



What's up with Wellness?



North Winneshiek students practice yoga guidance from Northeast Iowa FFI Resource Contact, Sonja Arneson-Ecklund.

February 2012



West Central youth at the new monthly 'Rec Nights'

Many ingredients go into making healthy kids. Two of the most important are good food and physical activity. Most children today don't get enough of either, and the result is an increase in chronic illness, including Type II diabetes and childhood obesity.

Schools are the public tables, at which many of our children eat two or even three meals a day. By offering healthy food, such as salad bars and other fresh, local options, schools can have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of our kids.

School is also a place that children spend a good portion of their waking hours. Increasing the amount of physical activity they get while there, or through school-related events, can go a long way toward reversing the negative health trends that have become prominent in the last decade.

In Northeast Iowa, we are working together to make schools health, vibrant places that serve locally grown foods and have abundant opportunities for physical activity and play *everyday*.

Inside...

Info about the upcoming FFI School Wellness Retreat!

Sweet 17—school wellness updates from a busy month.

Features about: *Whole Wellness: Whole Curriculum* workshop, St. Joe's FFI Day, U.S. Healthier Schools Challenge and lots of chocolate-y beet cake!



February has been a month of LOVE & RED. Can you name all the red fruits and veggies that you love— tomatoes, apples, etc? What are your favorite activities that make you red in the face—running, rollerblading, etc?

Join us Wednesday, March 21st for the **2012 FFI School Wellness Retreat**. The day begins at 8:30 am, shortly followed by the keynote by Wellmark's Director of Health Sustainability. There will be a chance to network and learn about a variety of school-based wellness topics in breakout sessions. The day concludes at 2:45. Stay tune for online registration info. *This retreat is designed specifically for school wellness teams.

School Updates:

Allamakee:

- FFI is proud to welcome Allamakee Community School Districts to our efforts.
- Elementary students and staff participating in Live Healthy Iowa 100 day Wellness Challenge – tracking minutes of activity. They also have a mileage club.
- Junior High "Walking Wednesdays"- walking during homeroom time every Wednesday. Going to switch things up a little bit and have Dani Bucknell, Director of the Waukon Wellness Center come in to start teaching Zumba classes in the Junior High gym during this time.
- After school program, which serves a large percentage of Waukon students, serving healthy snacks and offering abundant opportunities for physical activity
- The elementary students who attended "fitness camp" last Summer through the Department of Education are doing cross-age teaching of the activities they learned.
- PE program uses a track system where students can elect which track they would like to do. Options include working out in the wellness center, team sports and activities and low-impact activities where students receive a heart rate monitor. This allows students to personalize their workouts to make their workout experience more enjoyable.
- WW Homestead products sold through the Booster club at sporting events.

Central of Elkader:

- The principal, PE teacher, and the food service director attended a U.S Healthier Schools Challenge training in Waverly. The school plans to apply for the bronze level of the US Healthier Schools Challenge by the end of the school year. The food service director has been integrating recipes from the Iowa Gold Star Recipe Book.
- The entire student body and a number of staff members are participating in the 100-day wellness challenge.
- The FFI 4-H Youth Team asked local businesses in Elkader to display "Together We Grow Healthy Kids" window clings in their windows. 
- The school nurse completed a BMI study of 7th and 8th students for the Iowa Department of Public Health and was awarded money for their participation. She also completed vision and hearing screening for all students this fall and winter.

Decorah:

- The Decorah Cross-Age Teaching Teams continued Farm to School lessons at John Cline, Carrie Lee, and St. Benedict schools, this month discussing beef production.
- The Wellness Team is planning for their next parent education workshop themed around the Olympics.

Howard-Winneshiek:

- FFI RC, Leah Chapman, is doing weekly nutrition education with K and 1st grade at Lime Springs
- Go the Distance Day planning has begun.
- The Howard-Winn Cross-Age Teaching Team continued Farm to School lessons this month discussing beef production.
- The Howard-Winn Wellness Team is making doing a quality PE presentation to the school board. They would like to do class physical activity breaks and "fitness drills in addition to "fire drills."
- The Howard-Winn Wellness Team is applying for the U.S Healthier Schools Challenge.

MFL MarMac:

- Monona and McGregor Wellness Teams are now meeting separately at their respective centers. The teams will meet as a district quarterly.
- Both the Monona and the McGregor centers are working with the FFI RC, Sonja Arneson-Ecklund to plan events for *Turn Off the TV* Week in April.
- The McGregor center is planning an event night for 4-6th graders that will include physical activities and healthy snacks.
- The Monona center is working on integrating wellness into their elementary school reading week. This year's theme is camping.

SEE PAGE 3 for MORE

Nutrition Ed at Lime Springs

On February 16th FFI RC, Leah Chapman, conducted a 30-minute nutrition lesson with kindergarten and first grade students at Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School. In recognition of Valentine's Day, Leah prepared a "chocolate beet cake" and taught students about the nutritional benefits of beets and the importance of consuming desserts in moderation. Lime Springs/Chester Elementary students will receive ten hours of nutrition education from Chapman throughout the school year.

At the beginning of the lesson, Chapman showed a raw, whole beet and asked students if they could name the vegetable. Guesses ranged from an onion, to a mushroom to a potato. No student could identify it as a beet. Half of the students had heard of a beet before, and about half of the students had tried a beet.

The 30 students sampled the beet cake, and 27 said they loved the cake even though they were able to taste the beets. All 30 students reported that they would be willing to try beets after sampling the cake. The following week Chapman brought a raw beet salad for students to sample.

These nutrition lessons at Lime Springs will help the Howard-Winneshiek Community School District obtain bronze or silver status with the Healthier U.S. School Challenge (HUSC). Howard-Winneshiek's Wellness Team, supported by the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative, could receive \$500 from the U.S.D.A.'s HUSC for becoming a school that promotes healthier school environments through the promotion of nutrition and physical activity.

Just how much sugar is in that pop? An Oelwein student counts sugar cubes in this photo. Did you know in a liter of regular Coca-Cola there's 108 grams of sugar?



- The Monona center's 2nd grade teachers and students participated in a "Growing in the Garden" ICN and are working on planning the garden for the spring.
- The Monona center's high school foods class is teaching healthy snack lessons to elementary school students on a monthly basis.
- The entire district is participating in the 100-day wellness challenge. The teachers have been participating in Zumba at the McGregor center after school. The McGregor center students have been very active during their advisory section during the 100-day wellness challenge. Favorite activities have been walking laps and playing dodgeball. The school is hoping to participate in laughter yoga at some point during the 100-day wellness challenge.

New Hampton:

- FFI RC, Melanie Stewart, has continued a series of nutrition lessons in Elementary classrooms. February topics included: eat your colors (preschool), where food comes from (Kindergarten), food groups (1st grade), and beans and protein (2nd grade).
- The New Hampton F.F.A hosted an open house for their greenhouse project on February 21st.
- The New Hampton FFI 4-H Youth Team is gearing up for a visit from Iowa Senator Merlin Bartz in early March. Stay tuned for more details! 

North Fayette:

- North Fayette's breakfast taste test was held on February 20th. They sampled a berry and a vegetable smoothie.
- Cross-age teaching the week of February 20th- the FFI 4-H Youth Team taught nutrition lessons to a 4th grade classrooms at West Union Elementary. 
- Garden planning has begun at North Fayette Middle School.
- The North Fayette Wellness Team purchased two 64 oz smoothie makers for the cafeteria.

North Winneshiek:

- Middle school students participated in yoga in PE class earlier in February.
- The school applied for *Fuel Up To Play 60* funding to implement a number of wellness-related projects in the school.
- The gardening team at North Winn. has been planning for the spring planting season. They have developed a thorough garden planting schedule for the school with specific attention to harvesting produce during the school year.
- The school administered a screen time survey to teachers and parents to collect information about screen time habits.
- FFI RC, Sonja Arneson-Ecklund, is working with the North Winn Wellness Team to plan events for *Turn Off the TV Week* in April.
- The school recently posted the YouTube video "23 1/2 Hours" on the wellness page of the school's website.

Oelwein:

- The Oelwein Cross-Age Teaching Team continued Farm to School lessons in February and discussed beef production.
- BASICS highlighted grapefruit, broccoli, radishes and grapes as healthy snacks this past month.

Postville:

- The mobile kitchen cart has been ordered.
- The Postville Cross-Age Teaching Team continued Farm to School lessons in February and discussed beef production.

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- FFI RC, Elizabeth Makarewicz, did animal yoga with 3rd and 4th graders as part of 100-Day Wellness Challenge efforts.

Riceville:

- The Riceville FFI 4-H Youth Team has a new coach – welcome, Darcy Fair! 
- The Riceville School Wellness Team is making plans to install a Frisbee golf course on school grounds come spring. This will be a great addition to physical education courses and provide a fun opportunity for students, staff, and community members to be active!
- In addition to their school garden, Riceville is raising funds to purchase a hydroponics station to grow lettuce in their greenhouse!

South Winneshiek:

- FFI RC, Stephanie Conant taught two one-hour lessons in the 2nd grade classroom.

Starmont:

- FFI RC, Elizabeth Makarewicz, visited the after school program to do bread sculpture and teach a lesson on whole grains with K-2nd graders.
- FFI RC, Elizabeth Makarewicz, presented to elementary students on food advertising at a School Health Fair on February 24th.
- After-school program director, Ashley Becker, FFI RC Elizabeth Makarewicz, and garden liaison David Cavagnaro scoped out a site for a brand new school garden.

St Joe's:

- The St. Joe's FFI 4-H Youth Team sponsored Steal the Pin as the all-school fitness activity for February. 
- The St. Joe's School Wellness Team is beginning to assess parent readiness for a walking school bus. Many students live nearby, and this would be a great opportunity to get kids to actively transport themselves to school, while ensuring a safe environment.
- The St. Joe's FFI 4-H Youth Team had an all day fun-filled educational retreat on February 9th. 

Turkey Valley:

- FFI RC, Stephanie Conant, and the Turkey Valley Wellness Team coordinated a February "healthy heart" wellness activity for elementary school students.
- The Turkey Valley School Wellness Team met to discuss high school wellness activities
- The Turkey Valley School Wellness Team is planning a smoothie taste-testing day for elementary-high school students.
- The Turkey Cross-Age Teaching Team continued Farm to School lessons at this month discussing beef production.

Valley of Elgin:

- On February 9th the Valley School Wellness Team hosted a community wellness forum to recruit new members for their team.
- Elementary school principal Betsy Nefzger, RC Elizabeth Makarewicz, and garden liaison David Cavagnaro scoped out a site for a brand new school garden.
- FFI RC, Elizabeth Makarewicz, hosted a "Food Has Value" afterschool program for students in grades K-6th on February 22.

West Central:

- Thirty students attended West Central's second recreation night. It has been so successful, the West Central Wellness Team decided to hold another recreation night on February 17th. SEE more on PAGE 5



WHY WELLNESS MATTERS AT ST JOE'S!

On Thursday, February 9th the St. Joseph FFI 4-H Youth Team took a day off from school to learn about wellness, the FFI, and how to inspire change in their school community! The FFI 4-H Youth Coach Amy Kloberdanz planned the retreat with assistance from FFI Resource Contact Melanie Stewart.

Team members ate local yogurt parfaits for breakfast. Emily Neal, Director of School Outreach at Luther College presented "Why Wellness Matters" and how to build leadership capacity among their team. Participants then worked on displays for parent/teacher conferences outlining their goals and accomplishments. FFI Youth Coordinator Lynette Anderson trained the team how to be good cross-age teachers, a program they are hoping to implement by the end of the school year. The group cooked a Thai peanut pasta with veggies and fruit kabobs – and had fun eating with chopsticks! They wrapped up the day of learning with a trip to the Chickasaw Wellness Complex to play Wallyball! 

- o Garden planning has begun- students are being surveyed about what they'd like to grow in the garden.
- o The after-school local foods club (called Wild and Crazy—WC—Foods Club) started at the beginning of February. There are six 4-6th graders and 11 K-3rd graders enrolled.
- o Food service director, FCS teacher and PE teacher attended U.S Healthier Schools Challenge in Waverly.
- o There was a school-wide participation in Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Challenge- students are actively reporting their hours online.

REFLECTIONS FROM STEPHANIE CONANT:

For Valentine’s Day, I brought homemade beet cake to 1st grade students at Turkey Valley. The lesson that day was balance. Most of the students loved the cake! In the future many of the students said they would think differently about “healthy foods.” This 1st grade classroom is a sample group that I teach weekly as a Resource Contact with the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative. Both organizations are dedicated to helping schools create a healthy learning environment through food and physical activity education.



TEACHER EDUCATION WORKSHOP

Emily Neal, Director of School Outreach at Luther College, led a 15-hour workshop this month for graduate or recertification credit. Twenty-one teachers attended *Whole Wellness: Whole Curriculum*. K-12th grade teachers explored ways they could infuse wellness into their classrooms. They participated in hands-on activities such as how to cook in the classroom, how to incorporate food into literature and math curriculum. Lily Jensen with Winneshiek County Conservation explained GIS resources that are available to schools. Teachers practiced using the units by doing a scavenger hunt around the Luther College campus. Jason Martin-Hiner with the Keystone AEA shared how movement and nutrition literacy aligns with the Iowa CORE.

Participants were also encouraged to think about how they role model healthy habits by what they do and say. Participants watched a number of videos relating to food and physical activity, and dialogued about wellness.

Upon completion of the course teachers were asked to infuse several wellness-related lessons plans into their curriculum.

Food Service Networking Meeting

On January 26, 2012 food service directors and staff from area attended a networking meet at Luther College. They toured the Luther College Dining Facilities and listened to guest speaker, Patti Delger, with the Iowa Department of Education and Team Nutrition, provided information about the U.S. Healthier Schools Challenge. Currently, there are 20 schools in Iowa who have achieved bronze, silver or gold status. There is a lot of local interest in this prestigious opportunity. Check out details: [U.S. Healthier Schools Challenge](#). FFI Communications Coordinator and NIFF guru, Teresa Wiemerslage, remains committed to helping schools procure healthy, local foods for school menus while making sure local producers receive a fair and competitive price for their products.

February 2012

This newsletter is a product of the Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative. We encourage recipients to contribute! Please submit articles or bullets to Flannery Cerbin, Communications Liaison, fcferbin@iastate.edu / 563-382-2949. Thank you!



Leah Chapman enjoys fruit kabobs with West Central students.

What do I BELIEVE in?

“...almost nothing is more important than the food we eat. I love everything about food- the way it tastes, the way it grows, the way it nourishes our bodies. I therefore want to help re-instill a love for food in our country by educating consumers on agriculture, health and food-related issues and working to build community through food.” Leah Chapman— works with West Central, North Fayette and Howard Winn. schools.