



Illinois Schools Can! is a wellness initiative funded by a Team Nutrition Training Grant that supports and encourages elementary schools to take the *HealthierUS* School Challenge. Please visit www.KidsEatWell.org/IllinoisSchoolsCan.html for more information.

Wellness Events and Training

Illinois School Wellness, From A to Z Conference - May 6, 2008 in Decatur

Join Local Wellness Policy movers and shakers from across the state at the Illinois Wellness Conference, Tuesday, May 6, 2008 at the Decatur Hotel & Conference Center. Enjoy speakers that include keynote and physical education expert Dr. Robert Pangrazi, breakout sessions, exhibits, and more for local wellness policy leaders, physical education and school food service staff and nutrition educators! The conference is being presented by the Illinois State Board of Education in cooperation with the Action for Healthy Kids-Illinois Team.

Download the conference application online at

www.actionforhealthykids.org/StateSpecificInfo.php?state=IL. Register after April 15th for \$35. For agenda visit

www.kidseatwell.org/flyers/wellness%20conference%20program.pdf

Coming May 2008 - *Marketing Meal Appeal* Workshop for School Nutrition Staff

The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program has developed this exciting workshop to help school nutrition staff market meals that more closely align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Call (800) 466-7998 for more details.

Online Training - *Nutrition Education that Works: An Integrated Approach*

Nutrition Education that Works: An Integrated Approach, an online training course presented by the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program, assists preK through grade five educators with implementation of USDA Team Nutrition Curricula that have been linked to Illinois Nutrition Standards. Register now at www.kidseatwell.org/onlinetraining.html and take the course at your leisure.

Mark Your Calendar for a Satellite Seminar on May 8

The National Food Service Management Institute is continuing *Cooks for Kids*

satellite training programs with *Wrap it up with Wraps* on Thursday, May 8, 2008. Each episode focuses on healthful food and cooking techniques for schools and home and includes downloadable handouts. For more information about this training series or to view past episodes, visit www.nfsmi.org.

Illinois School Nutrition Association's Annual Conference, June 17-19 - Moline

Visit www.ilsna.net for more conference details.

Grant Opportunities

GoGirlGo! National Grant Program - Deadline: 5/9/08

The Women's Sports Foundation's GoGirlGo! National Grant Program is offering \$430,000 in grant money for schools and other community organizations to provide girls aged 8-13 with a minimum eight-week sports or physical activity program, along with implementing the GoGirlGo! Curriculum. Funds are available for underserved populations of girls, particularly those in economically challenged areas with high incidences of health-risk behaviors. For more details, visit www.womenssportsfoundation.org/cgi-bin/iowa/funding/featured.html?record=40.

2008 Healthy Sprouts Awards - Deadline: 10/15/08

Funding and supplies are available for a youth garden program for 20 schools with children between the ages of 3 and 18. Projects must incorporate nutrition education and educate children about hunger in the United States. Applications are available online at www.kidsgardening.com/healthysprouts.asp.

Outdoor Classroom Grant Program - Deadline: Rolling

Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, International Paper and the International Paper Foundation, and National Geographic Explorer classroom magazine are awarding grants to K-12 schools and/or districts for \$2,000-\$20,000 for new or enhancing existing outdoor classrooms, including fruit and vegetable gardens. See www.lowes.com/lowes/lkn?action=pg&p=AboutLowes/outdoor/index.html for more information.

Albertson's Corporate Contributions Program - Deadline: Rolling

Albertson's provides funding for youth and education and health and nutrition programs for schools within areas of operation, including Jewel/Osco stores. To view eligibility requirements, visit

www.albertsons.com/abs_inthecommunity/default.asp.

School Wellness Success Stories

Veterans Memorial Middle School - Blue Island, IL

Wellness is a top priority for Michael McLaughlin, Principal and Leah Humphrey, Assistant Principal, at Veterans Memorial Middle School. School staff, parents and students participate in a variety of student, community and academic-based activities. Here are some of the great ways the school is making nutrition and fitness a major focus throughout the school year.

Community Activities

- Fit 4 Life - participants are encouraged to walk, play activities at a local park and eat healthful smoothies with their family.
- Family Night - families participate in an open gym using weights and doing aerobic activities.

Student Activities

- Lock In - includes the promotion of fitness and healthful eating through several physical activities and a healthful smoothie bar.
- Bike Day - each May, the entire school brings their bicycles to school and everyone participates in a two mile parade down a major street through the town. After the parade, participants go to the local park and enjoy several outside activities for the remainder of the day.
- Annual Track Meet - two district middle schools compete in three days of events.
- Videos - select students create physical fitness videos to promote fitness throughout the school. Videos are viewed and used by students during advisory and physical education.
- Snacks for Students - baked chips are available in vending machines instead of regular chips. Soft drinks are not available in the building; only water and unsweetened tea and juice are provided. Vegetables and other healthful snacks are also available.

Academic Activities

- ISAT Walks - before each ISAT test, students will participate in activities that include walking/jogging in place, walking around the school, or trying one of the student fitness videos.
- Music Class - teachers provide instruction on different types of dance in addition to music history.
- Core Subjects - fitness education is currently being incorporated into core

subjects.

As you can see, students and staff go above and beyond to try and promote healthier lifestyles for the entire school community. Congratulations to Michael, Leah and Veterans Memorial Middle School for their great strides to wellness!

Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School - Oak Park, IL

The entire Holmes School community has welcomed the implementation of the district's wellness policy and guidelines. Initially, a few parents were very sad to say goodbye to treat laden classroom celebrations, but these have been enthusiastically replaced by action-based activities and healthier snack choices. The student community decided not to distribute Valentine cards with candy attached this year. As an alternative activity, the majority of students chose to participate in "Pennies for Peace", a program that provides school materials for students in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Students contributed "would be" candy money as pennies to help other students in schools far from Illinois. Students enjoyed cheese slice hearts and red pepper heart cut-outs along with many other creative healthier celebration food ideas. Classroom celebrations now focus upon exercise, altruism and team building concepts rather than food as a central theme. In fact, food is no longer used as an incentive at Holmes School.

Ms. Suzie Hackmiller, principal, walks to school every day, inspiring students to live actively. In March 2008, she encouraged every student by leading students, staff and parents to participate in the *Move and Crunch Challenge*.

Holmes School was one of fourteen schools in Illinois that received mini-grant funds in preparation to take the *HealthierUS* School Challenge during the 2007-2008 school year. The grant has allowed the wellness committee to enhance the nutrition education throughout the general curriculum, promoting wellness as part of each student's daily routine. Holmes is currently working hard to increase the average daily participation of students in the National School Lunch Program to fulfill the Challenge criteria. The district has contracted with a new lunch partner who has aligned the menu with the Challenge nutrition guidelines.

Congratulations to Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School for making great strides with student wellness.

Tell Us More About Your Success Story

Do you have a success story about improving wellness for elementary aged children in your school environment? If so, e-mail us at ilnet@kidsroe.org. We may share your story in a future newsletter.

Partner Contributions

Click Your Way to *Step Up Illinois School Meals*

The USDA has contracted with the Institute of Medicine to create recommendations for updating school meal patterns and nutrition requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The anticipated changes will ensure Child Nutrition Programs better align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which are the foundation for the *HealthierUS* School Challenge meal guidelines. In an effort to assist school nutrition staff in planning, preparing and promoting meals with these principles, the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program has developed *Step Up Illinois School Meals*. This initiative, funded by a 2007 Team Nutrition Training Grant, includes a new website developed in collaboration with the Illinois School Nutrition Association, Action for Healthy Kids-Illinois and the Illinois State Board of Education. The *Step Up Illinois School Meals* website includes:

- sample menus that meet Dietary Guidelines principles,
- ready-to-go promotion plans,
- funding opportunities,
- nutrition education materials, and
- food preference surveys.

For more information on *Step Up Illinois School Meals*, check out the new website at www.kidseatwell.org/stepup.html.

Serving Award Winning Menus

Elementary schools are encouraged to have fun with their *HealthierUS* School Challenge (HUSSC) application! Winning menus have included healthy and creative choices, such as whole grain pizza, confetti bean salad, hummus, and sweet potato plum bread. Some schools have modified select USDA school lunch recipes by adding more whole wheat flour in place of enriched flour. Although not required, some schools serve non-conventional, but nutritious choices, such as brown rice, bean cake and falafel. Check out HUSSC award winning menus for school districts in Kentucky and Virginia at www.kidseatwell.org/MealPlanning.html.

Wellness Resources

School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study - III - Summary of Findings

The third School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA III) from USDA Food and Nutrition Service is now available online. This study provides up to date information on school meal programs, the school environment that impacts the

programs, the contributions of schools meals to students' diets, and the nutrient content of school meals. See how your program compares to national findings and use the information to improve the nutrition integrity of your school meal programs at www.fns.usda.gov/oane/menu/Published/CNP/cnp.htm.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans - Fact Sheets for Healthier School Meals

Check out the first three of nine fact sheets created for school food service staff to better align school meals with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/dgfactsheet_hsm.html.

Enjoy Moving Flyer from USDA Team Nutrition

Team Nutrition has expanded the physical activity portion of the MyPyramid for Kids poster with a colorful, two page flyer. View and download a copy at: www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/enjoymovingflyer.html.

Mini Posters to Help Market Healthful Fruit and Vegetable A La Carte Options

Four, complimentary, 11" x 17" posters are available for your school cafeteria to promote increased consumption of 100% fruit juice, grab and go fresh vegetables and mixed fruit. To request one or more sets of posters, call the Illinois NET Program office at (800) 466-7998 or e-mail ilnet@kidsroe.org.

Be an *Illinois Schools Can!* Partner

If you have information about resources, training or grant opportunities that support wellness initiatives for elementary schools, please email your contributions of 150 words or less to ilnet@kidsroe.org. **The deadline for September 2008 electronic newsletter submissions is August 1, 2008.**

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