


Franklin 11-year-old grabs video prize

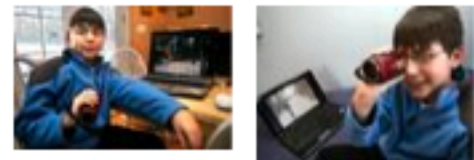
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Daniel Schratz, 11, of Franklin recently won the Recess Rocks video contest for his two-minute video promoting physical fitness.



By Brian Benson/Daily News staff
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FRANKLIN — Daniel Schratz may have won an iPad in an obesity prevention video contest, but he says his motivation was helping kids live healthier lives.

"I think sometimes kids don't listen to adults when they say to eat healthy and don't play video games," said Schratz, 11, a fifth-grader at Helen Keller Elementary School. "This was a good idea that they have kids in a contest to make a video. Kids tend to listen to kids a lot."

Schratz and his siblings filmed one of three first-place videos in a national contest that was part of the Recess Rocks childhood obesity prevention campaign run by Connecticut-based nonprofit Community Health Center last September.

Students across the country in second through eighth grades submitted two-minute videos featuring a speech, song, dance or commercial that answered two questions: How do you feel about the childhood obesity problem? What can you do about it?

Schratz made a music video that included a rap to high-energy techno music. The video urged kids to "move and play every day" by showing Schratz and his siblings hula hooping, jumping on a trampoline, biking and participating in other outdoor activities.

"It was great," said Mark Masselli, CEO and president of Community Health Center. "He obviously put a lot of time and effort into it. ... I think he captured the spirit of what we are trying to do."

The organization received several hundred entries from students and groups from schools and youth organizations. Entries were judged on their overall impact, creativity, memorable content and ability to deliver a clear message about solving the problem.

They decided to hold the contest because few people asked children for ideas about reducing childhood obesity, Masselli said.

Schratz spent about a month working on the video around his schoolwork and submitted it just before the Nov. 30 deadline. The biggest challenges were creating lyrics that rhymed and then editing, he said.

"When I saw me as a finalist, I just sat there with my mouth open," he said. "Then I screamed out loud 'Mom, Dad, come here.' That was really cool."

Although he won an iPad, Schratz plans to follow his own advice and keep exercising.

"I don't plan to use it all the time," he said. "I hope because I get it I don't stay inside just playing it, because that would just be terrible."

For more information on the Recess Rocks campaign and to watch the winning videos, visit recessrocks.com.

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