

BASICS Banter

February 2010

Iowa Department of Public Health

They're Walking the Walk

I deliver BASICS education in 6 schools in the Ottumwa School district. I often wonder what kind of impact the BASICS program has on students outside of the classroom.

One day as I shopped at our local drug store I had a 2nd grade student approach me. He had a huge smile on his face as he walked up. He was holding an apple and a bottle of 100% juice. He began to explain to me that his mother had given him the freedom to choose any snack he

wanted in the store. In this particular store there is a small produce area, however the majority of food choices throughout the store are pre-packed chips, cookies and candies. He had bypassed all of the other options and chosen something healthy. Seeing a student feeling empowered by his food choices was priceless.

*Story by
Stacie Latham,
Wapello County
Extension*



When left to their own devices will they make the right choice?

Inside this issue:

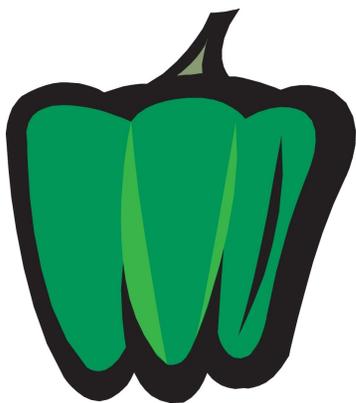
Story from Wapello County	1
Des Moines BASICS on TV	1
Healthier US School Challenge	2
Nutrition Calculator	2
Special Milk Promotion	2
The Children are Watching	3

BASICS on TV!

Two months ago our own BASICS instructor, Lyn Jenkins did an interview for the Des Moines School District's TV station. Her interview provides a succinct and engaging description of what BASICS is and how it works for kids and families. Please

take a moment to watch her interview and let us know about your own media contacts. We appreciate every opportunity we have to share the Pick a **better snack™** message. [Click here to watch Lyn's interview.](#)





Recognition Opportunity for Schools

The Department of Agriculture recently announced the expansion of the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSC) to include secondary schools. The HUSC is a voluntary national certification initiative that recognizes excellence in nutrition and physical activity in schools. Now all Team Nutrition schools can apply for one of the four award levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold or Gold of Distinc-

tion. Iowa currently has five elementary schools who are HUSC award winners and several schools who have committed to applying. The specific criteria established for middle and high schools can be found at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/secondary_chart.pdf. Secondary schools wishing to apply for an award can find more information and the online application tool lo-

cated on the Food and Nutrition Service Team Nutrition Web site located at www.teamnutrition.usda.gov. If you have questions, please contact Patti Delger at patti.delger@iowa.gov or 515-281-5676.



Food Service Nutrition Calculator Available

The Healthy Kids Act Nutrition Calculator is available on the Department of Education's website at www.tinyurl.com/Iowa-HKA. The calculator will determine whether a food product meets the Healthy Kids Act Nutritional Content Standards for a la carte, vending, and regu-

lated fundraising items sold to students during the school day. These standards will go into effect July 1, 2010.

Using information from a food product's nutrition facts label, simply enter all required fields into the Nutrition Calculator (i.e. calo-

ries, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugar) and click the "Check It!" button to see if the food item meets the nutrition standards.

Please contact Patti Delger at patti.delger@iowa.gov or Jennifer Neal at jenny.neal@iowa.gov for

BASICS Milk Promotion for 3rd Graders

Low-fat milk helps kids be who they wanna be. We at IDPH have prepared some materials and a special incentive to get kids in BASICS excited about drinking low-fat milk.

A card will be available soon that asks families to track their milk consumption. On one side is the graphic tracking card and on the other is a

letter explaining the purpose of this promotion to families. We hope all BASICS projects who work with 3rd graders will do a milk lesson in April or May and use this card.

We also have a special incentive pictured here. This will be available for projects doing the promotion. You may choose to give this to all participating 3rd graders or only

those who return a tracking card showing family participation.



The Children are Watching by Amy Liechti, Iowans Fit for Life

Have you considered the impact that school staff have on shaping the well-being of Iowa's students? Rising childhood obesity rates have increased concern about the behaviors we model for kids. Adults serve as role models to students often without realizing it. School personnel, parents, and other adults that students come in contact with regularly are powerful role models when it comes to nutrition and physical activity. Consider an employee wellness program for your school or the schools you serve!

In 2009, the Iowa Department of Public Health conducted a survey of school wellness coordinators. The results revealed that, of those responding, nearly two-thirds of Iowa schools have no health promotion programming in place for school staff. Small steps can be taken to have a positive impact. Here are a few easy things you could do to get started:

1. Consider joining a Live Healthy Iowa team. Visit www.livehealthyiowa.org.
2. Ask about opening the school before or after hours allowing staff and members of the community an opportunity to walk in a safe environment.
3. Encourage staff to set a good example by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables throughout the day. Drink water instead of soda.
4. Designate space in the teachers' lounge that could be used for posting healthy recipes and physical activity opportunities.



BASICS Funding Announcement

The Iowa Nutrition Network and the Iowa Department of Public Health invite you to participate in the Iowa Nutrition Network's community nutrition education program, BASICS for Nutrition and Physical Activity. The funding application will be posted on the department's Web site February 24, 2010.

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphGBP/IdphGBP.aspx>

Nutrition education can be provided to any age group, but must be directed to low-income audiences with an income limit of 185 percent of poverty. Funding is not competitive but match is required. Questions are welcome. Call 1-800-532-1579 for more information.

Please contact Christine if you have suggestions for future stories in the BASICS Banter.

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