



# THE Wellness JOURNEY

on the road to good health

April 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.

## Get Unplugged and Ready to...

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Rock! Roll! Run! Have fun! In honor of *National Turn Off the TV Week* April 20-26, you're invited to find fun family alternatives to screen time!

Screen time includes time spent watching TV, using computers and playing video and electronic games. The more time spent in front of a screen, the less time spent being up, about and active. So unplug this coming week and choose active family fun.

### Mark your calendars for unplugged fun!

To help families find alternatives to screen time, a number of activities are planned:

**Monday, April 20** – *Reading is Magic* includes performances by jugglers, magicians and a balloon artist. It will be held from 5-7 p.m. at the Mount Pleasant Public Library.

**Wednesday, April 22** – *Unplugged and Ready to Play Games* at the Civic Center Meeting Room in Mount Pleasant from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Stations with a variety of traditional board games and card games, as well as fun new ones, will be available.

**Thursday, April 23** – *Unplugged and Ready to Play Ball* at Cottrell Gym in Mount Pleasant from 4-7 p.m. Members of the Iowa Wesleyan College men's basketball team will join youth for fun on the courts.

Logs to track screen time for the week were distributed to K-5<sup>th</sup> graders in all Henry County schools. The logs are not just for students, they are for families. Youth can register to win door prizes by bringing completed logs to any of the week's events. To print a copy of the log, go to [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/screen-time-log.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/screen-time-log.pdf).

**Art Attack**, a pre-school art show will be held at the Mount Pleasant Public Library April 13-30, showcasing the work of young artists.

**A Poster contest** is underway for students in grades K-8, based on the theme "Unplugged & Ready to..." Entries may be submitted on any standard size paper. They will be judged on originality, graphic design, color, composition, clarity and use of the theme. There are two levels: middle school and elementary school. All entries must include, on the back: student name, student grade, school name, address and phone number, and teacher's name. Poster submissions should be dropped off by Thursday, April 30, at Healthy Henry County Communities, 407 S White Street, Mount Pleasant. Winners will be notified on or before May 15, 2009.

## TESSA'S HEALTH TIPS

### Limit impulse buys

Last-minute purchases tend to be high in fat and calories, and costly. Go to the supermarket with your healthy shopping list in hand – and stick to it!

### Beans aren't just for chili

Keep your favorite variety of beans in the refrigerator to quickly turn a side dish salad into a main course. Try a tuna and white bean salad on a bed of fresh greens.

### Cook once, eat twice

Save time and money by preparing enough food at dinnertime so you have extra for lunch the following day. Slice leftover chicken and roll up in a whole wheat tortilla with lettuce for a quick lunch wrap.

### Go meatless at least one night per week

Eating a meatless meal one or two nights a week is a simple way to cut down on saturated (animal) fat while also cutting back on high grocery bills. Try veggie burgers one night or a hearty all-bean chili.

## Reasons to unplug

Time away from screens leads to healthier bodies and minds. For most of us "doing" will always be more rewarding than "viewing."

In a detailed look at nearly 30 years of research on how television, music, movies and other media affect the lives of children and adolescents, a study released last winter found an array of negative health effects linked to greater use.

The report found strong connections between media exposure and problems of obesity and tobacco use. Nearly as strong was the link to early sexual behavior.

"We need to factor that in as we consider our social policies and as parents think about how they raise their kids," said lead researcher Ezekiel J. Emanuel, director of the Department of Bioethics at the National Institutes of Health. "We tend not to think of this as a health issue, and it is a health issue."

The research is clear that exposure to media has a variety of negative health impacts on children and teens.

For more information, log on to [www.screentime.org](http://www.screentime.org)

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## Spring into action!

*April is the perfect time to be active outdoors!*

- Take a nature walk.
- Plant a flower or vegetable garden
- Go for a bike ride with your family.
- Try a new activity, like skateboarding or roller-skating. Remember to wear your helmet.
- Take your dog for a walk or offer to walk the neighbor's dog.
- Jump rope or play hopscotch with the kids – or like a kid!

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## Super Snack

### Frozen Fruit Cups

3 bananas  
10 oz. frozen strawberries, thawed and undrained  
8 oz. crushed canned pineapple, undrained  
24 oz. fat-free strawberry yogurt

Line 18 muffin tin cups with paper liners. Mash bananas in a large bowl. Stir remaining ingredients. Spoon into muffin cups. Freeze at least 3 hours, or until firm. Before serving, remove paper cups and let stand 10 minutes. Store remaining cups in plastic bag in the freezer.



## PRODUCE PICKS

This month, change up your snacks and meals with something new. Pick up an artichoke or a couple of avocados. Go tropical with a pineapple or try some grape tomatoes on a salad or as a snack.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Healthy Lifestyles Conference

Comfort Suites, Burlington, Iowa  
Wednesday, April 29th  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

For more information or to sign up, contact Nancy Hahn, 385-6523 or [hahnn@hchc.org](mailto:hahnn@hchc.org)

### Youth soccer

Sign up at the Mt. Pleasant Park & Rec Department, 385-1475.

### The Magical Kingdom at East Lake Park

East Lake Park  
Wednesday, May 27th.  
4:30-7:00 p.m.

A family Rec Trail event.  
*Where dreams of healthy living really do come true.*

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For more information on the Wellness Journey programming, topics or events, contact Tessa Allworth, Wellness Coordinator, at 319-385-6595 or by e-mail at [allwortht@hchc.org](mailto:allwortht@hchc.org).