



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

Resolve to have a Healthy Home in the New Year!



How does your home contribute to your family's health habits?

If your home has a refrigerator stocked with colorful fruits and veggies, whole grains and minimally processed foods it makes it easier for your family to eat a healthy diet. If you turn the TV off during meals, have active toys for your kids to play with and set aside time to be active together as a family you make it easier for family members to get in the 60 minutes of physical activity they all need for good health.

See how healthy your home is by doing the home assessment in this newsletter. Do the assessment then discuss the results as a family. What can you do together to improve your family's home environment score in the New Year??

Healthy Family Home Assessment

1. Open your refrigerator and count the different types of fruits and vegetables it

contains. Give yourself 1 point for each one you find. Repeat this exercise in your cupboards. Give yourself 1 point for each can or package of fruits and vegetables. Include fresh, frozen, canned or dried varieties in your tally.

2. As fast as you can, find a ball, Frisbee or other item that can be tossed around outside for a game of catch. Give yourself 2 points if the item is found in under 2 minutes, 1 point if found in 2-5 minutes.

3. Are there stairs in your home or apartment building? At your workplace or school? Does everyone in the family walk them daily? If so, give yourself 1 point for each person who takes



Make your home a healthy home in 2009!

(Continued on page 2 inside)

Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition

Winter 2009

Special points of interest:

- ☺ Healthy Home assessment
- ☺ The How tos of raising healthy eaters
- ☺ 1st annual Fitness Festival
- ☺ Quick soup ideas for those cold winter nights

Inside this issue:

Home Assessment	1-2
Healthy Eaters	1-2
Fitness Festival	3
Winter Activities	3
Soups on	4
Coalition web site	4
Coalition members	4

Raising healthy eaters



Parents are often challenged to find foods their kids will eat. While pickiness is a normal part of a child's development, parents can use the following meal time strategies to make even the pickiest

eater learn to like a more varied diet.

Involve your child in preparing food: Researchers have found that kids who help prepare their food are more likely to eat the foods offered and may

in fact ask for seconds! Find ways to include your child (even young children) in meal preparation. Have them toss the salad, sprinkle seasonings on the vegetables or cut up ingredients for your casserole or stir fry. They are more willing
(Continued on page 2 inside)

Resolve to Have a Healthy Home in the New Year

the stairs each day.

4. Are family members physically active most days? For each family member who got in their 60 minutes of activity in the last 2 days, give yourself 1 point.

5. Over the past week, did you eat together as a family? Give yourself 1 point for each family meal your family has shared this past week.

6. Check out the number of televisions and computers in your home. Give yourself 1 point for each TV or computer that is currently turned off.

7. Grab 7 of your most frequently eaten food items out of your cabinets and bring them to the table. Check out the food labels on each item. How many have sugar or high fructose corn syrup listed as one of the first 4 ingredients. Subtract 1 point for each item that does. How many of the items have whole grain listed as an ingredient? Add 1 point for each one that does.

Tally up your family's total points.

The more points you have, the healthier your home environment is. Look at

your assessment results.

- What stands out?
- How have you made your home environment healthy?
- What could your family change to make it healthier?
- What will your family resolve to do in 2009 to improve your home environment to make it easier for each family member to make healthy choices??



Raising healthy eaters

to try & eat food they've just helped prepare

Just take one bite: While encouraging kids to take "just 1 bite" seems reasonable it can backfire! Studies show that children react negatively when parents pressure them to eat certain foods...even if parents offer a reward to do so ("Eat your veggies & you can watch TV"). In the short run you can use this strategy to get your child to eat those vegetables on his plate, but in the long run, he'll be less likely to eat those foods. Experts suggest a better approach is to put the food on the table, stay neutral...encourage him to try it and don't offer praise if he does. Just ask him if he wants more or take seconds yourself.

Avoid restricting food: To avoid kids binging on treats, we often put them out of sight or on a high shelf. Unfortunately, when we restrict a food kids just want it more. Studies show that when we highly restrict foods at home, children are far more likely to

binge when they have access to the "forbidden foods" away from home. The lesson in this? Avoid bringing foods into the house you feel the need to restrict. Instead, buy healthy snacks and give children free access to them.

Serve as a role model: Kids are very tuned into their parents eating preferences and are far more likely to try or eat foods if their parents do. Given this powerful effect, parents need to be careful of the food messages they send their kids. Do you eat your veggies? Are you always dieting and restricting your food intake? You may be teaching your children to do the same!

Experiment: Plain steamed vegetables, while low in calories, can be seen as pretty boring and unappetizing to many kids. Dress up those veggies with a little ranch dressing, shredded cheese, brown sugar or a dab of butter. Adding a small amount of fat won't break the calorie bank but will add "kid appeal" and increase the likelihood of

your child eating it!

Don't give up! Eating preferences change. While your child may initially turn up her nose at the new food you've offered her, that may not be the case next week! In young children, it may take 10-15 tries over several months before a new food is accepted. Many things influence children's acceptance and willingness to try new foods. Friendships, brothers and sisters and how the food is prepared all play a role. Once a new food is accepted, use it as a "food bridge" to widen their diet. If your child likes pumpkin pie try mashed sweet potatoes and then mashed carrots. If your child loves corn, try mixing in a few peas & carrots. Even if he picks them out, exposure to that new food is what counts!



Don't Let the Cold Make You a Couch Potato!

Brrr! Its cold outside...you're all bundled up & looking for some fun! Warm up fast and get those muscles moving by shoveling off the driveway or walk. Then make some giant snow people or snow animals. Build an igloo or fort and store all your snowballs in there for a snowball fight.

Try ice skating at one of the area parks or Green Island. Green Island offers skating lessons, a chance to join an ice hockey team and open skate times Monday—Friday 12 noon—2, Wednesday evenings from 6:15—8:15 PM and Sundays from 5-7 PM.

If skiing is more your thing try down hill skiing or snow boarding at Mount La Crosse or cross country skiing at Perrot Park, Hixon Forest, Goose Island and on area trails!

Love to see the snow rushing past you on a sled or toboggan? Enjoy sledding at Forest Hills Golf Course, Myrick Park or Copeland Park!



Still need ideas?? Try...

- Playing tag in the snow
- Taking a nature hike and look for animal foot-prints
- Taking turns pulling each other on a sled
- Making snow angels!

Family & Fitness = FUN!



If you haven't heard yet, La Crosse will host its first annual Fitness Festival on May 2-3, 2009.

The events during the festival include a 5k run/walk, half marathon, and full marathon. In addition, there will be many events available for children and youth. The 5K run/walk and Fitness Expo will occur May 2nd and the half marathon and marathon will be May 3rd. The Fitness Expo will feature the newest trends in fitness, highlighting area fitness clubs and groups, and providing educational material concerning healthy living. Admission to the Expo is free and open to the public.

For children and youth, the La Crosse Fitness Festival will host the YEA Riverside Races, a series of running events for younger children.

These races will be held in the late afternoon on Saturday, May 2, 2009 and will take place in Riverside Park. Children in kindergarten and younger up through 6th grade are invited to participate. There is no cost to participate and all entrants will receive a free t-shirt. The one request is that you register your child for the event in order to assist with the number of t-shirts.

The goal of this weekend is to make La Crosse the healthiest city for a weekend. Events during this weekend will be exciting and fun. If you have never participated in a race before, perhaps try the 5K run/walk with your child. The 5K run will be timed and therefore more competitive. However, if you want to just participate in the event, then join in the 5K Walk. The 5K will begin at Riverside Park, pass

through downtown and the La Crosse River marsh, and end back at Riverside Park, showcasing the La Crosse area.

"The goal of the Festival is to make the City of La Crosse the healthiest city for the weekend."

For more information regarding the events, please check out the website: <http://www.lacrossefitnessfestival.com/>.





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 UW-La Crosse YMCA
School Districts of La Crosse, Onalaska & Holmen
Viterbo University UW-Extension-WNEP Program

Soups On!

When it is cold outside, nothing warms you up like the ultimate comfort food---soup! Soups can provide high quality protein, fiber, and vitamins and minerals needed for good health.

Plan Ahead For Delicious Soup

Freeze leftover cooked meat, vegetable and liquid from cooked vegetable. When you are ready to make soup, add these leftovers and seasonings for a special homemade soup.

Make a broth for soup from beef, pork, ham, chicken or turkey bones.

Make Your Own Soup Broth

Place bones and meat pieces in a large pot and cover with water and bring to a boil; simmer for 3 hours. Throw bones away and refrigerate broth and meat. When broth is cold, skim fat off the top and throw fat away. Freeze broth if not using within 3 days. Use in recipes that call for meat broth.

No Time? Give Your Canned Soup a Boost!

In a hurry? Use your favorite

condensed soup and add: frozen or canned vegetables, leftover cooked meat or cooked dry beans. Add interesting and delicious soup toppers like homemade croutons, grated carrot, grated cheese, popcorn, or fresh or dried herbs. A cup of soup makes a delicious, nutritious snack. Add a sandwich for an entire meal!

Soup Safety

If you won't be eating the soup right after

you have prepared it or you have leftover soup, chill by setting pan of hot soup in sink filled with ice and cold water. Stir often until soup stops steaming.

Put soup in shallow containers and store in refrigerator right away. Use within 3-4 days.

Freeze soup for longer storage. Leave 1/2" space at top of container. Thaw frozen soups in the refrigerator or microwave. Do not thaw on the kitchen counter.

To reheat soup, cook over low heat to a boil. Add water if the soup is too thick.

Village Soup

Make 3-4 servings

2 (10-3/4 oz) can minestrone soup or another pasta soup such as chicken noodle

1 soup can water

1 (15oz) can favorite beans- black, chili, garbanzo, navy, etc.

1 (15oz) can mixed vegetables or your favorite canned vegetables

1 (15oz) can diced tomatoes

Optional: Add browned ground turkey or venison to the soup.

Open and empty the cans into a soup pot. Heat and enjoy!

Quick Turkey Rice Soup

Makes 6 (1 1/2 cup) servings

2 tsp. olive or vegetable oil

1 cup chopped onions

1 cup sliced mushrooms (optional)

1 clove garlic, minced (or 1/4 tsp. garlic powder)

1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes

3 14-ounce cans chicken broth*

1 10.75-ounce cream of chicken soup*

1 cup uncooked instant brown or white rice

2 cups fresh or frozen chopped broccoli

2 cups chopped cooked skinless turkey or chicken

1/2 tsp. ground pepper

*Option: Use low sodium/low-fat products if desired

1. Wash hands. Heat oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat.

2. Add onions, mushrooms, and minced garlic, if using. Cook, stirring often, until onion is tender-

about 5 minutes.

3. Add tomatoes, broth, soup, rice, and garlic powder, if using. Cover and cook until rice is nearly

tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

4. Stir in the broccoli and cooked turkey (or chicken): return to boil.

5. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered until broccoli is tender and turkey is heated through,

about 5 minutes.

6. Remove from heat; stir in pepper. Serve.

Recipe adapted from: Iowa State University Extension EFNEP.

La Crosse County UW-Extension WNEP Program

