greater Manchester, Manchester
YMCA of Greater Nashua, Merrimack

NEW JERSEY
Burlington County YMCA, Mt. Laurel
Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA, Vineland
Gateway Family YMCA, Elizabeth
Hunterdon County YMCA, Annandale
Princeton Family YMCA, Princeton
Somerset Hills YMCA, Somerville
The Community YMCA, Shrewsbury
YMCA of Fanwood-Scotch Plains, Scotch Plains
YMCA of Madison NJ, Inc., Madison
YMCA of Metuchen, Metuchen
YMCA of Summit NJ, Summit

NEW YORK
Frost Valley YMCA, Claryville
Greater Syracuse YMCA, Syracuse
Saratoga Regional YMCA, Saratoga Springs
YMCA of Broome County, Binghamton
YMCA of Buffalo Niagara, Buffalo
YMCA of the Capital District, Albany
YMCA of Greater New York, New York
YMCA of Greater Rochester, Rochester
YMCA of Long Island, Glen Cove
YMCA of Rye NY, Rye

OHIO
Family YMCA of Lancaster & Fairfield County, Lancaster
Greater Miami Valley YMCA, Hamilton
Marion Family YMCA, Marion
YMCA of Central Ohio, Columbus
YMCA of Greater Cleveland, Cleveland
YMCA of Greater Dayton, Dayton
YMCA of Greater Toledo, Toledo
YMCA of Mansfield, Mansfield
YMCA of Youngstown, Youngstown

OKLAHOMA
YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City, Oklahoma City
YMCA of Greater Tulsa, Tulsa

PENNSYLVANIA
Community YMCA of Eastern Delaware County, Landsdowne
Greater Scranton YMCA, Scranton
North Penn YMCA, Colmar
Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA, Wilkes-Barre
YMCA of Warren County, Warren
York and York County YMCA, York

RHODE ISLAND
Providence Metropolitan YMCA, Providence

SOUTH CAROLINA
YMCA of Columbia South Carolina, Columbia

TENNESSEE
YMCA of Bristol, Bristol
YMCA of Memphis and the Mid-South, Memphis
YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga, Chattanooga

TEXAS
Austin Metropolitan YMCA, Austin
YMCA of Arlington, Arlington
YMCA of Central Texas, Waco
YMCA Greater El Paso, El Paso
YMCA of Greater San Antonio, San Antonio
YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas, Dallas
YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth, Fort Worth
YMCA of the Greater Houston Area, Houston

VIRGINIA
Peninsula Metro YMCA, Newport News
Southside Virginia Family YMCA, Farmville

VERMONT
Greater Burlington YMCA, Burlington

WASHINGTON
Skagit Valley Family YMCA, Mount Vernon
South Sound YMCA, Olympia
YMCA of Greater Seattle, Seattle
YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties, Tacoma
YMCA of Snohomish County, Everett
YMCA of the Inland Northwest, Spokane

WISCONSIN
Door County YMCA, Sturgeon Bay
Greater Green Bay YMCA, Inc., Green Bay
Kettle Moraine YMCA, West Bend
La Crosse Area Family YMCA, La Crosse
Manitowoc-Two Rivers YMCA, Manitowoc
Oshkosh Community YMCA, Oshkosh
Racine Family YMCA, Racine
Sheboygan County YMCA, Sheboygan
South Wood County YMCA, Port Edwards
Stateline Family YMCA of Beloit, Inc., Beloit
Stevens Point Area YMCA, Stevens Point
Wausau-Woodson YMCA, Wausau
YMCA of Dane County, Madison
YMCA of Eau Claire, Eau Claire
YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee, Milwaukee
YMCA of the Fox Cities, Appleton
YMCA of the Northwoods, Rhinelander

WYOMING
Sheridan County YMCA, Sheridan