

Health Traxx

For Teachers by Teachers

A PUBLICATION FOR TEACHERS HEALTH TRUST PARTICIPANTS

SPRING 2008  VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1



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HEALTH TRAXX

*The Teachers Health Trust
Quarterly News Publication*

Health Traxx is published quarterly by the Teachers Health Trust to help participants make life-saving choices when making health care decisions. Although editorial content is based on sound medical information, we ask that you consult a health care professional for all matters of concern. We encourage you to keep copies of this news publication to build a handy home-medical reference or recycle issues to friends and family.

Any opinions expressed by an author/source whose article appears in this publication are solely the opinions of the author/source and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Teachers Health Trust. If you have questions or comments regarding this issue, email the Trust at wellness@teachershealthtrust.org or write to:

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

“The sky is falling” – these words are often associated with Chicken Little because she believed the sky was falling down when an acorn fell on her head. Fast forward to 2008, there are many people in our country who believe that our health care system in its present state cannot continue to provide the services we seem to demand. This is a complex subject and one for which every political candidate seems to have a solution.

I recently returned from South America, where I had an opportunity to observe the health care systems in several countries. In each instance, the government played a large role in the delivery of health care services, and, as a result, they were able to place severe limitations on the types and extent of services available. As a result of these restrictions in the “universal health care systems,” a market was created for private health insurers to offer alternative coverage so people could have quicker access to more expansive services. The “one system fits all” goal did not seem to be feasible. We need to become involved in the process of determining how the medical needs of our families and future generations will be met.

We are indeed facing serious problems in this country related to health care issues. However, the sky is not falling and there are solutions. There are no quick fixes and some of the alternate solutions may impact our lifestyles. We need, as a society, to assess what our health care system should be and how we are going to finance it. Those of us who have accessed the health care system know how frustrating and expensive it is. Can we afford to maintain the present system? Can the federal government continue funding Medicare without raising taxes? Can we continue paying for unnecessary procedures and spending hundreds of millions of dollars for services that will not improve the quality of life? These and many other questions need to be answered.

What is standing in the way of health care reform? To name a few: reluctant politicians, unrealistic demands by patients, and the mindset that we are entitled to anything and everything available without limitation and without regard to cost. New technologies and drugs are hitting the market every day and many of them are exorbitantly expensive; i.e. prescription drugs costing in excess of \$100,000 annually for one person. Until we come to grips with these issues, we will hear “the sky is falling” over and over again. The cost of health care is becoming a larger percentage of our disposable income each year, yet the system does not change. Think about it – and then think about how you and your family will fare in the future under our present system. There are solutions, but we must also face reality.

Sincerely,

Peter Alpert
Chief Executive Officer
February 2008

TRUST TIDBITS

DON'T MISS THESE IMPORTANT TRUST DEADLINES AND EVENTS:

> 2008 Summary Plan Document (SPD)

The CD-Rom is being finalized and will be mailed to all Trust Participants soon. The SPD is a summary of your benefits and includes plan changes and updates for the 2008 calendar year. To review the 2007 SPD, log on to the Trust website at www.teachershealthtrust.org.

> Annual Verification of Domestic Partnership

Forms will be mailed to you by April 10, 2008. Please remember, effective January 1, 2008, participants are required to submit copies of their birth certificates and their domestic partners' birth certificates in addition to the notarized statement already required in order to enroll their domestic partners on their plans. Any participant who currently has a domestic partner enrolled in the plan will be required to provide copies of both birth certificates with the Annual Verification form. **Required documents are due to the Trust no later than 5:45 p.m. Monday, May 12, 2008.** **Remember, it is your responsibility to verify that all required documents have been received by the Trust prior to the designated deadline dates.

> Pre-Operative Testing and Copayments at St. Rose Facilities

Please note, if you have pre-operative testing at a St. Rose facility and have surgery at the same facility within 72 hours of the testing, the testing is included in your surgery copayment. However, if the pre-op testing is obtained at a separate facility or if surgery is not performed within 72 hours of the testing, separate copayments will be applied.

The WellFit for Life and Best Weigh to Go

programs are currently underway. Log on to the Trust website for more information, including program rules and ongoing events.

Remember, the deadline to sign up for the WellFit for Life program is quickly approaching. You have until **Saturday, March 15, 2008**, to log on to the WellFit for Life website at www.wellfit.teachershealthtrust.org and start logging your miles. And mark your calendars for the Best Weigh to Go weigh out on **Saturday, April 26, 2008**, at Chaparral High School, 3850 Annie Oakley Drive. Turn to page 13 to read about the WellFit for Life Kick off and to see pictures of the event.

2008 WellFit for Life Seminar Series

Eating for Life: Making Healthy Nutritional Choices

Date: Thursday, March 27

Time: 4 to 5 p.m.

Location: Graduate Medical Education Auditorium, Valley Hospital, 620 Shadow Lane, Las Vegas, NV 89106

Registered Dietician and Certified Diabetes Educator Darlene Allen will provide information designed to help Participants make sound nutritional decisions in order to achieve healthy lifestyles. Ms. Allen's discussion will also focus on identifying the general principles of weight loss and learning keys to achieving healthy, permanent weight loss through balanced nutrition.

This seminar is available to Trust Participants **only**. Seating is limited. Please RSVP for the event through the WellFit for Life Website at www.wellfit.teachershealthtrust.org. For more information regarding the seminar, please contact Mary M. White, Health Programs Coordinator, at 702-866-6162 or via email at wellness@teachershealthtrust.org.





YOU MUST FILE A REPORT ON ALL INJURIES AND/OR ILLNESSES INCURRED AT WORK WITHIN SEVEN DAYS!

Claims resulting from work-related injuries must be filed through your Workers' Compensation carrier, not the Teachers Health Trust. This includes but is not limited to coaching injuries, environmental illnesses, etc.

If you are injured on the job, the Clark County School District (CCSD) and the State of Nevada require that you submit a written notice of injury or occupational disease (Form C-1) within seven (7) days of the incident.

If a timely-filed claim and all permissible appeals (including court reviews) are denied as not being work-related, the Trust will review your claims for payment. The Trust will not consider claims if Workers' Compensation denied them because you failed to file your claims in a timely manner.

Regardless of the severity or type, any injury or illness sustained on the job should be submitted to Workers' Compensation. Notify your administrator immediately and then call the School District's Risk Management office at 702-799-2967.

TRUST OFFICE CLOSINGS

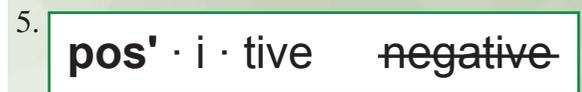
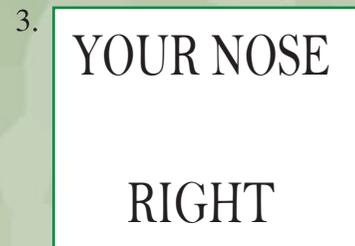
The Teachers Health Trust Offices will be closed for the following holidays and events:

Spring Break	March 21, 2008
Memorial Day	May 26, 2008
Fourth of July	July 4, 2008
July 3, 2008	Offices open 8 to 11:45 a.m. only
Labor Day	September 1, 2008

Mental Muscle Express

Boost your brain power by solving these puzzles. See if you can uncover the meaning in these words, letters, symbols, and their positions. Each puzzle represents a common word, phrase, expression, person or place. The example below is "up-town."

N
W
O
T



See answers on page 11.

KIDS KORNER

BREAKFAST = SUCCESS:

Studies Emphasize the Importance of the First Meal of the Day

Between finding misplaced homework, packing lunches and getting ready for the day ahead, many families just don't have the time for breakfast each morning, which means bellies often start rumbling long before the lunch hour.

But they don't have to, thanks to the nutritious variety of breakfast options available with the Clark County School District's School Breakfasts.

From cereal and yogurt to waffles and pancakes, CCSD children can start their school days with a nutritious, healthy meal and reap the benefits of that meal all day long.

It's no secret that breakfast improves a person's ability to function throughout the day. From improved attention spans to better ability to concentrate during late morning tasks, breakfast can help students kindergarten through high school have more productive days.

But improvement in school is not the only benefit afforded to students who eat breakfast daily. Studies performed by the Center on Weight and Health suggest that eating breakfast can actually help reduce the risk of childhood obesity. According to facts published in the Center's *Pediatric Overweight: A Review of Literature*, breakfast actually lowers fat intake and the

tendency to snack throughout the day. What's more, breakfast eating is a habit of children within their healthy weight range, while studies

a program to ensure all students get the opportunity to eat a healthful meal in the classroom with Expanding Breakfast. Because bus schedules

and drop off times often can create a rush to get to class in the mornings, cafeteria-based breakfasts are often bypassed. In short, Expanding Breakfast takes the idea of cafeteria-based breakfast and brings it directly to the children through one of three methods: Breakfast in the Classroom; Grab 'n' Go Breakfast; and Breakfast after First Period.

While the Dairy Council is aware of the hesitation many teachers and administrators will have with a program such as this one, it stresses that the benefits of emphasizing breakfast in this particular manner greatly outweigh many of the concerns.

In fact, one of the main concerns the Council has identified through its current program participants —

possible loss of instruction time — actually isn't a concern at all. Many



..CCSD children can start their days with a nutritious, healthy meal..

show those who are overweight rarely eat this important morning meal.

To further emphasize the importance of the first meal of the day, the Dairy Council of Utah/Nevada has designed

Kids' Korner is designed with the health of your students in mind. Have an upcoming event focused on kids' health and fitness and you'd like to get the word out? Have a program that implements healthy habits at your school that you'd like to share with others? Send the details along with your name, school and contact information to Misti Brock at mbrock@teachershealthtrust.org, and you may see your ideas in the next *Health Traxx* issue!

teachers participating in the program have reported fewer visits to the school nurse and less tardiness and absenteeism, resulting in an increase in instructional time.

From full bellies and smiling faces to more productive school days, the benefits of students eating nutritious breakfasts are immeasurable. For more information on your school's breakfast options, including free or reduced price meal information, contact the CCSD Food Service Department at 1-800-819-7556 or www.ccsd.net/foodservice. To learn more about the Dairy Council's Expanding Breakfast program, contact the Council's local branch at 1-800-352-7017 or www.utahdairycouncil.com.

*Misti R. Brock, Publications Specialist
Teachers Health Trust*

ORR MIDDLE SCHOOL RECEIVES SPECIAL AWARD

The University of Nevada Cooperative Extension is proud to announce that William E. Orr Middle School has received the PCPFS Demonstration School special honor from 24 Hour Fitness. In an effort to address the national childhood obesity epidemic, the President's Council project promotes and recognizes elementary and secondary schools that emphasize physical activity and fitness in their physical education programs and in the school environment.

Eight schools were awarded this honor by the Partners for a Healthy Nevada, a community obesity prevention coalition. Schools were selected based on several criteria and each had set a standard for teaching physical education and promoting an active school environment; They include Paul E. Culley Elementary School; John A. Dooley Elementary School; Roger D. Gehring Elementary School; R. Guild Gray Elementary School; Clifford J. Lawrence Junior High School; Bob Miller Middle School; William E. Orr Middle School; and Del E. Webb Middle School.



Orr Middle School was selected to receive this special honor because in addition to its excellent and creative PE programs, it notably reflects an entire school "culture" of promoting physical activity. Teachers promote and instruct after school programs with a nearly 40 percent participation from students, lunchtime intramurals are offered, and even the principal can be seen riding his bicycle to supervise students around campus. Students and staff alike at Orr Middle School were surprised at the award presentation on Friday, February 22, 2008, with a special appearance by former NBA Pro Jason Williams, a former basketball star at Duke and the 2002 Naismith College Player of the Year, whose NBA rookie season with the Chicago Bulls was cut short by a catastrophic motorcycle accident. Staffers received a year's "all club" membership to 24 Hour Fitness and students received pedometers, courtesy of the fitness club.

For more information about the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Demonstration Centers or the Partners for a Healthy Nevada, contact Anne Lindsay, State Coordinator for the PCPFS, at 702-940-5434 or via e-mail at lindsaya@unce.unr.edu.

Beating Workout Burnout:

Tips for Staying Motivated during WellFit for Life

It never fails. You start a new fitness routine with energy and enthusiasm. You make your scheduled workouts priority, you stick to your planned meals, and you drink your eight glasses of water a day.

But anywhere from four to eight weeks into your new routine, that natural high associated with working out begins to fade, and getting to the gym and eating right—the responsibilities we have to ourselves—take a backseat to life's other responsibilities.

Soon, you find yourself watching the minutes click by on the clock if you even make it to the gym, or you reason with yourself (and often those around you), trying to convince anyone within earshot that your excuse for not working out is a worthy one, even though deep down you know it isn't.

It's called **workout burnout**, and any number of fitness experts and personal trainers will agree that it happens to the best of us—from the beginner to the seasoned athlete. And while workout burnout is highly successful at derailing your resolve and repositioning you on a crash course for disaster, it *can* be defeated.

According to Diana Kline, a teacher at Smalley Elementary and a certified yoga and Pilates instructor, it is important to vary your workout and challenge your body on a regular basis: "The body gets used to doing a certain exercise over and over again, so adding variety to your workouts can often be the catalyst towards reaching a higher state of well-being."

When you become bored with a routine, you suffer—physically, yes, because you aren't pushing your body to reach its full potential but also mentally, as you become frustrated with your lack of progress and look for alternative, not-so-healthy means to reach that feeling of euphoria that results from a good, hard workout.

By venturing beyond your comfort zone—whether that be the treadmill or your living room—you are challenging both your body and your mind. And you will be amazed at what the following tips can do for your motivation!

• Vary your workouts.

When running on the treadmill begins to take its toll, don't be afraid to try something new and different. According to Kline, exercises such as yoga and Pilates, which focus on a person's physical, mental and spiritual well-being, firm and tone the body while helping the body deal with daily stress. And don't be afraid of extreme photos of yoga and Pilates poses, Kline cautions. "Anyone, given the right amount of instruction and modification for their body types, can do this type of exercise."

• Pump some iron.

While the weight room can often be an intimidating place, don't shy away from those dumbbells. The benefits of weight training are enormous, despite the ever-circulating myth that weight lifting will make you bigger. The muscle built through weight lifting burns fat more efficiently than cardio alone, and, while it is true that muscle weighs more than fat, it also is denser and takes up less space, so you will look leaner and healthier. Be sure to alter-



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nate your weight lifting days, however, to allow your muscles time to rest and rebuild and incorporate cardio on off days.

• **Bring along a friend.**

Studies have proven that people who work out with friends are less likely to lose motivation or quit a fitness routine because they do not want to let their workout buddies down. Whether it's your sibling, your spouse or a coworker, invite a friend along for your next workout and sweat it out together. The time will fly by and your friend will thank you.

• **Schedule your gym time.**

From doctor's appointments to parent-teacher conferences, important events in our daily lives usually end up on a calendar. So why not pencil in your daily workout? Research shows that people are less likely to flake on a workout if it is a scheduled part of their day. And don't forget to schedule yourself a rest day to allow your body to recuperate.

• **Write down your goals.**

Remember that the benefits of working out and eating right stretch far beyond a number on a scale. Setting and understanding your short term and long term goals is essential to achieving them. "I believe it is very important to assess and evaluate your progress," Kline explained. "Focus on WHY you want to achieve your goals." And individuals focused on better health often are more likely to stick with a permanent lifestyle change.

And, for those of you who haven't started the WellFit for Life program yet, remember you have until Saturday, March 15, to log on to the WellFit for Life website at www.wellfit.teachershealthtrust.org and sign up for the journey toward a healthier you.

*Misti R. Brock, Publications Specialist
Teachers Health Trust*

For Your Benefit

During the 10 weeks of the WellFit for Life program, the Wellness Division has scheduled a number of classes and events to help keep you on track and on target. Attend any of the classes or events below and log miles toward your weekly totals.

Las Vegas Running Club

6 p.m. at Niketown, Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace
March 5, 12, 19, 26
April 2, 9, 16, 23

Bootcamp*

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
24 Hour Fitness, 601 S. Rainbow at Alta
March 8, 15, 29
April 5, 12, 19
Space is limited. RSVP required.

SET (Strength and Endurance Training)*

12 to 1 p.m.
24 Hour Fitness, 2556 Wigwam Pkwy., Henderson
March 8, 15, 29
April 5, 12, 19
Space is limited. RSVP required.

To RSVP for the above classes or for directions to any of the events, log on to the WellFit for Life website at www.wellfit.teachershealthtrust.org. For more information regarding the WellFit for Life program, contact the Wellness Division at wellness@teachershealth-trust.org or 702-794-0272.

*Trust Participants who are not members of 24 Hour Fitness will be issued one month passes in order to attend up to four consecutive Saturdays of classes as well as enjoy other club amenities for that month. The Trust apologizes for a misprint on the WellFit for Life flyer which stated all classes were free with a Trust or CCSD identification and did not make mention of the limited one month pass.

Brushing and Flossing and Rinsing, Oh My!:

Preventing Disease through Tooth and Gum Care

“Brush and floss only the teeth you want to keep,” Dr. Gary Ozier, Family Practice Physician with the Clinics of North Texas, tells his patients on a regular basis. And while his words are lighthearted and usually elicit a chuckle from his patients, the message is clear: take care of your teeth or risk losing them.

But good dental hygiene isn't just about avoiding dentures. From the risk of tooth decay and loss to gum disease and halitosis, an unhealthy mouth can often be a sign of a much more serious condition.

For doctors and dentists alike, the mouth provides a wealth of information. Symptoms of certain diseases—including cancers, sexually transmitted diseases and osteoporosis—often present first in the mouth. And for those suffering from chronic conditions, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes, poor dental hygiene can only complicate disease management.

What many people don't realize is the mouth is home to so many different types of bacteria that some have yet to be named. Each time you open your mouth, additional bacteria enters the war zone, laying claim to your tongue, gums, and the back of your throat.

And, if you don't make brushing, flossing, and dentist visits a regular habit, the bacteria breeds and multiplies until it is so out of control that it begins to break down your gums, resulting in gum disease. This, in turn, provides a gateway, allowing the harmful bacteria in your mouth to enter your bloodstream. And harmful bacteria floating around in your blood stream is not a pleasant thought.

While it is never too late to start caring for your teeth and gums, starting at an early age and maintaining a good relationship with your toothbrush and dental floss as well as scheduling regular exams are necessary components of maintaining good health.

Children and Adolescents.

According to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, a report by the Department of Health and Human Services found that dental problems account for 51 million missed school hours a year for American children. The main cause for concern with children is cavities, or tooth decay, due to infrequent or incomplete

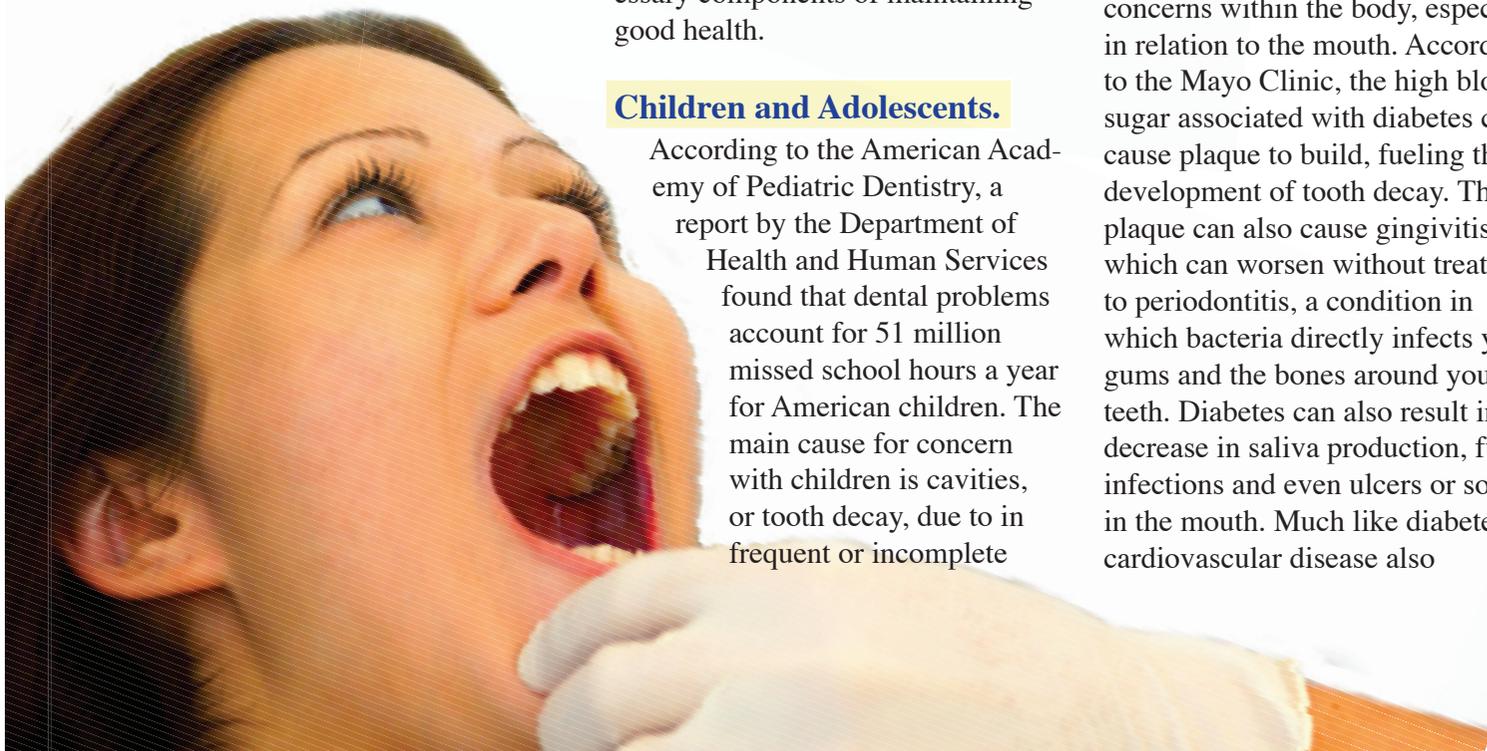
brushing and sugary snacks. When children reach their teenage years, they usually assume more responsibility, which includes managing (or not managing) their dental hygiene. According to the AAPD, their jaws are still growing and their permanent teeth are still breaking through their gums and are extremely prone to decay.

Adults.

Our teeth, gums and the muscles of our mouths are not immune to the aging process. And, unfortunately, as we age, we become more susceptible to dental problems such as brittle teeth, periodontal disease, and tooth decay. Additionally, painful dental procedures, dentures, and cost are often factors that keep adults from practicing good dental hygiene, especially older adults.

Adults with Chronic Conditions.

Conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes create other concerns within the body, especially in relation to the mouth. According to the Mayo Clinic, the high blood sugar associated with diabetes can cause plaque to build, fueling the development of tooth decay. This plaque can also cause gingivitis which can worsen without treatment to periodontitis, a condition in which bacteria directly infects your gums and the bones around your teeth. Diabetes can also result in a decrease in saliva production, fungal infections and even ulcers or sores in the mouth. Much like diabetes, cardiovascular disease also



carries its own risks associated with poor dental care, including infective (bacterial) endocarditis. This serious condition results when bacteria from the mouth infects the heart. Certain dental procedures put an individual with heart disease at risk for this infection, while new, unconfirmed research suggests that the bacteria entering the bloodstream due to gum disease can also negatively affect the heart's ability to function properly.

To avoid any of the complications that are a result of poor dental hygiene, the Trust encourages you to take advantage of the dental benefits

available to you under the Diamond and Platinum Plans. Preventive services, including routine oral exams and cleanings, x-rays, and fluoride and sealant treatments for children under age 19, are covered at 100 percent, meaning these services are free to you if provided by an In-Network Provider and if you have not met your Benefit Maximum for the Calendar Year.

Brushing and flossing may not only save the teeth you want to keep. Coupled with biannual dental visits, these simple preventive measures can help keep you happy,

healthy and smiling.

For more information regarding your dental benefits, including covered and non-covered services and benefit maximums, refer to Chapter Six of your Summary Plan Document (SPD) or contact the Trust's Service Team at 702-794-0272 or serviceteam@teachershealthtrust.org.

*Misti R. Brock, Publications Specialist
Teachers Health Trust*

Answers to Mental Muscle Express

1. Not My Cup of Tea
2. I want to be in movies
3. Right Under Your Nose
4. Three of a Kind
5. Accentuate the Positive Eliminate the Negative



Signs aren't always this clear.
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Keeping Count:

How Many Calories Do You Really Consume?

Contrary to what our bodies and our scales want us to believe, the formula for weight loss is simple: burn more calories daily than you take in.

3,500 calories equals one pound. Burn 3,500 calories more than you intake in a given week and lose one pound. It's simple math, really.

But no matter how many times we are told, no matter how many different ways the information is presented to us, somehow, somehow, it just isn't that easy. And most of the time, no matter how hard we try, we are our own worst enemies. We just don't realize how many calories we consume in a day.

Between handfuls of snacks here and there, quick lunches at fast food restaurants, and mid-afternoon trips to Starbucks, it's quite possible for the average person to double his or her recommended caloric intake without even realizing it. And we wonder why those last stubborn ten pounds won't budge!

But there is a tried and true weight loss method that nutritionists and weight loss coaches swear by, and it doesn't involve fancy meal replacements, nutritional supplements or crazy fads that have you drinking a maple syrup and cayenne pepper concoction the rest of your days. You need only a notebook and a pen or a resourceful website at your finger tips. Because the problem that most of us face in regard to weight loss is overconsumption, you must first learn to monitor what you are eating. And what better way to do this than to

keep a food journal. By writing down everything that passes your lips, including beverages and sticks of gum, you can see—on paper, no less—how many calories you eat a day. And for many, this number is a real eye-opener.

And once you have identified the source of those empty calories, you can eliminate it—or at least cut back on it considerably. But simply writing

down your food consumption may not be enough to lose

the weight if you aren't seeing your total calories on a daily basis. Experience teaches us that good intentions and firm resolve early on can only last so long if we aren't seeing results or aren't able to identify a tangible culprit for the continued struggle.

And that is where a website like SparkPeople becomes a girl's (or guy's) best friend. A free interactive website, SparkPeople is centered around health, nutrition and fitness. After creating a free account, members have access to nutrition

and fitness trackers, weight and measurement managing, fitness and nutrition tips and articles, and a whole community of SparkPeople who are sharing ideas, recipes and motivational stories.

After entering your current and goal weights and the length of time you have to reach your goal, you gain access to one of the most useful features of the website: nutrition tracking. If you know what you ate and how much you ate, you can log your meals and see the totals for calories, fat, carbs and protein add up before your eyes at the bottom of the page. And seeing your calories total before you is the best motivator for keeping your hand out of the cookie jar.

And you'll also be amazed at what monitoring your calorie consumption will teach you. Within days, you will learn the importance of portion control, and you'll soon shy away from foods that are loaded with calories in order to stay within the range of calories your body needs to lose weight at a safe and effective one to two pounds a week.

So whether you're a stickler for keeping that trusty notebook and pen glued to your hip all day or you prefer to run to the computer after every meal, keeping track of your calories is a no hassle way to tackle the battle against the bulge. And, when you're comfortable, incorporate a little exercise into the routine and its hello skinny jeans in no time!

*Misti R. Brock, Publications Specialist
Teachers Health Trust*

	NAME	CALORIES	CARBS	FAT	PROTEIN
Breakfast:	Cornfls, Honey bunches of oats, 1 serving(s)	188	24	3	6
Lunch:	Name				
Dinner:	Name				
Snack:	Name				
TOTALS:		888	26	3	6

WellFit for Life and Best Weigh to Go Programs Underway

February marked the kick off of the thirteenth annual WellFit for Life program, sponsored by the Trust, to encourage licensed personnel to get up and get moving. A web-managed program, WellFit for Life is a 10 week cardiovascular program designed to motivate licensed personnel of the Clark County School District to log at least one half mile of aerobic exercise four days a week for six to 10 weeks. At the end of the program, numerous prizes are awarded to participants, from those who log the most miles during the 10 weeks to those schools who had the most participants complete the program.

On Saturday, February 16, more than 450 licensed employees joined the Trust staff at Chaparral High School for the kick off, which was accompanied by a 5K run/walk and the Best Weigh to Go weigh in. Participants ran, jogged, and walked the 5K around Chaparral's track before heading to the gym to visit one of thirteen vendors providing fitness testing, health screenings, BMI and body fat analyses, and weight loss information.

Additionally, inside the gym, participants had the opportunity to weigh in for the Best Weigh to Go. A component of the WellFit for Life program, the Best Weigh to Go encourages participants to form teams and compete against one another to be the team to lose the highest percentage of body weight for a grand prize of \$1000. Teams consisted of two to five members with names ranging from the Thunderhawk Thighs and the Shrinkydinks to the Northern "Four"ce and Team We Just Met, two ladies who formed a team after meeting at the kick off.

As part of the WellFit for Life program, the Trust has scheduled a number of events to keep you on track. Two fitness classes are being offered by two 24 Hour Fitness locations in the valley. You must RSVP for these classes and spacing is limited. For more information, including times and locations, log on to the WellFit for Life website at www.wellfit.teachershealthtrust.org and click on the Calendar of Events.

Likewise, the Trust has scheduled a nutritional awareness and weight loss seminar on March 26, 2008, from 4 to 5 p.m. at Valley Hospital. See the advertisement on page 5 for more informa-

tion or click on the Calendar of Events link from the WellFit for Life home page to RSVP today.

Scheduled for April 26 at Chaparral High School, the Best Weigh to Go weigh out will mark the end of the two programs. Participants have until midnight Friday, April 25 to accumulate miles for the WellFit for Life program and until 5 p.m. May 1 to log the miles and complete the Data Report Form. Remember, to qualify for WellFit for Life prizes, you must have registered, logged at least one half mile of aerobic exercise four days a week for six of the 10 weeks, and completed the Data Report Form online by May 1 at 5 p.m. The Best Weigh to Go team winners as well as the WellFit for Life individual prize winners will be announced within the second week of May.

If you haven't had an opportunity to register for the WellFit for Life program, there is still time! Log on to the WellFit for Life website at www.wellfit.teachershealthtrust.org and start down the road to a healthier you today!



Lisa Concepcion, Tammalin Baumgart, Karen Zastera, and Ann Moody*



Ashley Warren, Amie Miner, John Spatharos, and Kevin Higley*

*Note: Names are in no particular order.

PREGNANCY RESOURCES



Pregnancy & Preterm Delivery Support Groups

March of Dimes

www.marchofdimes.com

Sidelines National Support Network

www.sidelines.org

Mothers of Supertwins

www.mostonling.org

Center for the Study of Multiple Birth

www.multiplebirth.com

American Pregnancy Association

www.americanpregnancy.org

Mommy Cast

www.mommymcast.com

The Teachers Health Trust provides Case Management Services for Diamond and Platinum Plan participants who may experience difficult pregnancies. Services are provided at no charge and are coordinated by a registered nurse (RN), who is also a certified case manager (CCM).

The Case Management Department is available to assist you during those challenging times and to help you achieve the best possible outcome for you and your new family member(s). For more information, please contact the Trust at 866-585-CARE (2273) between 7 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 and 11:45 a.m. Friday. You can also email the Case Management Department at casemanager@teachershealthtrust.org.

ASK THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

My New Year's Resolution this year was to take life in stride. I promised to make me, my health, and my sanity my top priority. But here it is, just a couple of months into the new year, and I am already falling into my old habits. I'm overwhelmed with work and afterschool activities, so much so that my littlest one is already in bed by the time I get home and my oldest is waiting for homework help, I'm having trouble sleeping, and my family is eating from the drive-thru more and more. Any suggestions on how I can keep myself from breaking?

Frazzled, Las Vegas

Dear Frazzled,

First, slow down and take a deep breath. Chances are, you feel just a tiny bit better already. In truth, we are all guilty of stretching ourselves too thin because, let's face it, in our eyes no one can do the job, cook the meal, or clean the house quite like we can, right? But, frankly, is it really worth sleepless nights, chronic headaches, or distant families? The answer is, without a doubt, no. There are a couple of little tricks that will help you feel more in control and less stressed in no time. **First, say no**

more often. You don't always have to be the knight in shining armor, so to speak. When you can give no more of yourself or when giving requires sacrificing your health or your sanity, just say no. Then, use the time you've saved to enjoy some "me" time by taking a hot bath, treating yourself to a massage, or simply cuddling up on the couch with a good book. Just a few moments to yourself will do wonders for your mental outlook. And incorporating a few "me" minutes a day will help put each day in a different perspective.

Next, prioritize. Make a list of the responsibilities you have at the start of your day and order them in terms of importance. As you complete a task, cross it off your list. The act of physically scratching through a completed task is empowering, and you'll be surprised at how much you actually accomplish when you see it on paper! And don't stress the tasks you don't finish. Make them your top priority the following day (and then leave them at work! Taking work home is never fun, not for you and not for your family). **Now, share responsibility.** Yes, your son prefers that you help him with his math homework, but your husband is just as capable and a more likely choice for homework help since he gets home two hours earlier than you. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. **Finally, take care of yourself.** If you are not sleeping, focus on

identifying the source of your sleeplessness. Don't let the inevitable or that which is out of your control keep you from enjoying today. Make an effort to cook and eat healthy by preparing bulk meals that can be frozen and reheated on the weekends and avoid the drive-thru lines during the week. And schedule time to exercise. Believe it or not, exercise is stress's greatest enemy. It clears your mind, refocuses your energy, and revitalizes your spirit. Above all, a healthy you is essential because if you are functioning at full capacity, you are better equipped to deal with all life's stresses—big, little, or in between. 🍏



Ask the Editor is a recurring feature of *Health Traxx* that allows participants to write in with health and wellness related questions. For each issue, the editorial staff will choose one to three questions to respond to and print. In addition to questions, your comments are also appreciated. Let us know what articles you truly enjoyed or what types of articles you would like to see more often. Questions and comments can be sent by mail to the Teachers Health Trust, c/o Misti R. Brock, P.O. Box 96238, Las Vegas, NV 89193-6238 or via email to mbrock@teachershealthtrust.org.



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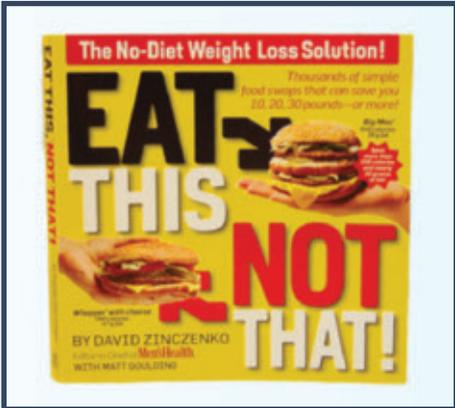
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CRITICS' CORNER

With swimsuit season just a few months away, the Wellness Division reviews the latest guide to getting the body you've always wanted to hit the market: Editor-in-Chief of Men's Health David Zinczenko's *Eat This, Not That*.



BRENDA KELLEY
I absolutely love Zinczenko's purpose! He writes, "The number-one principle of *Eat This, Not That* is to cut empty calories and add in nutrition—more bang for your caloric buck with every bite. And by carving away belly flab, you'll cut your risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and even cancer." And, trust me, this book will not leave you feeling empty. It is packed with vivid pictures and extremely useful information. When fast food is your only option and you are trying to stay in control, this book provides the answers and is small and compact enough to take along for the ride. *Eat This, Not That* provides suggested alternatives at fast food restaurants, the grocery aisle, and even at the ballpark and notes the amount of calories, fat, and sodium in all its comparisons, which is helpful for those keeping track of their daily food intake. It is packed from cover to cover with suggestions on healthy alternatives at fast food restaurants, in the frozen food aisle, and even in candies and beverages. I highly recommend this book, not only for those who are trying to lose weight, but also for everyone in search of healthier food

alternatives. The next time you find yourself at a bookstore, thumb through this handy guide. You'll be glad that you did. **GRADE: A+**

ROBIN DOMINQUEZ
Having *Eat This, Not That* on hand is ideal for making better choices, whether you are ordering at a fast food joint or doing monthly grocery shopping. It provides realistic alternatives to the foods we want (for example, choosing the Big Mac®, with less calories and fat, over the Whopper®), instead of telling us to substitute a salad for the cheeseburger we crave. Most of the food choices highlighted were no-brainers, though I was surprised at some of the comparisons. Who knew that a chicken sandwich was better than a chicken wrap? Or that simply varying the style of pizza crust (hand-tossed versus thin) could drastically alter the fat and calorie content? I liked the "Guilty Pleasures" section, which provided foods to splurge on without overdoing it, and it was helpful to read the children's drink selections, as anyone with kids knows how much juice kids drink in a week, though I wish there had been more pages dedicated to healthy menus for kids. Overall, this book has made me want to incorporate many of its tips in my own journey toward a healthier lifestyle. **GRADE: A+**

ISTI BROCK:
Eat This, Not That is rooted in the most basic of concepts: making healthy food choices will help you lose weight and feel better while decreasing your risk of developing any number of diseases and cancers later in life. But contrary to popular belief, the idea of "healthy food choices" does not mean deprivation. It means smart alternatives in moderation. Want that cheeseburger? No problem. Just choose the right

cheeseburger. In fact, knowing that I was preparing to review another "diet" book, I was taken aback when I saw the cover, which loudly boasts that instead of a Whopper® with cheese (at 760 calories and 47 grams of fat), a smart alternative would be a Big Mac® (540 calories and 29 grams of fat). From the cover, you can easily tell this is not your average diet and weight loss book. Instead, this book is about teaching the average person to be conscious of food choices on a daily basis. And, from the eight foods you should eat everyday (and the 20 you should never eat) to the list of healthy, mood enhancing foods, the book offers tip after tip in addition to an expansive comparison of substitutes to order or purchase at some of the most popular fast food and sit-down restaurants today. While many of the concepts are general knowledge (fried food is bad), you'll be surprised that some meals thought to be "healthy" just aren't. My only word of caution: after reading this book, you may never look at a restaurant menu the same way again! **GRADE: A+**

MARY WHITE
Eat This, Not That was an eye opener for me! It is really scary to know that in one meal at a fast food restaurant, you can meet or exceed your daily calorie, fat, and sodium totals without even realizing it! This is a wonderful book to keep on hand as a reference guide to eating healthy on the go. Very easy to read and follow, the book provides tips on cutting calories and fats while still getting to eat the foods you enjoy. I found the section that details foods that enhance your moods and rev your metabolism especially helpful. And there are also options for keeping our kids' food choices healthy, which is extremely important when you consider the growing rate of childhood obesity. **GRADE: A**

H.E.R.O.S.

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES REPRESENTING OUR SCHOOLS

At Frias Elementary School, students are encouraged to have role models—but the Eli Mannings and Hannah Montanas of the world aren't exactly what the staff has in mind.

Instead, FLIP (Frias Lifestyle Improvement Program) is making students aware of healthy choice-making at school, where they are learning from the examples set by their teachers.

"I heard of a study last summer which found that with education, children will make changes for healthy choices for six months. Without role modeling, the children will revert to their old habits," Frias school nurse Megan Pierce explained. "We can't make parents be role models, but this program [FLIP] allows the school staff to be role models for students."

A School District nurse at the elementary and middle school level for eleven years, Pierce credits the idea for FLIP to the staggering statistics regarding the growing rate of obesity and the predictions for America's future.

"By the year 2025, statistically speaking, 100 percent of the population in the United States will be considered obese, children today have a life expectancy less than their parents, and one out of three children today will be diagnosed with diabetes by the time they reach adulthood," Pierce summarized, noting that simply telling children and parents about the importance of healthy diets and exercise just isn't enough.

FLIP is a "multifaceted" program with the purpose of making the healthy choices of educators visible to the students. Pierce, along with Daryl Matsumaya, Karisa Garcia, Toni Shina, Andrea North, Michelle

Berkowitz, Barb D'Erole, and Janice Hefernan, all Frias educators, formed a committee to implement the program at the classroom level. "Mostly the staff is trying to MOVE more," Pierce said. "Our main goal is to have students see staff members making changes in the choices we make."

"Teachers began walking with their classes because the enthusiasm was so



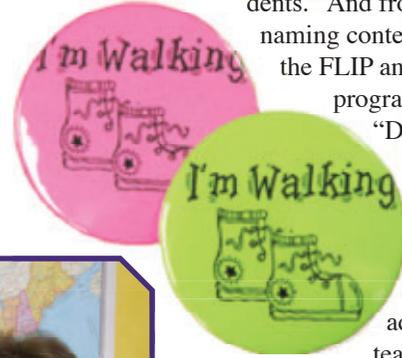
Tera Connor, Megan Pierce, and Sandy Leach

great," Pierce explained. "Teachers have begun to walk with their classes prior to starting classroom exercises or at the end of the day. Some walk the long way to the restrooms. Some use the opportunity to take lessons outside. Some staff members will use twenty minutes of their lunch to eat and the remaining ten to walk, wearing visible buttons that say 'I'm walking' so students see that teachers are trying to get in more activity."

Teachers have also taken the program into the classroom by using Body Mass Indexes (BMIs) anonymously submitted by staffers and the nutritional pyramid in their math and science lessons.

And the response to the program has been enormous, Pierce said, from both the children and the educators. "The students have been very enthusiastic. They are very conscious of their pedometers and the

steps they are taking," she explained. "We even had a naming contest with the students." And from this naming contest both the FLIP and the program motto, "Don't Sit, Be Fit" were born.



In addition to teaching students the importance of healthy choices, Pierce and the FLIP committee at Frias hope that the effects of the program will begin to follow the students home as well.

"We are with the students a third of their day, 180 days of the year," Pierce said. "I believe that today's parents are bombarded with information about the predictions of

our children's future health. I know so many parents are busy and struggle to make good choices as well. So not only are we becoming active participants in helping the youth of our schools, we can also help parents and families."

In short, Pierce believes programs which encourage healthy role models for children at the elementary level are essential in the children's development. And while FLIP is still in its infancy, it has a promising future.

"The realization that we, as school staff, can be role models is underestimated," Pierce said. "What we do in the classrooms and on the school campus in terms of education is so important. A child who isn't healthy can't learn, and I think this not only helps children become healthy now, but as adults, as role models, we can help students become healthy adults."

*Misti R. Brock, Publications Specialist
Teachers Health Trust*

HEROS is a section of Health Traxx that highlights outstanding CCSD licensed employees or employee groups who have achieved excellence by being healthy educators. A healthy educator can be a person or a group who has won a competition, the leader of a non-profit local or national health organization, one who has developed a health policy, curriculum, program or wellness initiative at a CCSD worksite or in the community, someone who has achieved a drug-free nutrition or weight loss goal with before and after results or a person who has a health condition and has made great strides despite the condition. To nominate a licensed employee or group for HEROS, contact Publications Specialist Misti R. Brock at mbrock@teachershealthtrust.org.



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