



# HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

## Get Healthy Hamilton County!

*Coordinated School Health Newsletter - Fall 2008*

### Welcome Back To School!



A new school year brings new students, staff, challenges and opportunities. At Hamilton County Public Health, we hope you have settled into another school year feeling revitalized and ready for the task ahead: to provide children with the knowledge and skills they need to become healthy and productive adults. Improving student health can increase student capacity to learn, reduce absenteeism, and improve physical fitness and mental alertness. **Thank you** for your role in impacting the lives of students, staff, and families in your community. If you would like assistance in developing a school wellness committee, conducting school health assessments, or have other consultation needs, contact Rebecca Laake, Health Educator, at [rebecca.laake@hamilton-co.org](mailto:rebecca.laake@hamilton-co.org) or 513.946.7845.

### Tasty Treats For Your Next Classroom Party

School has begun and it is almost time for classroom parties and holiday functions. Treats are always a student favorite when it comes to breaks from normal classroom schedules. But what is there to feed students that will get them excited and be healthy at the same time? With the issue of childhood obesity being so prevalent it is important for teachers to be creative in deciding what to feed students. Below are some options for making snacks healthy and fun when planning your next classroom party:

- Soda contains empty calories and high amounts of fructose and corn syrup. Substitute with water, which contains no calories! To add flavor try 100% fruit juice or fruit smoothies, which are always a favorite.
- Instead of traditional potato chips, try low sodium pretzels or baked chips. When using dips, encourage the tasting of dips like hummus or a spinach-based dip instead of chip dip.
- Substitute cake or cupcakes with angel food cake. Add an assortment of berries, such as strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries to add a sweet taste!
- Fruit leathers or 100% fruit snacks are healthy alternatives to candy. Graham or animal crackers are great alternatives to brownies and come in a variety of flavors.
- Need other ideas for your next classroom party? Include a vegetable or fruit tray with healthy dips. Create "ants on a log" using celery stalks, peanut butter and raisins. Making trail mix is always fun, too!

Snacks can be fun no matter what the reason. Kids will eat healthy foods - the key is to be creative! Of course, one of the biggest concerns is cost, as many healthy foods come with a higher price. Talk with your food service personnel - they may have ideas on how you can get food at lower costs or may be able to help you with your next classroom party!



You can also eliminate food at classroom parties and substitute with other low-cost items, which is a great alternative when considering possible food allergies. Items like stickers, pencils, erasers, or other small items from your local dollar store are good options.

## Sharing Session Places Spotlight on Local School Physical Education Practices

Norwood High School generously opened its doors to schools across the county for the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Spring Sharing Session on April 24, 2008. The event was sponsored by Hamilton County Public Health with funding provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Thirty-eight school nurses, physical education teachers, administrators, and other wellness team members attended, representing 14 of 22 public school districts in Hamilton County.

The Sharing Session was a forum that provided school wellness teams an opportunity to network with area schools, as well as to learn the successes and challenges other districts are having with regards to the implementation of their district wellness policies. With the adoption of the six National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) standards, the Sharing Session focused on discussion surrounding physical education and physical activity.

Lisa Henry, Physical Education Consultant with the Ohio Department of Education, attended the Sharing Session and was available to answer questions on a one-on-one basis. Ms. Henry provided a Power Point presentation on the state of Physical Education in Ohio, including the timeline for developing benchmarks, indicators, and a model curriculum, as well as the progress of the Physical Education Writing Team.

The Physical Education Writing Team has continued to be very productive. The Writing Team met in June, July and August to develop benchmarks and indicators based on the NASPE standards adopted by the State Board of Education in December 2007. Writing Team committee work continues to allow for refinement of the standards development work. The draft benchmarks and indicators will be presented to the State Board of Education in 2009. Lisa Henry encourages everyone to visit the Ohio Department of Education website at [www.ode.state.oh.us](http://www.ode.state.oh.us) for updates and related educational topics.

## Taking Action to Address a Major Public Health Concern Facing Our Youth

It's a well known fact that childhood obesity is a serious health epidemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that rates of obesity have more than doubled among children ages 2 to 5 and more than tripled among those ages 6 to 11 over the last three decades. Roughly 9 million kids are considered obese and the health consequences are already apparent. In 2005, 20.6 percent of Ohio's public school students were overweight. An additional 17 percent of students were found at risk for becoming overweight. However, there is very limited local data indicating the extent of the problem in Hamilton County.

At Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) we are concerned about this trend and are partnering with schools to take action to reverse it. HCPH will be piloting a body mass index (BMI) project and will collect height and weight measurements to calculate BMI among a sample of 3rd and 7th grade students in Hamilton County schools. Measurement results will **not** be sent home to parents and HCPH will **not** provide recommendations for further assessment. Currently, BMI measurement is widely approved for surveillance purposes only. The pilot project will expand to include all interested Hamilton County schools in the sample design in the spring of 2009.

This project will provide a mechanism for long-term evaluation of physical activity and nutrition programs, policies and environmental changes occurring across the county. Project information will be sent to superintendents, principals and school nurses in upcoming weeks as details become finalized. If you are interested in learning more about this pilot project, contact Rebecca Laake at [rebecca.laake@hamilton-co.org](mailto:rebecca.laake@hamilton-co.org).

## Healthy Students Make Better Learners!

The Buckeye Best Healthy School Award recognizes schools that demonstrate a commitment to the health and wellness of their staff and students through the establishment of programs and policies that focus on improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, and stopping or preventing the use of tobacco. Congratulations to the following Hamilton County schools that received a 2007-2008 Buckeye Best Healthy School Award:

### GOLD AWARD RECIPIENTS

Indian Hill Elementary  
Kilgour Elementary  
Norwood Middle School

Shawness Early Childhood Elementary  
Winton Woods Middle School



### SILVER AWARD RECIPIENTS

Altercrest St. Joseph  
Anderson High School  
Elm Elementary School  
Hilltop Elementary School  
Indian Hill High School  
Indian Hill Middle School  
Maple Dale Elementary  
Norwood View Elementary

Oakdale Elementary  
Princeton High School  
Riverside Academy Elementary  
Roberts Paideia Academy  
Seton High School  
Seven Hills Upper School  
Sharpsburg Elementary  
St. Clement Elementary

Turpin High School  
Vermont Elementary School  
Weigel Elementary School  
Williams Elementary School  
Wilson Elementary School  
Woodford Paideia Elementary  
Wyoming High School

### BRONZE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Aiken University High School  
All Saints Elementary  
Allison Street Elementary  
Bridgetown Middle School  
C.O. Harrison Elementary  
Charles T. Young Elementary  
Colerain Middle School  
Dater Montessori Elementary  
Delhi Middle School  
Delshire Elementary School  
Ewendale Elementary School  
Everett J. Welch Elementary  
Indian Hill Primary School

International College Prep. Acad. High  
International College Prep. Academy  
International College Prep. Middle  
Madeira Middle School  
Midway Elementary  
McAuley High School  
Northwest High School  
Norwood High School  
Oyler Elementary  
Pace High School  
Pleasant Run Middle School  
Rees E. Price Academy Elementary  
Riverside Academy High School

Sands Montessori Elementary  
St. Bartholomew Consolidated  
St. John the Baptist Elementary  
St. Ursula Villa Elementary  
St. Vivian Elementary  
Struble Elementary School  
Summit Academy Cincinnati  
Taylor Elementary School  
Taylor High School  
The New School Elementary  
Wyoming Middle School

### RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

Annunciation Elementary  
Arlington Heights Academy  
Bevis Elementary  
Elder High School  
Frost Elementary  
Hamilton Co. Math & Science Elem.

Hartwell Elementary  
Hooven Elementary  
Houston Elementary  
Miami Heights Elementary  
Monfort Heights Elementary  
Our Lady of Visitation School

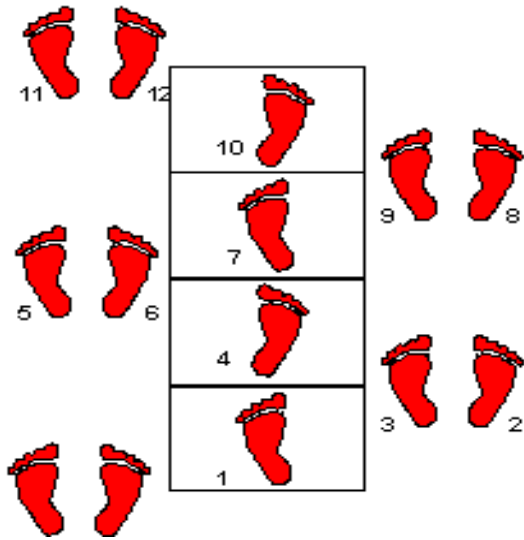
Roselawn Condon Elementary  
Schiel Primary Arts Enrichment  
St. Aloysius on the Ohio  
St. Joseph School  
Taft Elementary  
Winton Woods Elementary

For a complete list of all Ohio Buckeye Best Healthy School Award recipients, visit the Healthy Ohio website at [www.healthyohioprogram.org](http://www.healthyohioprogram.org).



## Fall Into Fitness: Student Edition

When the weather turns cold or rainy and teachers can't take students outside, it is important to find ways to provide some form of physical activity as an outlet. Physical activity breaks during the school day have shown improved concentration, academic performance, and classroom behavior. By ensuring recess is active and incorporating physical activity throughout the day, students have a better chance of succeeding at their studies.



### *Some ideas for including fitness in the classroom include:*

- Be creative! Incorporate physical activity into everyday classroom lessons, such as Jumping Jack Math. Students must mentally solve a math problem and then perform the corresponding number of jumping jacks or other specified movements (knee lifts, squats, march in place, etc.).
- Fitness circuits in the classroom can be fun and as simple as knee raises (standing or seated), overhead arm reaches, squats or jumping jacks.
- Ladder drills (as demonstrated in the picture to the left) can be done by putting tape down on the floor in the shape of a ladder and teaching variable jumping patterns (double feet, single to double, to the right, to the left, etc.).
- For additional activities, visit [www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html](http://www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html).

## Fall Into Fitness: Staff Edition

Students learn by example, so maintaining or beginning a fitness program, especially in the cool fall and winter months, can go a long way in forming habits that students will see and model. People that exercise are less likely to get sick, have more energy throughout the day and generally have a more positive outlook on life.

The current exercise recommendation is 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week. This can be accomplished by exercising for 30 minutes straight, or by doing intervals (10 minutes before work, 10 minutes during your lunch break, and 10 minutes after dinner).

The easiest and most accessible form of exercise that most can do is to walk. Walking works many muscle groups and challenges the cardiovascular system. One way to get staff walking is to have a step challenge using pedometers, or by organizing walk/run teams for local charity campaigns. Utilizing small weights during walking or with simple movements like bicep curls and lunges can help to increase muscle tone. Having muscle tone will help to burn calories when you aren't exercising at all. Vacuuming and dusting not only lead to a clean house, but can also burn approximately 250 calories!

One of the most important areas of fitness that is nearly always forgotten is stretching. Stretching can be done in the classroom with students. It helps to spread oxygen around the body and promote flexibility and increased range of motion. Simple stretches, such as reaching overhead or reaching for the toes, can help to make you more alert, reset posture and to get the mind refocused.

