Building Bridges in the Community

Our role model is Christ and we are reminded that “His method alone will bring true success in reaching people.” What did He do? Inspiration and Scripture tell us that He “mingled” with people and ministered to their needs, before asking them to follow Him (Ministry of Healing, p. 143). If we want to make an impact in people’s lives we must start by meeting the needs around us. There are many needs to meet, but one in particular has been brought to our attention. Thirty-three percent of the population in the US is obese and one in three kids fit that description. A child that is obese at the ages of 10-13 has an 80% chance of being obese as an adult. Scientific evidence confirms the links between obesity and diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other major killers. There is a huge need for education and opportunities to help families prevent and reverse this scenario.

What can Adventists do?

Many years ago Adventists took the tobacco “epidemic” and engaged with the community to make a difference teaching Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking programs, as well as partnering with community organizations and policy makers to change the course of smoking around the world. Years later we now see the prevalence of smoking being reduced in the US and other parts of the world. Now we have the opportunity to do the same with the obesity epidemic. The key again is to make connections and build bridges in the community so we can have a similar positive impact in the health of families and communities today. This effort will take collaboration from Adventist ministries and institutions, as well as the creation of partnerships in our communities. This month, the NAD is launching Adventists InStep for Life, the Adventist response to the childhood and adult epidemic of obesity. Please join our ministries (health, youth, children’s, community services, schools, hospitals) in following Christ’s example of mingling, showing sympathy, and meeting this current need around us. I have no doubt God can bring incredible success as we follow His method to reach out in love to individuals and families in our communities “Telling the World to Choose Full Life.”

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“... Your word has revived me and given me life.” – Psalm 119:50
Health Ministries Resources

- **Adventists InStep for Life Toolkit.** Free downloadable resource for leading your church, school or organization to form a team to fight childhood obesity. Check out www.nadhealthministries.org for more information, ideas, and stories of how others are getting involved.

- **Vibrant Life Forks Over Knives Special Issue.** The documentary *Forks Over Knives* is premiering in theaters across the country beginning May 6 and provides a great opportunity for us to share the Seventh-day Adventist health message in a positive way. *Vibrant Life* has made it easy with a special issue that includes recipes and articles for how to eat better. Special pricing available from your Adventist Book Center. For more information about the film, visit www.forksoverknives.com.

- **The Vegetarian Advantage** is a great tool for helping people adopt a plant-based diet. Dr. Don Hall provides research showing the health benefits of a vegetarian diet, suggestions to ensure that nutritional needs are met, meal planning guidelines, and pointers on how to become a smart vegetarian. Use *The Vegetarian Advantage* in health fairs, literature racks, health lectures and programs, and more! Special pricing available. To purchase, contact your Adventist Book Center.

- **Foods for Thought** shows nutrition’s link with brain as well as body health. Learn how lifestyle can help your mental engine “purr” instead of “ping” at any age, and how to reduce and reverse chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity. Includes special features on children’s brain health and nutrition; balancing a plant-based diet; menu ideas for busy people; and the importance of spiritual health. Available from Lifestyle Matters at www.lifestylematters.com or 1-866-624-5433.

- **Monthly Health Ministry Teleconference** for conference and union health ministries directors. To join the next call, contact Katia Reinert at Katia.Reinert@nad.adventist.org.

- **Facts with Hope** is a concept taught in the *Health Ministry Team Building* course for a positive way to create awareness of the need for lifestyle change while instilling hope and confidence that change is possible. See page four of this newsletter for facts you can use in health nuggets, bulletin boards, newsletters, church bulletins or community handouts.
NAD HEALTH MINISTRIES

The North American Division launched Adventists InStep for Life on April 1. Co-sponsored by Adventist Community Services, Children’s Ministries, Education, Health Ministries, Youth, Adventist Health Systems and Adventist HealthCare, this initiative aims to mobilize every member and institution to make an impact on childhood obesity. Specific goals for 2011 include accumulating one million miles of physical activity, 60% of Adventist students achieving the NAD and President Active Lifestyle Awards, launching 100 summer feeding sites, and starting 100 vegetable gardens in schools and/or churches. The Division has also set aside Sunday, September 25 as Let’s Move Day, during which as many people as possible will be involved in physical activity. A toolkit and resources are available at www.nadhealthministries.org.

SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

The Maranatha Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tallahassee, Florida hosted their 2nd Annual Southside Community Health & Fitness Fair at the North Florida Fairgrounds on April 10, 2011, drawing more than 1500 attendees. The church partnered with professional football player Ernie Sims and his Big H.I.T.S. Foundation, as well as the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University’s chapter of Health and Educational Relief for Guyana, to focus on seniors, children and youth. Seventy-five vendors, including the Leon County Health Unit, the Public Health Department, Florida State College of Medicine, US Army, hospitals, fitness centers and health food stores offered health and dental screenings, child ID kits, rock climbing wall, moon walk, obstacle courses, a bounce house, presentations on exercising, gardening, healthy snacks/meals for kids, and more. The Maranatha Pathfinder Club displayed camping demonstrations and featured their drum corps for entertainment for the youth, while Community Services distributed food and clothing to those in need. “Southside youth are more at risk, and we are trying to give them an alternative,” said James L. James, Outreach Ministry Leader. “We want them to know we are there for them.”

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

Andrews University received a LIVE UNITED Award for providing methods for the United Way to more effectively track their program outcomes. Graduate students, in conjunction with Curt VanderWaal, chair of the Department of Social Work and director of the Center for Community Impact Research, meet with community program leaders, design evaluation tools, analyze data, and create the community report cards. “The Live United Award is given to an individual or company that exemplifies Give, Advocate and Volunteer,” reports Anna Murphy.

ADVENTIST HEALTH CARE

The Vice Presidents representing the five Adventist health care institutions in North America met at Kettering, Ohio on March 13-16. Also participating were Katia Reinert, NAD HM Director, Elder Dan Jackson, NAD President, and Elder Dave Weigley, President of the Columbia Union. Moments of inspiration and success stories in accomplishing the mission of the church were shared, along with discussions exploring closer partnerships between Adventist hospitals, NAD Health Ministries and local churches across the Division. The commitment from the church leadership and the hospital mission leaders was renovated in uniting forces to fulfill the mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ in such a time as this.
Sleep, Vegetarian Diet and Exercise Promise Greater Health

**FACT** When we are short-changed on sleep, we make up for it—in calories. Columbia University researchers found that people actually eat more when they are sleep-deprived vs. well-rested. Normal-weight men and women consumed 296 calories more on average when they slept for four hours versus when they got a full night’s sleep. Overall, most of the extra calories came from high-fat foods such as ice cream and fast foods.

**HOPE** If you are trying to lose weight, take an inventory of your sleep habits. Address chronic sleep deprivation as part of your overall weight loss strategy. Cutting 300 calories a day from your diet may be as easy as going to bed earlier.

**FACT** Chronic diseases—such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes—are responsible for 7 of 10 deaths among Americans each year and account for 75% of the nation’s health spending. Although sometimes related to economic, social, and physical factors, more often it is behaviors such as tobacco use, poor diet, physical inactivity, and alcohol abuse that lead to poor health and contribute to chronic disease.

**HOPE** A focus on prevention in our families, churches, schools and communities will not only improve the health of Americans, but also save a lot of money. A report from Trust for America’s Health entitled *Prevention for a Healthier America* concluded that investing $10 per person per year in proven community-based programs that increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking and other tobacco use could save the country more than $16 billion annually within 5 years.

**FACT** It’s estimated that over 50 million Americans have metabolic syndrome, a cluster of factors—blood sugar, blood fats, blood pressure, waist size, and body mass—that when elevated puts them at a greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes or heart disease in the future.

**HOPE** You can lower your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes or heart disease by moving towards a plant-based diet. New data from the *Adventist Health Study 2*, a long term study of Seventh-day Adventists, found that metabolic risk factors were significantly lower in association with a vegetarian diet compared with a nonvegetarian diet. The risk of having metabolic syndrome was also lower for vegetarians, even after adjustment for lifestyle and demographic factors. The results stated that out of 100 vegetarians, only 23 showed signs of metabolic syndrome compared with 39 out of 100 in non-vegetarians and 37 out of 100 semi-vegetarians.

**FACT** Overweight kids are more prone to do poorly in school, have more school absences, and increased social-behavioral problems, reports a study published in the *International Journal of Obesity*.

**HOPE** You can help your child improve their grades and their weight by turning off the TV and encouraging them to move. Overweight children ages 7 to 11 who participated in a program that included 20 to 40 minutes of vigorous exercise had increased activities in brain regions involved in self-control, planning, complex thinking and proper social behavior compared with those who didn’t exercise, researchers reported in the *Health Psychology* journal. The study also found that higher amounts of exercise corresponded to higher scores in measures of intelligence.

“... I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” Deuteronomy 30:19, NIV

This free newsletter is published by Health Ministries, North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. To learn more or subscribe, visit our website www.nadhealthministries.org, email Katia.Reinert@nad.adventist.org or call (301) 680-6733