



FYI Connections

A monthly newsletter for Tuscarawas County families.

February 2008

A community collaboration promoting wellness and fitness for children and families.

Vision

Community Environments that promote and support healthy lifestyles of children and their families.

Mission

To improve the health of children and their families through the promotion of healthy weight and fitness.

Organizations represented in FYI:

American Cancer Society
American Diabetes Association
American Red Cross
Claymont Schools
Dover City Schools
Dr. Timothy McKnight
HARCATUS Head Start
Indian Valley Schools
Kiwanis
Dr. Michelle Levitt
Nationwide Insurance
New Philadelphia City Schools
Norma Johnson Center
Ohio State University Extension/4-H
Super Fitness/Thin & Healthy's
Total Solutions
Strasburg Schools
Tuscarawas-Carroll-Harrison
Educational Service Center
Tuscarawas County Dairy Farmers
Tuscarawas County Health Department
Twin City Hospital
Union Hospital
WIC
YMCA

Sponsors:

FYI activities are funded through grants and local sponsorship.

On-going support is being provided by the Twin City Hospital Healthy Community Outreach Program.

For more information about Fit Youth Initiative contact:

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Children at Risk for Overweight—Guidance for Parents

Submitted by Andrea Settimio, RN, Dover City Schools

The school nurse has sent home the screening paper that tells you your child's BMI (body mass index) is too high and he/she needs to seek medical attention. Where do you start? First, you should realize that a child whose BMI is in the overweight grouping should be evaluated by his/her doctor to determine if this is a "simple" case of eating more than he/she should or another medical problem.

Assuming the child has no other medical problems that lend themselves toward overweight, the doctor may recommend "eating well" and getting more exercise, which is never as simple as it seems. First of all, children should not be put on a restrictive diet, but instead given options that are all good for them. You should begin by telling the child (depending on his/her age) that he needs to eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Emphasize the things he needs to eat, rather than those he needs to avoid. Don't say, "You can't have any potato chips," but instead say, "Would you rather have popcorn or peanuts for your snack?" When they've made their choice, measure out the appropriate amount to give to them for a serving size.

Secondly, reduce the number of high-calorie drinks your child drinks every day. This could be anything from soda to Gatorade or juice. You could refrain from buying them as one way to discourage their intake, or tell your child he can only have one of these a week and allow him to choose the day and time. This will depend on the age of your child. Younger children don't understand the concept of time and may not be able to do this. Remember, children need water and 3-4 glasses of milk per day and juice (100%) counts as a fruit or vegetable serving.

Watching high calorie drinks and snacks while encouraging 5 fruits and vegetables per day will go a long way to establish good eating habits, but it is equally important to increase the child's ability to burn calories (exercise). Encourage outdoor play. Most young children don't need a gym to workout; they simply need to go out and play. Kids should spend at least 1-2 hours in active play per day and no more than one hour per day of inactive time in front of a computer game or television.

Generally, I don't encourage weight loss in children, but rather strive for them to increase in stature without gaining any weight. Weight loss is reserved for those who have completed their growth in height (teens and adults).



Local Event Highlights

Upcoming programs presented by FYI and its member organizations.

12th Annual Book Drive sponsored by HARCATUS Head Start Policy Council. Appropriate books for children or adults will be accepted through 2/22/08 and will be distributed to local families to help conquer the growing illiteracy problem in our area. Call D.J. at 330-364-6248 for information on drop off locations or to make arrangements for pick-up.

Family Fun Nights—Parents, mark your calendars for these active family events, coordinated by school nurses in partnership with Fit Youth Initiative.

Dover East Elementary—Tuesday, February 12 from 6-8 PM, in conjunction with library night
Claymont Intermediate—Tuesday, March 11 from 6:30 -7:30 PM

Union Hospital "Run for Home" - Sunday, April 13, 2008, at Tuscora Park—In addition to the half-marathon event, there will be a one mile run/walk, kids' fun run, post-race entertainment, and health and fitness exhibits. All proceeds from the event will benefit Tuscarawas Valley chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Go to www.unionhospital.org and click on the "Run for Home 1/2 Marathon" for details, including free Saturday trainings being offered NOW!