



THE Wellness JOURNEY

on the road to good health

February 2010

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.

Turn off the TV....Turn on the possibilities!

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

Studies have shown an array of negative health effects linked to greater TV use, including strong connections between media exposure and problems of obesity and tobacco use. Nearly as strong was the link to early sexual behavior.

Screen time includes time spent watching TV, using computers, texting and playing video and electronic games. The more time spent in front of a screen, the less time spent being up, about and active.

Tips to Reduce Screen Time

Talk to Your Family - Explain to your kids that it's important to sit less and move more in order to stay healthy. Tell them they'll also have more energy, and it will help them develop and/or perfect new skills, such as riding a bike or shooting hoops, that could lead to more fun with friends.

Set a Good Example - Be a good role model and limit your screen time to no more than two hours per day, too. If your kids see you following your own rules, then they'll be more likely to do the same.

Log Screen Time vs. Active Time - Start tracking how much time your family spends in front of a screen, including things like TV- and DVD-watching, playing video games, texting on cell phones and using the computer for something other than school or work. Then take a look at how much physical activity they get. That way you'll get a sense of what changes need to be made.

Make Screen Time = Active Time - When you do spend time in front of the screen, do something active. Stretch, do yoga and/or lift weights. Or, challenge the family to see who can do the most push-ups, jumping jacks, or leg lifts during TV commercial breaks.

Set Screen Time Limits - Create a house rule that limits screen time to two hours every day. More importantly, enforce the rule.

Create Screen-free Bedrooms - Don't put a TV or computer in your child's bedroom. Kids who have TVs in their room tend to watch about 1.5 hours more TV a day than those that don't. Plus, it keeps them in their room instead of spending time with the rest of the family.

Make Meal Time = Family Time - Turn off the TV during meals. Better yet, remove the TV from the eating area if you have one there. Make the dinner table a cell phone-free zone. Family meals are a good time to talk to each other. Research shows that families who eat together tend to eat more nutritious meals. Make eating together a priority and schedule family meals at least two to three times a week.

TESSA'S HEALTH TIPS

*Know your Resting Heart Rate: The lower the number, the less your heart has to work. Measure the number of beats in 10 seconds, and then multiply times 6. Your number should be between 60 and 80—even lower if you're athletic.

*Use TV time to stretch, walk in place or jump rope.

*Check out a fitness video at the library or video store and try it out at home.

*Schedule family time at least once a week. Ask your kids or grandkids to choose what you'll do that week. Make sure it is something that doesn't involve TV, video games, or computers.



PRODUCE PICKS

Add some crunch to meals and snacks this month! Celery, cauliflower and cabbage are healthy choices that can be eaten raw or cooked. Raisins are an easy addition to oatmeal or whole grain muffins and make a great ready-to-eat snack!

Provide Other Options - Watching TV can become a habit, making it easy to forget what else is out there. Give your kids ideas and/or alternatives, such as playing outside, getting a new hobby, or learning a sport.

Don't Use TV Time as Reward or Punishment - This makes TV seem even more important to children.

For more information, log on to www.screentime.org

Be Picky in the Aisle

Spotlight on Fruit

The Dietary Guidelines recommend 1-1 1/2 cups of fruit daily for children and 1 1/2-2 cups for teens and adults.

- Purchase fruit in season for the best price.
- Pre-cut fruit is up to 3 times more expensive than whole fruit.
- Choose canned fruits packed in water or juice.
- Limit dried fruit servings to 1/2 cup.

Check out this site for more information: www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/fruit

Tasty Tips

Want your kids to reach for a healthy snack?

- Make sure fruits and veggies are in reach
- Challenge yourself to add a fruit or vegetable to every meal and snack
- Add fruit to your cereal or oatmeal
- Mix asparagus, peppers and mushrooms into scrambled eggs
- Add tomato and spinach to sandwiches
- Eat dried fruits and pretzels for a snack
- Add veggies to your family's favorite casseroles and pasta dishes

Veggie Pillows

Ingredients:

- 1 celery stalk
- 1 carrot, peeled
- 1/2 green pepper
- 2 tablespoons ranch-style salad dressing
- 1 slice pita bread

Directions:

Wash vegetables and chop into small pieces. Combine vegetables in a small bowl and add dressing. Cut pita bread into two half-moon shapes and open pita pocket. Stuff veggies into each pocket. (Add other vegetables if you want more variety.) Serving size: 1/2 slice pita bread - Makes 2 servings

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UNPLUGGED FUN!

To help families find alternatives to screen time, a number of activities are planned in the coming weeks for Henry County residents:

MOVE MORE...WATCH LESS

Thursday, March 4

All K-8th grade students are invited to Cottrell Gym from 2:00 to 4:00 pm for an afternoon of 'Dance Fever' & a variety of basketball activities!

PLAY MORE...WATCH LESS

Sunday, March 7

All K-8th grade students and their families are invited to the Mt. Pleasant Public Library from 1:00 to 3:00 pm for Family-Fun-Day! Games and much, much more!

READ MORE...WATCH LESS

Monday, March 8

All Pre K-8th grade students are invited to a fun-filled all day event that will take place at Mt. Pleasant Public Library, WACO School Library, H.J. Nugen Library in New London, and Winfield Public Library. Questions call Susan Mast at 319.385.1490

FACE-TO-FACE

Date to be scheduled.

So you think you can text, talk and drive all at the same time...

PROVE IT!

Coming to area schools.

Sponsored by Healthy Henry County Communities, Henry County Health Center, Mt. Pleasant Public Library, Mt. Pleasant Park & Rec, State Farm Insurance, The Mt. Pleasant High School Interact Club, Henry County Sheriff's Department and The Wellmark Foundation.

For more information on the Wellness Journey programming, topics or events, contact Tessa Yakle, Wellness Coordinator, at 319-385-6595 or by e-mail at yaklet@hchc.org