

Fitness celeb to kids: Move, get smarter

BY LISA MUNGER / Lincoln Journal Star
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You might have seen fitness fanatic Tony Horton's infomercials while channel surfing late at night.

But Saturday, Horton brought his message to Lincoln in person, to a group of kids.

"Kids are more sedentary and eat more junk than they used to," he said. "It has a tremendous effect on their brains."

About 30 kids attended Horton's workout at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel Saturday morning, about half of them members of a local baseball team that participates in Horton's fitness program.

Horton started working in personal training 20 years ago. Since then, he's established himself as a recognizable face in the fitness industry by working with Hollywood celebs and selling his fitness products on TV.

His program advocates six days a week of exercise — three days cardio, three days resistance or weight training — at 35-minute intervals. While most of the programs target adults, Saturday, he translated his message to the younger audience.

He led the kids, ranging in ages from about 2 to 14, through a series of exercises, designed to get young people moving.

"Let's get goofy!" he said, before leading the group in a round of play-type movements, pretend-ing to surf, pull a rope, jump on a pogo stick and soar like an airplane.

The California-based fitness aficionado said he wants to emphasize the connection between the brain and exercise, especially with kids.

"Every time you move your brain gets smarter," he said to the group. "We need to eat like our great-grandparents did — whole, clean, healthy foods."

Horton's product line includes an exercise DVD targeted at kids ages 3-7.

He said it's often tough to get kids healthy without parents who set a good example.

"Parents have to take care of themselves first: slowly introduce better eating and more working out."

That's exactly how Leah Redling got her family on board with Horton's fitness philosophy.

"It's really a matter of living the example, exercising and eating right," said Redling, of Lincoln. "You need to find what works for you: I like to cook anyway, so that works for us. We do chicken about 100 ways at my house because the kids will eat it."

Redling's three children, Riley, 8, Renae, 5, and Rianna, 1, all joined in with Horton on Saturday.

"We have lots of fresh fruit around. I try encourage them to try things; they won't like every-thing," she said.

Redling and her husband started Horton's program in 2007. The kids are exercising,

too, making it up as they go along, which is fine with Redling.

Said Renae: "I make up my own dances, I love it so much."

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