

## “Frisbee Frenzee” at Manheim Central High School

Several months ago, an e-newsletter from the nrg Powered by Choice campaign sparked Physical Education Teacher Matt Schwartz’s wheels to turn.

The e-mail offered his school, Manheim Central High School (Lancaster County), a free Ultimate Frisbee kit and the idea to host an Ultimate Frisbee tournament. During the spring of the 2009/2010 school year, the nrg Powered by Choice campaign, with funding from the Highmark Foundation’s Healthy High 5 initiative, offered 50 Ultimate Frisbee kits at no cost to middle and high schools in Highmark’s 49-county service region.

In response to the school’s growth screening results, Schwartz wanted to bring a physical activity to his school which would allow all students, athletic or not, to participate – “Frisbee Frenzee” emerged. It was Schwartz’s goal to put together a fun, exciting event that students could look forward to each year. He also wanted to strive for a theme of school connectedness.

“My idea was to have an event that combined outside activity with having fun,” remarked Schwartz. “During gym class, students sometimes view physical activity as work because it is graded; this event encouraged stress-free activity and fun without the worries of making a passing grade.”

A beautiful May afternoon brought out more than 900 students – freshman through seniors – for the inaugural “Frisbee Frenzee.” The event spanned across 18 athletic fields at Manheim Central High School. Each student was encouraged to participate in at least 30-35 minutes of the two-hour, non-competitive activity.

Even with the warm temperatures, approximately 85 percent of the students took to the fields. Teams were created alphabetically by grade. This strategy allowed for equal players on all teams and encouraged teams from being created ‘clique-free.’

As a fundraiser during the event, Schwartz had t-shirts screened with the “Frisbee Frenzee” title and nrg Powered by Choice logo. The t-shirts were sold at a minimal cost with the idea of raising enough funds to help bring the event back to the school the following school year.

According to several Manheim Central High School students, the event was a great success:

“The whole school was doing one thing as a group, everyone came together as one, and there was no status and labels.”



"This was something different...not your regular gym class activities like baseball or basketball."

"I didn't know much about Frisbee before today; but I worked up a sweat and burned calories."

"I enjoyed getting outside for an activity and not being graded on it!"

"It's still school, but it's fun!"

"No cliques involved, no one left out; everyone could participate"

With only a few short weeks to plan and no funding, Schwartz and co-event coordinator, Becca Yerkes, did a terrific job pulling the event together. "Thanks to the support of the administration, faculty, staff, and the Medical Careers Club, the 'Frisbee Frenzee' was a highly successful event," exclaimed Schwartz.

The nrg Powered by Choice campaign is a program of the Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital.



The campaign is funded by Highmark Healthy High 5, a children's health promotion initiative of the Highmark Foundation, created to change behavior in young people ages 6-18 and improve eating habits and physical activity. For more information, visit [www.highmarkhealthyhigh5.org](http://www.highmarkhealthyhigh5.org).