Health Promotion: Why it Matters

A useful resource for Health Ministries is the National Health Calendar where we can find a Health Promotion topic emphasized across the country and the world. Health leaders and educators in faith communities may not only use this calendar to promote the important areas highlighted by the country, but also access wonderful resources available for raising awareness about a particular health issue. In the United States, for instance, in August we have the National Immunization Awareness Month and the World Breastfeeding Week listed as the focus (see Resource list on page 2 for more information). How important to remind our family, friends and community members of the importance to follow these two health practices in order to reduce disease risk and improve health.

But why does it matter? If you are reading this Health Unlimited issues is likely you are naturally interested in health, but the truth is that many people are not necessarily aware of their risks and of what they need to do to reduce these risks and improve their chances for a healthy, full life. It is our duty as children of God, to engage in promoting the health and wellbeing of others as Jesus did, and one very practical way is through health promotion and education. God has given us important knowledge to share with others. Once we learn something, it is our responsibility not only to live it, but also to share it with others.

Next month, it will be child obesity awareness month for our church in North America. Are you ready to engage in health promotion? Our Let’s Move Day will give us the opportunity to invite family, friends, students, parents, church members, and the community at large to participate with us in this effort of raising awareness about this important health issue. If you have not done so yet, register today at www.AdventistsInStepForLife.org and watch a short video about why it matters. Download materials online for promotion and register to attend our free Let’s Move Day Webinar on August 22 at 8pm EST (register on the homepage or under events). Ultimately, it matters to us because it matters to God! (John 10:10 – I came that you may have life and life to the full). Let us together, Choose Full Life, Tell the World!

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Supersized Kids explains step-by-step how parents can work to avert the childhood obesity epidemic from damaging their community, and take control of the weight and health challenges facing every member of their family. Online resources at www.Super SizedKids.com include an assessment quiz, monthly newsletter, and a digital companion to the book. The Leader’s Guide, available at www.FloridaHospitalPublishing.com, includes training, marketing, promotion, and presentation materials to host a program in your community ($249). Be sure to download a Healthy100 Product Catalog for additional health ministry’s resources.

Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Policies The Institute of Medicine reviewed factors related to overweight and obesity from birth to age five, with a focus on nutrition, physical activity, and sedentary behavior. To view their recommendations, visit www.iom.edu/Reports/2011/Early-Childhood-Obesity-Prevention-Policies.aspx.

Grants for Gardens One of the Adventist InStep for Life goals is to start vegetable gardens in our communities to help families access more fresh fruits and vegetables. The People’s Garden Initiative is helping you do just that with a new grant program to facilitate the creation of produce, recreation, and/or wildlife gardens in urban and rural areas. All applications are due Aug. 26, 2011. For more information, visit www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/peoplesgardenrantprogram.cfm.

Free Webinar Series Join us on August 22 at 8:00 pm EST for the next NAD Health Ministries webinar in which we will discuss the Lets Move Day event, and the 1 million mile physical activity goal. Register to attend at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/955041592 Webinars are recorded. To access the July 26 recording and PowerPoint, visit www.adventistsinstepforlife.org.

Health Calendar Emphasis - August
- Festival of the Laity Dallas, TX www.festivalofthelaity.com (Health ministries seminars offered)
- NAD Let’s Move Day www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

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Health Ministries Resources

2011
August 27
September 7-10
Festival of the Laity Dallas, TX www.festivalofthelaity.com (Health ministries seminars offered)
September 25
NAD Let’s Move Day www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

2012
January 15-18
Adventist Ministries Convention Innisbrook, FL www.adventistministriesconvention.com
January 25-27
NAD Health Ministry Advisory Orlando, FL (Held every 5 years. If you are a HM Director of a Union or Conference, please plan to attend.)
January 27-February 5
NAD Health Summit 2012 Orlando, FL www.NADhealthsummit.com
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Educators from Union and Conferences representing physical education (PE) from schools and universities across the North American Division met this summer in Salt Lake City to plan for a stronger focus on health and fitness in the curriculum. As part of this effort they invited Katia Reinert, NAD Health Ministries director, to introduce in more details the Adventists InStep for Life initiative. Embracing with enthusiasm the presentations and motivated to engage students on Lets Move Day, they eagerly wore t-shirts and planned to incorporate it in the upcoming school year. Jim Ingersoll, Education Superintendent for the Southern Union, led the special group of PE teachers in the discussions, and together they launched a plan to renew the focus on Physical Education Curriculum in our schools. The goal is to have equal balance among physical, mental and spiritual areas in the curriculum. The division wide initiative was also well received by educators of the Iowa-Missouri, Kansas-Nebraska, and Arkansas-Louisiana Conferences.

ADVENTIST HEALTH WEST

Adventist Medical Center - Portland started “LivingWell” to motivate and educate their employees about fitness and nutrition. LivingWell offers employees free health screenings, online resources, practical workshops and a variety of activities to keep staff moving. Jean Riquelme, MD, has been working at AMC-P since December 2010. Since then, she has drastically changed her lifestyle; all thanks to LivingWell. “The day they took my employee ID photo by the healthy cafeteria, I was inspired,” said Dr. Riquelme. “This organization supports my efforts to be healthy.” Dr. Riquelme has seen amazing results: after a 21-day vegan kick-start program recommended by LivingWell, she is now practicing a vegan lifestyle. That’s not all: When Dr. Riquelme stalled on her weight loss, she realized she needed to be active while at work, too. So she purchased a treadmill desk. So far she has lost 62 pounds and counting!

SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

The Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church in North Charleston, South Carolina believes that health ministries is not only about assisting their members with living healthier, happier lives; it is also about reaching out to their community. They started a separate 501(c)(3) specifically for community outreach. In May over 300 people attended the church’s Get Fit, Stay Fit health fair, with seven different health screenings, child CPR, fire engine tours, exercise demonstrations, a vegetarian meal, and a door prize of $200 in groceries, planned and purchased to provide at least two weeks of healthy meals. This summer the church launched a free summer lunch program for the children in their neighborhood and served an average of 45 lunches daily. The children eat first and then any that want to stay and play games or do other activities can. During the last week of the lunch program the church distributed personalized Bibles to the children. Iris Wilson reported that “Everyone WANTED a Bible and parents were telling their kids ‘now you have your own personal bible.’ To see this kind of response to the Bibles makes it worth it all!”
Ready, Set, MOVE!

**FACT** Every hour spent watching TV may shorten the viewer’s life by 21.8 minutes. New research published earlier this month in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* tracked data from 100,000 Australian participants over the age of 25 and calculated the effects of television on life expectancy. They found that those who watch six hours a day “can expect to live 4.8 years less than a person who does not watch TV” and concluded that watching too much TV is as dangerous as smoking or being overweight.

**HOPE** You can extend your life expectancy by the push of a button—the TV remote button, that is. Do the math (22 minutes/day multiplied by the number of hours of TV watched per week), then consider alternative forms of relaxation and entertainment that reduce sedentary time and introduce more physical activity to your family’s daily life.

**FACT** Exercising at school boosts test scores. Researchers led students in grades 1 and 2 in Charleston, SC through movement skills (i.e. hopping, treadmill) while learning basic academic skills like geography. They found that the percentage of students who reached their goal on standardized tests increased from 55% to 68.5%, compared with students who were not participating in the program.

**HOPE** While exercising at school or while learning might improve kids’ test scores, this study also adds to growing evidence that exercise is good for the mind as well as the body. What can you think about, solve or learn while you are exercising today?

**FACT** Bicycling helps to control weight. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health found that among women who did not originally bicycle in 1989 but bicycled in 2005, even a small increase in bicycling time – as little as 5 minutes each day – helped to control weight. Among the walkers who had increased their daily activity by an average of 30 min/day over the years, only those who walked briskly (at least 3 mph) were able to control their weight. Walking slowly (slower than 3 mph) had no effect.

**HOPE** If you have a lot of weight to lose and are unable to walk briskly, consider bicycling as an exercise option. For premenopausal women of any weight, riding a bicycle was effective in helping to maintain weight, and overweight and obese women appeared to benefit the most. The researchers found that “small daily increments in bicycling helped women control their weight.”

**FACT** The aging brain experiences biologic changes that impact memory, reasoning, ability to learn new material, and ability to perform complex tasks. In addition, dementia (a lost of mental ability severe enough to interfere with normal activities of daily living) affects 11% of Americans older than 65 years.

**HOPE** Physical activity may be protective against cognitive impairment. Research published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* found that those older adults who were the most physically active had a 90 percent lower risk of developing significant cognitive decline, compared with those who had the least physical activity. Even if you start late in life, physical activity can help preserve your mental ability.

“... 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