

Eat Healthy, Be Active

Welcome to this issue of *Eat Healthy, Be Active*-- the Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition's quarterly newsletter. Through this newsletter we hope to provide you and your family with quick, practical ideas for eating healthy and staying active. We hope you enjoy it, and please...share it with a friend.



Coulee Region
Childhood Obesity
Coalition

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Biking Safety Tips
- ☺ Container Gardening

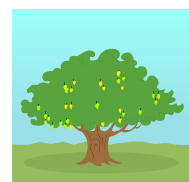


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Biking Basics



Biking is a great way for kids (and adults) to get around. Its fun, a good way to be active, good for the

environment and encourages kids to be independent. That said, bikes aren't toys...they're vehicles! So with that in mind, we'd like to share some tips to keep you and your kids safe while biking this spring and summer.

Be sure your bike fits you! Because kids are growing parents sometimes purchase bikes their kids will "grow into". While this makes economic sense it puts kids at risk. A bike that is too large is hard for a child to handle making it easier for them to be injured. To check the fit of your child's bike: Have your child straddle the bike. There should be 1-2 inches between your child and the top tube. The seat should be level from front to back. Adjust the seat height so your child's leg is slightly bent at the knee when their leg is fully extended. The handle bar height should be at the same level as the seat.

Wear a properly fitted helmet. Protect your child's brain! A helmet reduces the risk of serious brain injuries by as much as 85%. Crash statistics show that nearly one quarter of cyclists injured in crashes with motor vehicles were 14 or younger. However...a helmet can only protect your child's head if it fits properly. Go to www.helmets.org/fit.htm to view a great video on the proper way to fit a helmet.

See & Be Seen. Just because you can see a driver doesn't mean they can see you! Wear bright, neon or fluorescent colors so you are visible. In addition, wear something that reflects light or has reflective tape on it. Be sure your bike has lights that you can turn on when light is dim. (Lights that have a flash mode are nice as they attract drivers' attention) This will improve the probability that drivers will see you.

Follow the rules of the road. Remember bicycles are vehicles so as a cyclist you have the same responsibility to follow the rules of the road as cars (con't pg 2)



Healthy Eating Travel Tips

Summer travel is just around the corner. How can we maintain healthy eating habits while traveling? Try these tips...

1. **Plan & Pack...** If your trip is short just bring along water or a calo-

rie free beverage. For 3+ hour trips, pack some healthy snacks such as bite size pieces of fruit (grapes, apple slices, berries), 1/4 cup dried fruit in boxes or in a baggy, dried cereal, string cheese or a 1/2

of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
2. **Drink water!** Have water and other calorie free beverages such as tea in a mini cooler or large thermos. It keeps you (Con't on page 2)



Healthy Eating Travel Tips

hydrated & from mindlessly snacking! How much water do our bodies need? Take your body weight and divide it in half. If your child weighs 60 pounds they need 30 oz or just under 4–8 oz glasses. Now some comes from food (maybe 1-2 servings) but at least 16 oz needs to

come from fluids—preferably water!

3. Walk Everywhere! Rather than hope in the car for short trips, walk to your destination. Not only do you get to really see the place you're visiting, you also get in some activity!

4. Only fast food choices??



Try one of the oatmeal offerings for breakfast or a "Happy Meal" at McDonalds with a burger, apple dip-pers or baby carrots

& milk. The healthier Happy Meal doesn't cost more than the traditional one...you just have to ask for it!

5. Staying in a hotel? Make sure it has a small fridge, find the nearest grocery store and stock up on fruit, pre-cut veggies and your favorite low fat dip/dressing for healthy snacks or cereal & low fat milk for breakfast.



Biking Basics

Rules of the Road...

Go with the flow: When riding in the street ride in the same direction that traffic flows.

Obey Traffic Laws: Remember, you're a vehicle! Stop at stop signs, obey traffic lights and follow all traffic signs!

Yield to Traffic when appropriate: Think as if you are a car. Have a yield sign? Then yield the right of way to others. Entering a main street from a side street? Slow down and look both ways before proceeding. Coming to a crosswalk? Yield to pedestrians.

Be predictable: Ride in a straight line. Avoid weaving in and out of cars. Look behind you before turning and use hand signals so others know your intentions. Ride at least 3 feet from the curb or parked vehicles.

Use your eyes & ears! Most of us watch the street when we ride to avoid trash, potholes and storm grates. But how often do you see someone riding with earbuds in listening to music? You need your

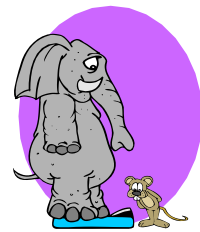
ears to hear traffic around you so save your music session for another time!

Sidewalk VS Street Riding...

In general, children under 10 should ride on the sidewalk with adult supervision. Kids this age are not mature enough to make the decisions necessary to ride in the street. In the City of La Crosse riding on sidewalks in the downtown area is prohibited while outside the downtown area riding on the sidewalk is allowed. When riding on the sidewalk children should ...



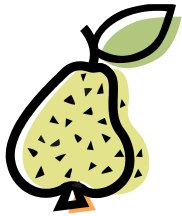
1. Watch for vehicles coming out of or turning into driveways
2. **STOP** at the corners of sidewalks & streets to look for cars so drivers see you before crossing.
3. Enter a street at a corner, not between parked cars.
4. Alert pedestrians that your near them by saying, "excuse me" or "on your left".



Obesity & Children— What Harm can it Do?

Check out this Washington Post interactive article on the effects obesity has on a child's body. This organ by organ summary shows the damage obesity does...head to toe!

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/health/childhoodobesity/obesityeffects.html>



Footsteps to Health

Footsteps to Health is a project of the Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition conducted in partnership with La Crosse County Health Dept, Festival Foods, Hansen's in West Salem, Gunderson Lutheran 500 Club, UW-La Crosse and Viterbo University. The goal of the project is to encourage Coulee Region residents to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Each month a different fruit and vegetable is featured at the Footsteps to Health kiosk at area Festival & Hansens stores. Store patrons have the opportunity to taste a recipe that includes the featured fruit or vegetable, receive information about choosing and storing the featured produce and receive

preparation tips. Visit the coalition's web site at www.childhoodobesitycoalition.org for the Footsteps to Health kiosk schedule for April, May and June. Also view the fruit/vegetable demonstration videos at www.gundluth.org/nutrition Try these tasty Footsteps to Health, 500 Club approved recipes

Bunny Salad

Serves 1

- 1 large lettuce leaf
- 1/2 canned pear
- 1 Tbsp. cottage cheese
- 1 raisin
- 2 very thin slices of apple, shaped like ears

Place lettuce leaf on a small plate. Place 1/2 pear, cut side down on top of lettuce leaf for the bunny body. Using a small scoop if available, place the cottage cheese on the lettuce leaf next to the wide end of the pear as a tail. Carefully place apples slices, sticking up, towards the front of the narrow side of the pear as the ears. Place raisin into the tip of the narrow end of the pear for the nose. Chill until ready to serve. Per serving: 60 calories, .5 g fat, 2 g protein, 13 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 55 mg sodium



Why Bike/Walk to School or Work

While there are many great reasons for adults to actively commute to work & kids to walk or bike to school consider the following...

Better physical health... Actively commuting improves heart health, improves balance and flexibility, improves strength & burns calories helping you to maintain a healthy weight.

Better mental health... Active commuting relieves stress and reduced stress translates to improved mental health. Riding to school or works helps us reach our destinations relaxed yet energized and more ready to start the day.

Improved community environment...

Experts believe 1/4 of morning traffic is parents



driving their kids to school. What if kids walked or bike to school and that traffic disappeared. Think how much cleaner our air would be!

Save money... It costs between \$.20 -\$.30/ mile to operate a car (gas, oil, maintenance). What if your kids walked or rode their bikes or you rode or walked to work. How many car miles could YOU save??

Better parking... Bike racks are often near the front door. How often do you get to park near the front door????

Independence... Kids who ride or walk to school learn to be independent & gain confidence in their ability to handle different situations. Parents who actively commute to work help our country reduce its dependence on foreign oil!

Pasta with Artichoke Hearts

- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic, minced 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 (14 oz.) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 1 (16 oz.) can stewed or crushed tomatoes
- 1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. basil
- 1/4 cup white cooking wine
- 1 lb. dried pasta
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese.

Prepare pasta as directed. 2. Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil. 3. Add artichoke hearts and sauté 10 minutes on low heat. 4. Raise heat, add tomatoes, pepper, sugar, basil, wine and bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 35 minutes. 5. Serve prepared pasta with sauce and top with Parmesan cheese.



This newsletter is brought to you by the Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition. Our goal is to prevent childhood overweight & obesity. Members include:

Family Resources Gundersen Lutheran Head Start
La Crosse County Health Dept Franciscan Skemp Healthcare
School Districts of La Crosse, Onalaska & Holmen YMCA
Viterbo University UW-Extension-WNEP Program



Grab a Grownup & Garden!

Gardening is a great way to get children excited about growing, nurturing and eating vegetables. Children can learn "hands-on" about science, responsibility, patience and success. If you don't have space for a garden, container gardening may be a great option. Only a little space is needed and you can move your "garden" to a perfect growing location, especially during bad weather. Good locations include your windowsill, balcony, and porch or patio area. Here are some tips to get you started:

Grab a container- Choose a container large enough for the plants you want to grow. Examples include clay pots, plastic pails, bushel baskets, and wooden planters. Punch holes in the bottom of the containers for proper drainage. You may want to place stones or a mesh screen over the drain holes to keep them from getting plugged up. Use good potting soil for best results.

Choose your vegetables: Let your child pick some of the vegetables to grow and decorate a marker to label each vegetable. Some vegetables that grow well in containers include green beans, carrots, beets, cucumbers, leaf lettuce, green and bulb onions, peas, radishes, tomatoes, green peppers, and various herbs. Help your child plant the seeds or set transplants according to the seed or plant instructions.

Water frequently: Because the container soil can dry out very quickly, plants may need watering on a daily or twice daily basis. Read directions on the plant or seeds carefully. Soak the soil thoroughly before planting. After planting, water the pots frequently. Children can use a child-size watering can. Place your pot where there will get at least six hours of sun each day. Carefully remove any weeds that appear.

If you have questions or need gardening tips, call the La Crosse County Extension office at 608-785-9593. This summer try container gardening. It's an enjoyable way to grow good nutrition...at your fingertips!

Looking for a delicious recipe to use your garden produce??

Veggie Wraps

1 - 8 ounce package of cream cheese
1 Cup grated carrots
1 Cup finely chopped broccoli
1-teaspoon dill weed
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic powder
1 -teaspoon minced onion
Ten - 7" flour tortillas

1. Mix cream cheese, carrots, and broccoli together until well blended
 2. Add dill weed, onion, and garlic powder. Stir until well blended
- Scoop $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of mixture on to a flour tortilla and spread evenly. Cut in half. Enjoy!

WNEP
La Crosse County UW-Extension

