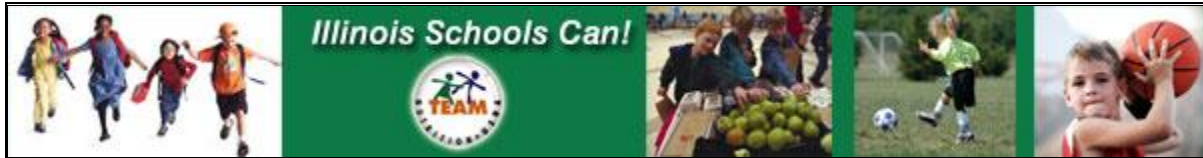


September 2009 Illinois Schools Can! E-Newsletter



The *Illinois Schools Can!* newsletter is your source for information on resources, upcoming training, and grant opportunities that can support school wellness policies.

[Non-Discrimination Statement](#)

E-newsletter Reader Survey: Please assist us in our efforts to bring you quality school wellness information by taking this short survey:

[E-newsletter Reader Survey](#)

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New At NET

Move & Crunch Event Planning Guide

The *Move & Crunch Challenge* is a fun, innovative event that engages the entire school community to "Move" and "Crunch" their way to wellness. This event was originally introduced as a statewide competition in 2007, but now can easily be adapted to a school-based or district-based level. The *Move & Crunch Event Planning Guide* was designed to decrease planning time and make the event process easy and fun. All the materials in the guide are downloadable from our website www.kidseatwell.org/MoveandCrunchChallenge.html/. It's a great way to show your commitment to student wellness!

Web-based Nutrition Education Curriculum for Teens

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Nutrition A3 - Nutrition Anytime, Anywhere, Anyplace (A3 in text language) is a collaboration between the Illinois NET Program and Northwestern University's iCollaboratory. The program consists of six independent projects that engage teens with technology and empower them to make healthy food choices and be physically active. The projects focus on increasing physical activity, decreasing screen time, choosing less sweetened beverages, fueling up with less fat, enjoying more fruits and vegetables and learning to customize their own meal plans with MyPyramid. Additionally, *Nutrition A3* can be integrated into core subjects; helps middle school, high school or after-school teachers support school wellness; and, addresses Illinois Learning Standards, Local Wellness Policy requirements and No Child Left Behind goals.

KidsEatWell.org

Our website has an exciting new feature: a searchable database for nutrition education and physical activity resources for Pre-K - 12th grade. Search by topic, keyword, grade level, class subject, or material type. Many new resources have been added and we will continue to update the database to provide you with the most comprehensive list of nutrition education and physical activity resources to assist you in health education. Visit www.kidseatwell.org/nutrition-education.htm and click on *Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Resource LookUp*.

HealthierUS School Challenge Mini-Grants and School Training!

Two Illinois elementary schools won the silver award recognition in the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) this past school year. The Illinois NET Program wants to encourage more schools to take the Challenge during the 2009-2010 school year by providing mini-grants to 10 motivated elementary schools (pending funding). It's easier than you think to take the Challenge! Stay tuned to KidsEatWell.org for mini-grant details.

The Illinois NET Program has also updated our *HealthierUS School Challenge Workshop* to guide schools through the new requirements of the Challenge and provide strategies and resources for success. For more information about the HUSSC workshop or to sign up for training go to www.kidseatwell.org/training.htm/.

For detailed information about the Challenge criteria and to view their new online application, go to www.kidseatwell.org/team-nutrition.htm/.

Wellness Events and Training

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Walk Across Illinois Mileage Challenge!

The *Walk Across Illinois Mileage Challenge* is an online challenge for all students in Illinois. The Challenge was developed by the Active Transportation Alliance, a non-profit advocacy organization based in Chicago, which sponsors the *Safe Routes to School Program*. The alliance is encouraging schools to promote walking and bicycling to and from schools starting this fall, and to utilize the Challenge as a way to get students motivated. Students can earn miles and track their progress online as they "walk" virtual historical routes. Schools can participate as individual classes or school wide. For more information, visit www.walkacrossillinois.org, or e-mail info@walkacrossillinois.org.

National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) Online Courses

NFSMI has developed a series of online courses that are now available and use the latest Internet technology to make learning easy and convenient. To reflect the busy lives of food and nutrition professionals, each course can be taken over multiple sessions and computers and can be accessed from work, school, or home. Check out the series for food service professionals, *On the Road to Professional Food Preparation*. Visit www.nfsmi.org to view their course list and to register.

Meet Farm to School Experts at the Community Food Security Coalition's 13th National Conference - October 10-13, 2009

The CFSC 2009 conference will be held in Des Moines, IA and will include presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, local foods, and a variety of field trips around the state. A panel of experts will engage participants in a roundtable discussion of the economics of farm to school practices. In addition, experts from the National Farm to School Network and School Food FOCUS will highlight strategies that have been successful in existing programs. To register, visit www.communityfoodconference.org/. For more information, call outreach committee chair Lynn Fallon at 515-201-9405 or email fallonlynn@gmail.com.

National Turnoff Week - September 20-26, 2009

Challenge your students to participate in Turnoff Week! Turn off the TVs, computers, and video games and find alternative ways to have fun. Send home information to parents about TurnOff Week and encourage them to participate with their kids. Visit the *Center for Screen-Time Awareness* at www.screentime.org for more information about this initiative.

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2009 Whole Grains Challenge

Attention foodservice professionals! Here is a chance to increase whole grains in your school meals and receive a variety of whole grain prizes. October is National Whole Grains month and the Whole Grains Council is challenging you to include at least one healthy and delicious whole grain option in your menu *at all times during the month of October*. Online entry forms will be available in September 2009. Visit www.wholegrainscouncil.org website for more details.

National School Lunch Week - October 12-16, 2009

The theme of this year's National School Lunch Week is **All Star School Lunch**, presented by the School Nutrition Association. The NBA inspired campaign features five "basketball teams" each comprised of healthy school lunch menu items and coached by a current or former NBA/WNBA player. SNA has downloadable materials such as press releases, recipes/menus, posters, and a student toolkit to help make your NSLW an exciting and successful event! SNA is also holding a NSLW sweepstakes where you can receive an "All Star" prize pack for your school. For details visit <http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nsbw2010/>.

Mark Your Calendar! May 4, 2010: Action for Healthy Kids' Illinois School Wellness Conference from A-Z in Decatur, IL.

This one-day wellness conference highlights successful implementation of school wellness programs involving healthy foods, nutrition education, physical activity, and physical education. More details to come.

Grant Opportunities

Love Your Veggies Grant

The makers of Hidden Valley Salad Dressing, with the support of the School Nutrition Foundation, will award \$10,000 grants to ten elementary schools across the United States who want to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption in their schools. Schools need to present an innovative program that will increase the access to, and consumption of, fresh fruits and vegetables in the lunchroom. Application deadline is November 6, 2009. For complete details visit www.loveyourveggies.com/school_grants.php/.

Saucony Run for Good Grant Program

Twice a year Saucony™ grants \$10,000 to five organizations nationally that plan

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to initiate a running program for health and wellness. Preference is given to programs that target youths who would not otherwise be exposed to running or who lack the necessary resources for running (i.e., safe running routes). This grant would be especially suited to after-school programs. Application deadline is in December 2009. For complete details go to www.sauconyrunforgood.com/.

Healthy Sprouts Awards

This award is given to school garden programs that educate children on the issues of hunger and nutrition in the United States. The program must include at least fifteen children between the ages of 3 and 18 and be planned for spring of 2010. Twenty gift certificates for Gardener's Supply Company worth \$500 or \$200 will be awarded. Application deadline is October 17, 2009. For an application and details go to kidsgardening.org/.

National Gardening Association's (NGA) Youth Garden Grants Program

NGA, in collaboration with Home Depot, will award Youth Garden Grants to schools and community organizations with child-centered garden programs. Applicants must plan to garden in 2010 with at least 15 children between the ages of 3 and 18 years. 100 grants are available, including \$500.00-\$1000.00 gift cards to NGA or Home Depot. Application deadline is November 2, 2009. For more details, please visit www.assoc.garden.org/grants/.

Wellness Resources

Illinois NET Program Curriculum Give-Away Program (Grades K-12)

In a 2008 needs assessment of Illinois elementary schools, 71% of schools responded that they need recommendations for quality nutrition education curriculum. The [Illinois NET School Nutrition Education Program](#) provides **evidence-based** curricula to all Illinois schools who apply. Curriculum can be integrated into core subjects and will help address Illinois Learning Standards. One curriculum is available per school.

The application is simple and only takes a few minutes to complete. For more information about this program, to view the available curricula, or to download an application go to www.kidseatwell.org/index.htm/.

Learn to Be Healthy (Grades K-12)

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This is an online resource for interactive student health science activities and teacher lesson plans. All of their resource materials can be downloaded when you sign up to become a member. Visit www.learntobehealthy.org/parents-teachers/.

Curriculum for Life Sciences and Nutrition (Grade 4)

VEGGIE U is an online organization that promotes sustainable agriculture and healthy food choices. Their curriculum, *Earth to Table* includes a kit for studying soil, composting, planting, nutrition education, and plant anatomy. Kids can even grow and taste their own vegetables! The curriculum was created by teachers and can easily be integrated into the existing science curriculum. Visit www.veggieu.org/educators.htm/. Financial assistance is available.

Crunch the Numbers (Grades 3-4)

Is a standards-based, downloadable math curriculum from Scholastic that shows students how to make fruits and vegetables a delicious and healthy part of their lives, while improving their math skills. Visit the Scholastic website to view the lessons at www2.scholastic.com/browse/search?query=crunch+the+numbers/.

New Team Nutrition Materials for Food Service Professionals

Team Nutrition has five new resources that have been **updated** to assist food service programs in providing meals to students that meet the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. They include: the *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* and the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* in a dual CD set; *Fruits & Vegetables Galore Helping Kids Eat More*; *Fact Sheets for Healthier School Meals*; *USDA Recipes for Schools*; and the *Offer versus Serve Resource Guide*. For more information visit: healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/TN_Newsletters/TN_FoodService.html/.

Step Up Illinois School Meals: Prepares School Nutrition Staff for Change

The *Step Up Illinois School Meals* initiative, funded by a USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant project, has assisted school nutrition staff with planning, preparing and promoting school meals that demonstrate the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPyramid* principles. This timely initiative will continue to help school nutrition staff be proactive in preparing for the updated USDA school meal patterns and nutrition requirements for the School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, to be recommended by the Institute of Medicine as early as Fall 2009.

The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program, in partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois School Nutrition Association and Illinois

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Action for Healthy Kids has implemented a statewide awareness campaign and developed a website focused on improving the nutritional quality of school meals. Highlights of the website include:

- *A Step Up Plan* - a menu planning tool that helps school nutrition staff gradually implement the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid principles as well as the USDA HealthierUS School Challenge criteria for school menus.
- *Practical Ideas for Dietary Guidelines Implementation* - a series of six articles that provide tips and resources for implementation of a variety of lean protein sources; more whole grains; more fruits and vegetables; a variety of low-fat and non-free calcium-rich foods, and foods with less fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium; and minimal *trans* fatty acids.
- *Illinois School Nutrition Success Stories* -a sneak peek at Illinois schools that have successfully implemented the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPyramid* principles within school meals.

Still to come is an online course being developed by the National Food Service Management Institute. Check the Illinois NET website at KidsEatWell.org for information on a launch date and how you may qualify for a stipend for completing the training program.

For more information on the *Step Up Illinois School Meals* initiative and website, please visit www.KidsEatWell.org under *Healthy Schools* and *School Meals*.

School Wellness Success Story

Congratulations to Northeast Elementary, a magnet-school in Danville, Illinois, for receiving a Silver Award in the Healthy Schools Program from *Alliance for a Healthier Generation* this past spring! Principal Cheryl McIntire explained the efforts the school staff made to create impactful and lasting changes at their school:

- Increased physical education time so that all students at their school have physical education every day
- Came up with creative ways to incorporate additional physical activity into their daily routines, such as exercise breaks or movement time in the classroom setting
- Asked parents to send only healthy snacks and treats to school
- Celebrated their health and wellness successes through activities that involve students, staff, and parents, to show everyone how fun creating a

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healthy school can be

The staff at Northeast Elementary has found that parental involvement, communication and buy-in to the program are keys to their success. While it was a struggle at the beginning, they are now seeing more support from parents and this has allowed them to set new goals. The staff at Northeast Elementary says they are looking forward to the day when their students do not know anything but the healthy life and they are beginning to see their efforts becoming the "norm" and less of a short-term project.

Congratulations to Northeast Elementary for being a shining example of good health in Illinois!

Partner Contributions

Illinois Action for Healthy Kids needs YOU! They have received grant money to support the following programs in Illinois and now they need volunteers to help get the programs running:

- Fuel Up to Play will help Illinois AFHK continue and expand their work in Central Illinois by providing funding for schools that want to participate in this exciting program. Illinois AFHK wants to build on their existing relationships in the Decatur schools AND expand into Springfield, Champaign-Urbana, Bloomington and Peoria! Please contact Linda Dawson at ldawson@iasb.com and support Illinois AFHK.
- Students Taking Charge is a national program to empower high school students as advocates for healthy schools. Illinois AFHK is currently looking to establish partnerships with organizations in Chicago/Chicago metro area that work in high schools, especially with Chicago Public Schools. If you are interested or if you work for an organization with direct connections to high school students, please contact Linda Dawson at ldawson@iasb.com. They will also need Students Taking Charge facilitators to work with the schools and the youth advocates.

Your School Breakfast Program

All children should have a healthy and nutritious breakfast before starting their school day. Studies have shown a definitive link between hunger and poor academic performance - an excellent reason to initiate a school breakfast program.

Here are some resources to assist you in creating or improving your School

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Breakfast Program:

- School Breakfast Program
www.isbe.state.il.us/nutrition/htmls/breakfast.htm
- SNA's School Breakfast Campaign
<http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nsbw2010>
- Marketing resources for promoting a SBP from the USDA
www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Breakfast/expansion/marketingideas.htm/
- Breakfast fact sheets for schools and parents titled *Breakfast = Achievement*. Go to <http://www.eatsmart.org/article.asp?id=3782> and scroll down to Information Sheets. Also available in Spanish.
- Scholarly articles on the importance of School Breakfast Programs: (1) *School Meal Program Participation and its Association with Dietary Patterns and Childhood Obesity*, (2) *The School Breakfast Program: Participation and Impacts*.
www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/view.aspx?subject=FoodNutritionAssistance

For specialized assistance in creating a healthier environment in your school, please go to www.kidseatwell.org/technical-assistance.htm/.

Contribute to School Wellness

If you have information about resources, training or grant opportunities that support wellness initiatives for Illinois schools, please email your contributions of 150 words or less to ilnet@kidsroe.org. **The deadline for the November 2009 electronic newsletter submissions is October 1, 2009.**

For additional information and resources, visit KidsEatWell.org/.

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