

Dear Friends,

This week I had the opportunity to sign legislation that will improve the lives of children throughout the Sunshine State.

First, elementary and middle school students will now have the opportunity for more physical education and activity at school. Studies show that healthy living habits begin at an early age, and I am committed to improving the health of all Floridians, starting with our students. By emphasizing the importance of physical fitness, we can teach young people how to make smart choices about exercise that will improve their health throughout their lives.

We also had the privilege of presenting the first round of awards to elementary schools participating in the Governor's Fitness Challenge. Four schools received \$5,000 – and four more received \$10,000 – toward the purchase of sports or fitness equipment. Two additional schools were will receive a visit from Florida athletes. More than 300 schools and over 130,000 Florida students participated in the eight-week program. I am proud of the enthusiasm schools across Florida have shown in taking a step toward better health for our children.

This week, we also created Florida's first ever Children's Zone in the Magic City neighborhood of Miami-Dade's Liberty City. It is the first of many Children's Zones that will be designated throughout the Sunshine State. Every child deserves a solid foundation in life, and this legislation can help make that happen by giving children the opportunity to follow their dreams – and to hope for a brighter future.

No one better understands the challenges facing Florida's communities than the people living in those communities. By creating Children's Zones, we can help community members and partners develop their own solutions. We can empower them to focus on what is best for the children in their communities and neighborhoods.

May God bless the great state of Florida and the children who call her home.

Charlie Crist

