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For Immediate Release

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Meet Barbara Storper, MS, RD

Barbara Storper, MS, RD, is an Emmy Award-winning nutritionist and national leader in children's nutrition. As founder and Executive Director of FoodPlay Productions, a pioneering nutrition theater and media company, Storper has written, produced, (and performed in!) national touring theater shows, video kits, television specials, media campaigns, and curricula designed to turn kids on to healthy eating and exercise habits. She is also a national speaker, nutrition columnist, media spokesperson, and has the ability, like the star of her new children's book, **Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!**, to eat three apples at the same time as she juggles them!



In addition to receiving an Emmy for "Best Children and Youth TV Special," Storper has been honored with a host of national awards including the first "Outstanding Young Nutrition Educator in the Country Award" from the Society for Nutrition Education, "Outstanding Nutrition Entrepreneur in the Country Award" from the American Dietetic Association, and in this last year, "National Award of Excellence" from the Produce for Better Health Foundation and "Distinguished Alumni Award" from Columbia University Teachers College.

What is FOODPLAY and does it really change children's eating habits?

FOODPLAY is a national touring nutrition show that travels to schools, festivals and special events, bringing the power of live theater, awesome feats of juggling, a cast of colorful characters, music, magic, and audience participation to help kids take charge of growing up healthy and fit. We've reached over three million school children from New York to Alaska with these fun-filled theatrical performances, and this year alone, we'll be presenting FOODPLAY to an additional 325,000 children throughout the country!

And it works! FOODPLAY is considered to be among the most effective and innovative nutrition programs in the country, receiving rave reviews, outstanding evaluations, and extensive national media coverage. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-sponsored evaluations, FOODPLAY programs dramatically improve the eating and exercise habits of the nation's youth, with over 75% of children reporting an increased consumption of fruits and vegetables and marked decreases in their intake of soda, sweets, and junk food! Kids also report reading food labels, eating breakfast more frequently, becoming more physically active, and bringing the health messages back to their families. Programs come with comprehensive educational materials to extend the nutrition learning in class and at home.

Why do you think FOODPLAY and now your new book, **Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!, is so effective at helping children improve their eating and exercise habits?**

First, because they're so much fun, kids don't even realize how much they're learning! And, secondly, kids are being bombarded every day with thousands of media messages that are promoting the very foods and practices we want kids to avoid. Making food choices is rarely a rational decision for most people, especially children, and that's why food advertisements are so effective — they target kids at an emotional level and appeal to all their senses. So, we need to fight fire with fire. We do that by empowering kids with the skills they need to see through these media messages and, at the same time, make healthy foods and lifestyle habits fun, exciting, and cool!

— continued —

When did you first get the idea to combine food and fun?

In 1982, while working with the New York City Board of Education, I was asked to give a lecture on nutrition to an inner city school in Brooklyn. I knew that nutrition could be a lot more exciting than the way I had learned it and thought, why not use the same techniques advertisers use to sell junk foods, to promote healthy foods? I was drawn to the power of live theater, loved to juggle, and had studied clowning, puppetry, storytelling, and mime. I got the idea to put it all together with my nutrition knowledge, and FOODPLAY was born! Now, 25 years later, I no longer perform, but we have several troupes of professional actors touring the country with FOODPLAY as well as several other of our health education theater productions.

When did you first become interested in food and nutrition?

My mission grew from the painful experience of watching my mother battle cancer. This impressed upon me the critical need for children to develop healthy habits right from the start. I earned an MS in nutrition from Columbia University Teachers College after receiving my BA in journalism from the University of Michigan.

Have you been able to use your journalism degree in your work?

Yes. Before building FoodPlay Productions into a full-time media company, I was the media spokesperson for the MA Dept of Public Health and the nutrition columnist for almost a decade for the Providence Journal, Boston Herald, and the Boston and Rhode Island Parents Papers. In addition to writing and creating video kits, curricula, and media campaigns, I have based my new children's book, *Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!* on the character of Tobe Fit, Ace Food Detective, who helps kids investigate the case against junk food.

Who is Tobe Fit, Ace Food Detective, and what does she stand for?

Tobe Fit is the eleven-year-old narrator and best friend to Janey in *Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!* She will also be appearing in her own one-person show and is the official mascot on our soon-to-be-launched FoodPlayKids website (www.foodplaykids.com) where she will be answering children's food and nutrition questions, cooking up delicious snack recipes, and offering fun and exciting activities and downloads.

Tobe Fit is also, as you may guess, my alter ego and was inspired by my first few jobs after college working as an investigative reporter for Jack Anderson as well as for the Center for Science in the Public Interest in Washington, D.C. As an "Ace Food Detective," Tobe is always in search of the truth and helps kids see through media messages and peer group pressures in order to make healthy choices. She is full of curiosity and wonder, and dedicates her efforts to "Mother Nature" for making so many foods that are good for our health and good for the health of the planet!

For more information about Barbara Storper, FoodPlay Productions, and her new children's book, *Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!*, visit www.foodplay.com.

To request a review copy of *Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!*, to arrange an interview with Barbara Storper, MS, RD, to receive art electronically, or for any additional information, please contact Jenn Evans at FoodPlay Productions: **800-366-3752 x112 or 413-247-5400 x112 • jenn@foodplay.com**



Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure! Making Good Eating Great Fun!

by Barbara Storper, MS, RD • illustrated by Frances E. Schneid

40 pages • 8.25" x 10.5" • color illustrations throughout • 14 fun snack recipe cards

For children ages 8 - 12

ISBN: 978-09642858-5-9 • \$15.95 hardcover

Publication date: March 2008 (National Nutrition Month)

Published by FoodPlay Productions, Hatfield, MA. The book is available at bookstores nationwide. It is also available online; contact 1-800-FOODPLAY (1-800-366-3752), info@foodplay.com or www.foodplay.com.

Please send copies of any review or mention to info@foodplay.com or FoodPlay Productions • 1 Sunset Ave • Hatfield, MA 01038