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JumpBunch keeps busy kids moving

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Thomas Bunchman is trying to get a jump on the obesity epidemic.

The Annapolis resident founded JumpBunch, a franchise model that brings sports to children in daycares, preschools, after school programs and county recreation and parks departments.

What sets this program apart from others is that it introduces a different sport every week. One week the kids might learn soccer, the next, football; another week, croquet and then obstacle courses, according to Bunchman.

"The whole key is to keep children interested and excited," Bunchman said. "Every parent instinctively knows that with today's video games and cable TV, there is too much opportunity for kids to be sedentary."

Bunchman started teaching the sports classes in the early '90s when his daughter was in daycare.

"I always liked sports and I always liked children, so I went into a Kindercare in Anne Arundel County with the sports program and soon I was in another Kindercare and another center," he said. "By the late '90s I was in 28 schools."

There are now JumpBunch programs offered in 13 states, and the franchise even has it's own proprietary music. Cost per 30-minute class ranges from \$8 to \$10. Classes are offered at many schools in Howard and Baltimore counties and through both counties' departments of recreation and parks. For details visit www.jumpbunch.com.

Betsy Stein

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