

Success Stories

INNOVATIVE AND INSPIRING SOLUTIONS THAT IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Vol. 2

DECEMBER 19, 2006

As part of its Healthy Schools Program, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation celebrates the efforts and achievements of its members.



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HealthierGeneration.org

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Success Story No. 1

Students Stand Up for Fruit

VARE MIDDLE SCHOOL
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

In November, eighth graders at Vare Middle School started their own after-school fruit stand.

From their newly constructed and designed stand, these students offer a variety of fruit for students and staff at the school entrance once a week.

The effort is part of Vare's new health curriculum this year which includes a heavy focus on fitness and nutrition. The school is taking part in a new Philadelphia School District sponsored program called "Eat Right Now." The school introduces and asks students to taste a new fruit or vegetable every two to four weeks to encourage them to eat more healthy foods and less junk food.



SUCCESS STORY 4 Students from Waubun Earth Community School in Minnesota are now enjoying fresh fruits and vegetables instead of canned.



Success Story No. 2

No More Candy Sales

MT. NITTANY MIDDLE SCHOOL
STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA

At Mt. Nittany Middle School, the student council is asking students for new healthy ideas to support the school's big fundraiser.

In the past, the council has raised money by selling candy on campus as students are boarding buses at the end of the school day. Not surprisingly, these sales were quite successful. But this year—with student health in mind—candy sales are out and students are searching for healthier alternatives. Please turn to page 2 of this newsletter to find a healthy fundraiser resource from the National Parent Teacher Association.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



American Heart Association



Small Changes Add Up

GREEN BAY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
WISCONSIN

High calorie soft drinks are no longer sold in the Green Bay Area School District.

Food Services Director, Susan Baier, is responsible for negotiating beverage changes for the district that comply with the beverage guidelines set forth by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. As a result, the district's four high schools, five middle schools, and 25 elementary schools now offer only 100% juice, water, Gatorade and Propel. That's just one of many steps the district has taken to improve wellness over the past few years that is leading to big changes.

The district is also making an effort to offer healthier foods in the vending machines. For the past 2-3 years, district schools have been selling only snacks that have 8 grams of fat or less and are approved by food services, such as baked chips. The district will continue to improve vending offerings gradually over the next few years.

Green Bay Area School District also offers a volunteer staff wellness program intended to help the 2,000 district employees be positive role models for students. Baier believes these district- and school-level changes are well planned and made with the support of the district administration. "We just needed someone to listen to us—the federal wellness policy mandate and the Healthy Schools Program have done that," she says.

New Resources

Healthy Fundraising Ideas from the National Parent Teacher Association

With one of the busiest holiday seasons upon us, many of us are thinking about ways to get all of our gift shopping completed without spending a fortune. Meanwhile, schools spend all year thinking about how they can raise the money they need to keep giving our children the priceless gift of education.

In the spirit of healthy giving, the Alliance would like to spread a little cheer by sharing some great resources that the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has available to help school groups raise money to support their programs, without compromising their focus on nutrition and overall wellness.

For great tips on everything you need to know about holding a healthy fundraiser in your school, visit the following PTA Web page:

http://www.pta.org/archive_article_details_1127491576078.html

Included are excerpts from their Healthy Lifestyles notebook focused on healthy fundraising ideas.

To receive an electronic copy of the entire notebook, send a request to HealthyLifestyles@pta.org

Creative Ideas Stir Up Student Excitement

WAUBUN-OGEMA-WHITE EARTH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, MINNESOTA

Students and staff at Waubun-Ogema-White Earth Community Schools in northern Minnesota have taken a creative approach to integrate healthy ideas into their schools since joining the Healthy Schools Program in May 2006.

Reschedule Play Time

At Ogema Elementary School, students now enjoy recess before lunch. Previously, teachers observed students racing through lunch—often leaving fruits, vegetables and milk unfinished, so they would have more time for recess. School administrators decided to schedule recess before lunch this year. The result? Better nutrition AND better behavior! Students are no longer rushing to eat and are now more likely to finish their fruits, vegetables and milk.

Healthy Changes in the Cafeteria

This year, the Waubun-Ogema-White Earth Community Schools have stopped offering second helpings of main course entrees—students may only go back for second servings of fruits and vegetables. The schools are also making an effort to serve fruits and vegetables that are almost all fresh or frozen, in place of the canned goods they used to serve. In addition to improving the nutritional value of the meals, shifting to more fresh produce has also produced significant cost savings.

Students Restock the School Store

At the upper school, student organizations have the opportunity to run the school store for one month of the year and use the profits for their organizations. In summer 2006, staff and students found a way to boost sales and offer healthy options. They raised the price of candy bars from 50 cents to \$1.25 and began to stock healthy snacks for about 40 cents each. These healthier items—which meet USDA guidelines and were taste-tested by students—are selling fast. The school store is now busier than ever and the student organizations are making plenty of money.

Early Bird Walking Club

Students who arrive at school early are given pedometers and encouraged to spend time walking around the gym or playing games. The students are motivated to see how many miles they can record—those who reach goals set by the school get their picture on the wall. Some students had already accumulated 25 miles after only the first six weeks of school! A priority for the school wellness council this year will be to continue the Early Bird club after its current leader retires.

This story continues on page 3...

Organizing for Wellness

BELLVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

Bellview Middle School is sponsoring a Student Wellness Committee to work with the School Wellness Council to plan activities and offer new options for students. Using input from students about which physical activities and foods are most appealing, the committee will actively promote healthy choices to the entire student body. The school has already launched a number of initiatives to encourage wellness for both students and teachers. These include:

Healthier Foods

In fall 2006, the school began offering breakfast—currently about 500 students enjoy breakfast at school every morning. The school is also offering healthier options in the cafeteria like more salads and vegetables, as well as healthier snacks in the staff lounge. A new conveyer oven was also provided by the district—as a result, more foods are being baked instead of fried.

Active Afterschool Programs

The school sponsors a sports club that focuses on a different sport each month. The students also have an active running club — they participate in one Saturday community run each month. Twice a year, members join other middle school runners to race and play games. Other afterschool programs offer opportunities for activity and nutrition education, such as African dance and cooking.

More Physical Education

At Bellview, 75 percent of students take physical education class every day, which adds up to 225 minutes of physical education each week. Teachers now offer physical activity and stretch breaks for students during class and there are plans for teachers at each grade level to receive training that will help them integrate more health education into their curriculum.

Staff Wellness

Teachers and staff play an important role in this school's healthy changes. Staff members measured an indoor track to encourage teachers to walk inside the building. In the fall, half of the staff members received free health assessments on the school campus from a local hospital, including a blood draw, screenings and nutrition counseling. There are also plans for a massage therapist to visit the school one day a week to offer 10-minute massages to staff and teachers.

Welcoming Healthy Changes

OROSI HIGH SCHOOL
OROSI, CALIFORNIA

The town of Cutler-Orosi is surrounded by fields of grapes, raisins, plums and other fruit—and much of the population works in agriculture. But access to healthy food is often beyond the reach of residents in an area where 7 out of 10 households live below the poverty line.

At Orosi High School, Principal Gene Etheridge has taken it upon himself to ensure that his students have access to fresh fruit, frequently donating produce from his own farms. An organic farmer with 35 acres of deciduous and citrus fruits, Etheridge plays a leading role in promoting healthier eating in this California Central Valley district.

To help introduce the school's connection to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program, plums, apples and oranges were served at the high school's most recent Report Card Night. Students and parents consumed eight 32 lb. boxes of fresh fruit at the evening event and commented about how pleased they were to have fruit in place of the cookies usually served at the function. "I was amazed at the reaction from both students and parents," said Etheridge.

Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District Superintendent Frank Murphy has engaged all district schools in the Healthy Schools Program and every school plans to complete the online Healthy Schools Builder Inventory to determine a plan to help students and the community lead healthier lives.

"There is no doubt that the Healthy Schools Program will be a success," predicts Marvin Espinoza, the California relationship manager. Espinoza, who is working to help the school district meet the beverage and competitive foods guidelines supported by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, believes they will accomplish their goal. "We have support of the superintendent and there is a high level of cooperation between community agencies," stated Espinoza.

Continued from page 2, "Creative Ideas Stir Up Student Excitement".

Healthy Role Models

Many individuals at the schools are playing invaluable roles: Superintendent Boyd Bradbury secured funds to serve elementary students a daily snack of milk and either a fruit or vegetable, such as carrots or grapes. School wellness leader Vicki Haugo shows her commitment to her students' health by participating in World Wide Day of Play events. She also offered to help every elementary student keep track of health status from fall to spring every year. Another school wellness leader, Gina Worms, changed foods and nutrition classes, to reflect healthier recipes and a stronger focus on healthy choices, including diet analysis.