

HIP Happenings

Washtenaw County Health Improvement Plan

Winter 2003-04

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Local Experts React to New Healthy Eating Data

On November 19, ten nutrition experts gathered at the Washtenaw County Health Department to discuss local healthy eating trends and key messages about nutrition to promote in the community. Panelists included representatives from the University of Michigan School of Public Health, the Corner Health Center, MSU Extension, Growing Hope Community Gardening, Chelsea Community Hospital, University of Michigan Program for Multicultural Health, NSF International, Washtenaw County WIC, and M-Fit.

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Health department staff presented new local information about healthy eating. Laura Bauman, Washtenaw County Public Health epidemiologist, analyzed the 1995 and 2000 HIP survey data on adults' and children's consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. "As a community overall, we are not doing very well on fruit and vegetable intake," said Laura. "Only 14.3% of adults report eating the recommended five or more servings a day. Even more discouraging is that over 35% of adult men in Washtenaw County report eating one or less serving each day," she said. Other data presented included local and state WIC breastfeeding rates, an analysis of the number of grocery stores and restaurants in the county from 1950 to the present, and school environment trends.

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—Laura Bauman, WCPH Epidemiologist

After hearing the data on healthy eating patterns and environmental factors, the expert panel discussed their reactions. "The discussion was energetic and positive, and it made it clear to me that these issues are on the minds of many," said Amanda Edmonds, Director of Growing Hope, a non-profit community garden organization in Ypsilanti.

The panelists identified the following populations as high-priority for health promotion intervention: children, families, adult men, African American adults, people with transportation difficulties (e.g. low income seniors, disabled) and the community as a whole. The panel then identified several common messages about healthy eating to promote across all of these populations, including a focus on preparing more meals at home and drinking less sweetened beverages.

State Coalition Pushes for School Policy Changes to Address Childhood Obesity

In the year since its formation, the Michigan Action for Healthy Kids Coalition has convened an impressive state-wide group of representatives from school districts, the food industry, state agencies, local health departments, non-profit organizations, and many others. The coalition's goal is to help **create health-promoting schools that support sound nutrition and physical activity programs**. With staff assistance from the Michigan Departments of Education and Community Health, and financial backing from United Dairy Industry of Michigan, the coalition has developed an ambitious policy agenda (see box).

The coalition celebrated its first-year successes at a December 9 meeting in Lansing. Two programs received special recognition as success stories for increasing children's physical activity and healthy eating. The Fowlerville public schools' **Family Involvement in Student Cafeteria Purchasing Decisions Project** increased parental awareness of student food choices and increased the amount of healthy food purchased by students in the school district. The Fowlerville Schools food services director, Kathleen Kane, said that using a new on-line system, "Parents can view their child's cafeteria purchases and control the purchases by

putting spending limits on a la carte purchases." Ms. Kane tracked spending changes between the first nine weeks in the 2002-3 school year and the same weeks of the 2003-4 school year. She



Action for Healthy Kids

found that snack purchases were down, breakfast and lunch purchases were up, and overall revenue from food services was up about \$9,000. For more information about this program, visit <http://scnc.fvl.k12.mi.us/~nutritio/>.

Michigan Action for Healthy Kids Goals

Goal I: Ensure that healthy snacks and foods are provided in vending machines, school stores and other venues within the school's control.

Goal II: Provide all children, from pre-kindergarten through grade 12, with quality daily physical education that helps develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors and confidence needed to be physically active for life.

A second highlighted program, Mo' Better Health, Inc., of Detroit, provides after school health promotion and nutrition education activities for youth ages 6 to 16. MBH, Inc. organizes **Team Jump Rope** as an after-school club or during recess. Youth learn skills for tournament competition, and championship jumpers advance to state and national competitions. MBH, Inc. has developed a curriculum and kits for schools, community centers, or churches who would like to start jump roping clubs. They send out teams to perform jump-roping demonstrations to interested groups. For more information, email mobetterhealth@aol.com or call (313) 571-7600.

The next full coalition meeting will be Friday, March 5, at the Novi Sheraton Hotel. (This meeting is timed to follow the *Eat Healthy + Play Hard = Smart Students Conference* at the Novi Sheraton on March 4.) For more information about the coalition or the conference, visit www.actionforhealthykids.org and click on Michigan's state page.

~~ Announcement ~~

School Based Health Center Month is February!

The Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools is hosting Open Houses at local School Based Health Centers:

HealthPlace 101

(inside Scarlett Middle School, Ann Arbor)

AND

East Wellness Center

(inside East Middle School, Ypsilanti)

Monday, February 2nd from 8am-3pm

Tours of the Centers and information about services, programs, and outcomes will be available!

Come and find out what school based health care is all about!

Refreshments and giveaways all day!!

For more information/directions call (734) 677-2708

HIP Business Roundtable Inspires Wellness Programming at Catholic Social Services

The February 2003 HIP Business Roundtable drew a standing-room-only crowd on the topic of promoting employee physical activity. The session offered practical advice about effective employee health promotion, with the hope that business representatives would take the message back to their own worksites. Vendors, including the American Cancer Society (ACS) offered information about free or low-cost worksite wellness programs. Lois Plantefaber, Vice-President of Catholic Social Services (CSS), had low expectations of the event, and was surprised at how inspired and motivated she was to make changes at CSS. After the Business Roundtable Lois was able to bring back many ideas and resources to CSS.

“The most important information I learned was regarding the organization and structure of a wellness program,” said Lois. Armed with information from the Roundtable, Lois set several goals for wellness programming at CSS. First, Lois made plans to start a wellness committee that represents all seven worksites and eighty-three employees of the CSS agency. She hopes to have something formal in place at the first of the year.

Lois also contacted the American Cancer Society for a consultation and information on the **Active for Life** program. Active for Life is a free ten-week program that uses a team environment to motivate individuals to meet their own personal physical activity goals. ACS staff member Lisa Ziske met with Lois to discuss program options. “The consultation went very well,” said Lisa. “Lois was very enthusiastic and we are hoping she will set a start date by the first of the year.” Support from upper management is a barrier for successful employee health promotion in many workplaces, said Lisa. She was pleased to see that Lois was at a management level and committed to implementing a wellness program. Lois described the ACS consultation experience as very thorough. “ACS was able to offer me ideas and answered all of my questions regarding having a program here,” she said.

Now at CSS the lunchroom talk is about physical activity and healthy eating. Many employees have gotten involved in healthy activities with co-workers such as going to Curves or joining Weight Watchers. Lois is hoping to do a formal survey of employee needs regarding a wellness program. Management is very supportive of these plans.

Unfortunately, there are some barriers that make creating a wellness program a challenge for Lois as well as for other businesses. “Lay-offs and budget cuts directly affect everything that we do,” she said. She described her biggest challenge as finding time. Since lay-offs have occurred she has had to take on more responsibilities, which leaves less time for organizing any type of wellness program.

Budget cuts also challenge Lois to find a way to sponsor programs and motivate employees at no cost to CSS. Despite these challenges she is still striving to have the beginnings of a program in place by the first of the year.

Lois hopes that other business managers will become motivated to make a difference at their workplace like she has. She is also hoping for more events like the business roundtable to assist her in the future. Lois and Catholic Social Services are helping to lead the way to a healthier workforce in Washtenaw County.

Interesting in learning more about the American Cancer Society’s “Active for Life” program? Contact Lisa Ziske at 971-4300 or Lisa.Ziske@cancer.org.



Lois Plantefaber of Catholic Social Services hopes to implement an employee wellness program in 2004.

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Healthy Eating Panel

"It felt as though we only chipped away at the tip of the iceberg, and it makes me look forward to many more fruitful sessions with this group, brainstorming innovative community programs, partnerships, and interventions to address healthy eating in our community," said Amanda.

Other panelists felt the same way, so the group is hoping to reconvene in February when the Centers for Disease Control releases new community recommendations about obesity prevention. These recommendations will be matched with information

about local populations to create local community recommendations.

Community Health Committee members will have the opportunity to see the presentation from the expert panel meeting, plus hear results from the panel, at the **January 13 CHC meeting**. Please contact Jenna Bacolor at bacolorj@ewashtenaw.org or (734) 544-2969 for more information.

~~ Fast Facts ~~

The Hidden Costs of Supersizing

- ◆ For small increases in price, people can purchase larger portions and end up with substantially more calories and fat.
- ◆ At movie theaters, upgrading from a small to a medium sized bag of unbuttered popcorn costs just 71 more cents on average, but it's 500 additional calories. For another 60 cents, you can get a large (1,160 calories), and almost 3 days' worth of saturated fat. "Butter" topping adds even more calories and fat.
- ◆ Food portion sizes have grown over time. In the 1950's, a "family size" bottle of Coke was 26 oz, while now a single serving is 20 oz.
- ◆ McDonald's original burger, fries, and 12-oz Coke provided 590 calories. Today a super sized Extra Value Meal with a quarter pounder with cheese, super sized fries, and a super sized Coke delivers 1,550 calories.
- ◆ According to the USDA, Americans' average daily caloric intake has risen from 1,876 kcal in 1978 to 2,043 kcal in 1995.

From *From Wallet to Waistline: The Hidden Costs of Supersizing*, The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, 2002. The full document is available from the Washtenaw County Health Department.

Mark Your Calendar!

2004 Community Health Committee Meetings:

January 13

March 9

May 11

July 13

September 14

November 9

All meetings will be held from 12:00—1:30 at the Library Learning Resource Center, Room A 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor (inside the County Service Center at the corner of Washtenaw and Hogback Rds.)

Reserve a healthy boxed lunch by emailing Jillian Thomas at thomasj@ewashtenaw.org.