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### Seven reasons exercise never gets old

- Helps maintain the ability to live independently and reduces the risk of falling and fracturing bones.
- Reduces the risk of dying from coronary heart disease and of developing high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes.
- Can help reduce blood pressure in some people with hypertension.
- Helps people with chronic, disabling conditions improve their stamina and muscle strength.
- Reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression and fosters improvements in mood and feelings of well-being.
- Helps maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- Helps control joint swelling and pain associated with arthritis.

**Sources:** *The Well Workplace*, May 2006; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health



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The mission of the Healthy Grants team is to implement wellness programs designed to provide education, tools and resources to achieve healthy lifestyles among our students, staff and community.

## Before you reach for another glass of egg nog or grab one of Grandma's famous holiday cookies... take the Holiday Weight Challenge to combat holiday weight gain

New studies suggests that we gain, on average, a full pound during the winter holiday season, but the extra weight that grows through the years is a major contributor to obesity later in life.

These findings run contrary to the common belief that most people gain from five to ten pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

The good news is that people don't gain as much weight during the holidays as previously believed. The bad news is that the weight gained often isn't lost throughout the rest of the year.

Because of this trend, take the *District Wellness Holiday Weight Challenge!* The *Challenge* is to maintain your current weight over the winter holiday season.

Aim for weight maintenance rather than weight gain or loss during the holidays. To achieve this, you don't need to pass up potatoes and gravy, fudge, or any other of our holiday food favorites. It's no secret, just shoot for moderation and balance. Taking one helping of potatoes instead of two, or taking smaller portions of your favorites will help your maintenance success. If you know you tend to gain weight during the holidays, step up your physical activity. Balance the extra helping of potatoes and gravy with a brisk walk after dinner.



Use the following suggestions to help combat holiday weight gain:

**Be realistic:** Don't try to lose weight during the holidays, instead, maintain your weight. Never skip meals! Eat smaller, lower calorie meals during the day so you can enjoy a few higher calorie items at parties and gatherings.

**Eat before the party:** Eat a light snack before heading out the door. This will keep you from over-doing it the rest of the night.

**Choose lower calorie foods:** To ensure there will be healthy festive foods, bring a plate of raw vegetables and low-fat dip or bring fruit kabobs.

**Be physically active:** After holiday meals, take the family out for a walk.

We tend to use the holiday as an excuse to overeat. The same principals apply during the holidays as do for the rest of the year...enjoy all foods in moderation, and pay close attention to portion sizes. You should enjoy the holidays, and all that comes with them, including the food. However, make sure to enjoy them in a way that will bring enjoyment to the rest of your many holidays to come. Take the challenge!

For more information on the *Challenge* go to [www.wellness.spps.org](http://www.wellness.spps.org)



## MAP Project: Diabetes grant helps determine students at-risk for the disease by measuring Body Mass Index

Body Mass Index (BMI) screening was completed for about 550 fourth graders in Saint Paul Public Schools as a part of the Centers for Disease Control funded grant, "Managing and Preventing Diabetes & Weight Gain" (MAP).

More than 1,000 students to date have had their height and weight measured to determine their BMI. BMI is one way to determine overall health and one way to determine risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Twelve schools are involved in the MAP pilot this school year: Webster, Maxfield, Longfellow, Prosperity, Franklin, American Indian/World Cultures, JJ Hill, North End, Dayton's Bluff, Monroe, and Jackson.

Preliminary BMI results indicate that 25% of participating students are "obese" compared to 18.8% nationally and another 15% of students are "overweight." "Obese" refers to a BMI at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile and "overweight" refers to a BMI from the 85<sup>th</sup> to 94<sup>th</sup> percentile. Only 60% of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in this project are at a healthy weight. Licensed school nurses in each of the twelve schools are in the process of interviewing parents/guardians of students in the "obese" category to provide information about healthy lifestyles and community resources as well as medical referrals for students at risk of developing diabetes.

For more information contact Stephanie Kimmes Diabetes Prevention Resource Nurse, at [stephanie.kimmes@spps.org](mailto:stephanie.kimmes@spps.org)

# Saint Paul Public Schools staff members get on the ball

## Steps to a HealthierMN—St. Paul hosts Stability Ball training for 50 plus staff

More than 50 classroom teachers, physical education teachers, therapists and support staff attended a stability ball training at *Jackson Preparatory Magnet School* on November 1. The training was hosted by *Student Health and Wellness* and funded by *Steps to a HealthierMN—St. Paul*.

Lisa Witt of *WittFitt* facilitated the training session. *WittFitt* promotes the use of the stability ball as a sitting device to enhance the learning environment and provide ergonomic seating.

The many benefits of sitting on stability balls include: promoting learning through movement; active sitting with no classroom disturbance; enhances attention and concentration; assists in improving posture; improves blood flow to all parts of the body, especially the brain; strengthens core (postural) and back muscle groups; improves balance and coordination.

Those who attended the training hope to integrate the stability balls into their classrooms, therapy sessions and office spaces.

Check the *Student Health and Wellness* website for registration information for another *WittFitt* Stability Ball training in Spring 2008. This training will be a repeat of the November training. There will be a fee involved. For Stability ball training information go to [www.studentwellness.spps.org](http://www.studentwellness.spps.org)



Above and below: Staff “get on the ball” at the November 1st Stability Ball training!



For more information on *WittFitt* go to [www.wittfitt.com](http://www.wittfitt.com)

To learn more about *Steps* go to [www.stepstohealthiermn.com](http://www.stepstohealthiermn.com)

## Community Design Center spices up PEP grant nutrition lessons with a passion for promoting healthy communities

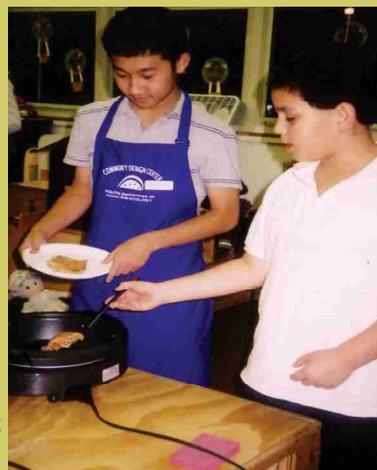
When Ruth Murphy and Britt Carlson of the *Community Design Center* signed on to teach some nutrition lessons for the *Physical Education Program (PEP)* Grant last year it was a perfect fit. This year the *PEP* grant includes specific funding so they can continue their great work.

The *PEP* grant offers many family nights each month at 24 different sites. Providing food for the family nights is essential for increased attendance. However, the *PEP* grant does not include consumables. Five of the *PEP* Grant school sites, last year, benefited from the *Community Design Center's* cooking class that engaged families chopping, cooking and eating veggie quesadillas. Families were encouraged to take traditional family recipes and replace some ingredients with fruits and vegetables. This year, through a grant written by the *Community Design Center* specifically for the *PEP* grant, all of the *PEP* school sites will benefit from the cooking classes.

The *Community Design Center's* slogan says they “use food and ecology to promote healthy people and communities.” Their mission is to help revitalize low-to-moderate income communities by providing technical assistance and operating programs that will enhance the physical, economic, social, ecological, and spiritual well being of the community and its residents.

Along with the cooking classes, the *Community Design Center* is also providing classroom lessons focusing on the belief that “variety is the spice of life.” The lessons include describing and viewing food that come in many different colors, flavors and textures. While a healthy snack is provided, students are encouraged to eat a variety of foods. “The classroom teachers are excited about the lessons that build upon their *PEP* grant curriculum!” says Carlson.

For more information on the *Community Design Center* go to: <http://www.comdesignctrmn.org/>  
To learn more about the *PEP* grant visit [www.pe.spps.org](http://www.pe.spps.org)



Two students cook a healthy meal at one of the recent PEP family nights.

## Nutrition Services brings fresh vegetables to the cafeteria!

*Nutrition Services* makes continual efforts to offer a variety of delicious vegetables to the students of *Saint Paul Public Schools*. Each day, students can select from an assortment of fresh vegetables including baby carrots, celery, cucumbers, grape tomatoes, jicama sticks, peas, *onions* and *zucchini*.

*Nutrition Services* also introduced several new vegetables to the lunch menu this fall to the delight of students, parents and staff. September brought Corn on the Cob and Winter Melon Soup. New October vegetables included Chinese Mustard Greens and Sweet Potato Fries. In November and December, students got to try a new recipe developed by Chef Seth Bixby Daughtery: Roasted Rosemary Potatoes.

Roasted Rosemary Potatoes are easy to prepare at home and are a great side dish for the holidays.

### Roasted Rosemary Potatoes

1 lb. potatoes, chopped in 1 inch pieces  
1 Tbsp. Olive Oil  
¼ tsp. Salt  
¼ tsp. Pepper  
1 tsp. minced Garlic  
1/8 tsp. fresh chopped Rosemary, or ¼ tsp. dried Rosemary

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Toss potatoes, olive oil and spices until evenly coated. Spread potatoes on baking sheet. Roast for 30 minutes or until potatoes are slightly browned and are easily pierced with a fork.

Find out what's cookin' in the cafeterias at [www.sppscafe.spps.org](http://www.sppscafe.spps.org)

## Vegetable and Bean Quesadillas Makes four Quesadillas

### Ingredients:

2 cups chopped and steamed broccoli  
8 whole-wheat flour or corn tortillas (1 pkg.)  
1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese  
1 15 oz. can of refried beans  
1 bunch cilantro, chopped

Hot sauce

### Directions:

Chop broccoli into bite-sized pieces. Add to a pan with 1/2 inch water and cover. Steam 2-5 minutes, until bright green. Drain the water and put broccoli in a small bowl.

Shred cheese and put into a small bowl.

Chop cilantro and put into a small bowl.

Open refried beans and put into a small bowl.

Assemble your Quesadilla: Spread a scoop of beans on one tortilla like pizza sauce. On top of that, sprinkle 1/2 cup shredded cheese, 1/3 cup broccoli, and a tablespoon of cilantro. Cover with another tortilla.

Warm in a fry pan on the stove for five minutes, until cheese has melted and the tortillas are golden brown. Cut into wedges and serve with hot sauce.

Recipe courtesy of the  
**Community Design Center**  
and the **PEP grant**