



THE Wellness JOURNEY

on the road to good health

February 2009

A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO EDUCATE, INFORM AND MOTIVATE PARENTS, TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS AND ENCOURAGE THEIR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AS THEY REINFORCE THE INFORMATION YOUTH RECEIVE THROUGH WELLNESS JOURNEY PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES.

February is the perfect month to Help kids keep their hearts healthy!

February is heart health month and keeping a healthy heart should start at a young age. A healthy weight combined with a lifestyle of regular physical activity, good nutrition and plenty of sleep will help children keep their hearts strong and healthy. But serious health risks, usually associated with adults, are increasingly real for overweight children.

A recent student from Children's Mercy Hospital in Missouri shows that overweight kids can suffer advanced heart damage. In fact, some of these obese youngsters had arteries that looked 30 years older than they should have. Ultrasounds of overweight youth age 6-19 who had high cholesterol indicated a buildup of plaque in the arteries that was typical of a 45-year old. These kids are at risk for heart attacks in their 20s and 30s.

Keeping young hearts healthy

- Get children's cholesterol and blood pressure checked regularly
- Provide foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, salt and added sugars
- Encourage children to be physically active for 30-60 minutes each day
- Make sure children get adequate sleep. Children 7-12 years old need 10-11 hours of sleep each night
- Serve a variety of fruits and vegetables daily, while limiting juice intake
- Serve fat-free and low-fat dairy products
- Include whole grain/high-fiber breads and cereals rather than refined grain products in your children's diet
- Substitute water for sugary sodas
- Establish set meal times and periodic healthful snacks

√^••æ <YUk 'H]dg'

Know your resting heart rate.
The lower the number, the less your heart has to work.

Measure the number of beats in 10 seconds, then multiply by 6. Your number should be between 60 and 80 – even lower if you are athletic.

Get your cholesterol checked every five years, starting at age 20.

Find friends who love to work out. You'll encourage and motivate each other!

Spice up your life with cinnamon. Studies show that ½ teaspoon a day lowers blood sugar and cholesterol in people with type II diabetes.

Tiny Tot and Preschool Gym

This program meets every Wednesday from 10-11:30 am at Cottrell Gym. There are a variety of activities and play equipment for children to

Log on to learn more!

There are many web sites with great information for kids and families on their own wellness journey. Check them out:

www.americanheart.org – The American Heart Association web site

www.webmd.com – Extensive health information for all ages

www.healthiergeneration.org – Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Super Snack

Mango Salsa

1 mango

¼ cup red bell pepper

1 green onion

1 tablespoon lime juice or ½ of lime

Peel and chop the mango, removing seeds. Cut the red bell pepper and onion into small pieces. Mix all ingredients together. Use as a dip for whole grain chips or crackers, or put on top of chicken.

remain active during the cold winter months. Cost is \$0.50 per child; adults do not pay, but must stay on premise.

For more information, contact the Mount Pleasant Parks and Recreation Department at 319.385.1475



Produce Picks

There are plenty of fresh fruits and veggies, even in the heart of winter! Choose bananas to top cereal or eat as a snack. Try kiwi or cantaloupe for a refreshing juicy treat. Slice mushrooms and add to meat or salads. Green pepper adds crunch to any meal!

For more information on the Wellness Journey and ideas for healthier families, log on to www.healthyhenrycounty.org