

A Health Word E-Style



RSU #20 A 21st Century Learning Community

April is:

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Earth Day
- National Humor Month
- Stress Awareness Month
- World Health Day (April 7th)
- Youth Sports Safety Month
- National Turn off TV Week (4/18-24)

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Earth Day – April 22nd



April is Alcohol Awareness Month

For Educators and Parents: Signs of Underage Alcohol Use

Most of those working in America's educational systems already know the facts about underage drinking. Underage drinking is harmful:



- * It can result in death and disability, poor academic performance, high-risk behaviors, and more.
- * It adversely affects the adolescent developing brain.
- * It increases the likelihood of chronic alcohol problems.

Warning signs can help educators spot an alcohol problem, especially if the behavior occurs suddenly or seems extreme. Concern should be even greater if several warning signs occur at the same time.

Behavioral Changes



- * School problems, poor attendance, low grades, and/or recent disciplinary action
- * Rebelling against family rules
- * Switching friends, along with a reluctance to let you get to know the new friends
- * Sloppy appearance
- * A lack of involvement in former interests

Emotional Changes



- * Mood changes, flare-ups, irritability, and defensiveness
- * A "nothing matters" attitude

Mental Changes

- * Memory lapses
- * Poor concentration

Physical Changes



- * Low energy
- * Bloodshot eyes
- * Lack of coordination
- * Slurred speech

What to Do if You Observe Signs of Underage Alcohol Use

As with all sensitive issues involving students, educators need to follow appropriate policies and procedures. Your school or school district may have substance abuse prevention and treatment programs. Your school nurse may be the person responsible for referrals. Be sure to check with the proper authority.

<http://www.toosmartostart.samhsa.gov>

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?



Source: National Health Observation : <http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/aprtoolkit.aspx>

Wellness Team Meeting
April 11
3:45
East Belfast School
NEW MEMBERS
Welcomed!!
Special Wellness Activity
Hand waxing



LET'S GO WALDO

Celebrate the number **2** for the month of April:

Limit recreational TV or computer use to two hours of less.
In other words, turn on the FUN!

Life is lots more fun when you join in! Try these activities
instead of watching TV or playing on the computer.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Ω Ride a bike | Ω Put together a puzzle |
| Ω Go for a nature hike | Ω Play ball |
| Ω Turn on the music
and dance | Ω Take your kids to
the park or beach |
| Ω Play charades | Ω Look for spring
peepers |
| Ω Go bird watching | |

Celebrate National TV Turn of Week
April 18-24

Interesting Facts about TV

- Number of minutes per week that parents spend in meaningful conversations with their children: 38.5
- Number of minutes per week that the average child watches television: 1,680
- Number of 30 – second commercials seen in a year by an average child: 20,000
- Percentage of children ages 6 -17 who have TV's in their bedroom: 50%
- Percentage of childcare centers that use TV during a typical day: 70%
- Hours per year the American youth watches TV: 1500 hours
- Percentage of Americans that regularly watch television while eating dinner: 66%

Unplug and start living. Check out Healthy Habits for TV, Video Games, and the Internets at KidsHealth:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv_habits.html

From the Kitchen..... RSU #20 Food Service Program

On Friday, March 25th, RSU #20 Food Service Staff and Food Director attended a 4 hour workshop at the Waldo County Technical School focused on cooking healthier meals. The workshop was taught by Waldo County Technical School Culinary Teacher/ Chef Mark Hannibal.

Twenty –two food service staff participated in the day. The day started out with an overview of the National School Lunch program followed by a short clip on Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution. Staff was then divided into five teams to prepare a variety of recipes from scratch. The day ended with everyone sampling their dishes, clean-up and a round table discussion.

The timing was perfect, especially in regards to First Lady Michelle Obama's campaign, Let's Move! to address childhood obesity, Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution, the release of the updated American Dietary Guidelines and the Hungry-Free Kids Act 2011. In Waldo County alone, the Body Mass Index (BMI) average for children who are overweight or obese is 40%, compared to the state average of 33% and the national average of 32%.

Highlights from the staff:

- Loved the hands-on training
- Working together in the kitchen with so many talented cooks
- Preparing different recipes and eating
- Learning how to 'hide' veggies in the meal to make them nutrient dense

Favorite Recipes

- Apple-Cucumber Salad
- Garlic Mashed Potatoes
- Mac, Cheese & Cauliflower



RSU #20 Healthy Kids Launch Web Site

Check out the new RSU #20 Healthy Kids web site at www.rsu20healthykids.com.

Find out what the RSU #20 Food Service program and other school programs are doing across the state and country to promote healthy school breakfast and lunch programs.

Join RSU #20 Healthy Kids on Face Book





Risky Behavior

Many kids start drinking in middle school. In fact, one out of every two 8th graders has tried alcohol.⁸ Additionally, more kids use alcohol than use tobacco or illicit drugs and more children are killed by alcohol than all illegal drugs combined.⁹

But the risky behavior does not end there.

- **Dependence.** People who reported starting to drink before the age of 15 were four times more likely to also report meeting the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their lives. In fact, new research shows that the serious drinking problems (including what is called alcoholism) typically associated with middle age actually begin to appear much earlier, during young adulthood and even adolescence.¹⁰
- **Illicit drug use.** More than 67 percent of young people who start drinking before the age of 15 will try an illicit drug. Children who drink are over 7 times more likely to use any illicit drug, are over 22 times more likely to use marijuana, and 50 times more likely to use cocaine than children who never drink.¹¹

Did You Know?

Each year approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking. This statistic includes about 1,900 deaths from motor vehicle accidents; 1,600 homicides; 300 suicides; and hundreds of others stemming from injuries such as falls, burns and drownings.²

A standard drink is:

One 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler;
One 5-ounce glass of wine; or
1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

Health Hazards

It's no secret that society gives children mixed messages about alcohol. As a parent, you should know that underage drinking can have serious consequences. The teenage brain is still developing. Did you know that alcohol can impair the parts of the brain that control the following:

- **Motor coordination.** This includes the ability to walk, drive and process information.⁴
- **Impulse control.** Drinking lowers inhibitions and increases the chances that a person will do something that they will regret when they are sober.⁵
- **Memory.** Impaired recollection and even blackouts can occur when too much alcohol has been consumed.⁶
- **Judgment and decision making capacity.** Drinking may lead young people to engage in risky behaviors that can result in illness, injury and even death.⁷




- **Sexual activity.** Alcohol use by teens is a strong predictor of both sexual activity and unprotected sex. A survey of high school students found that 18 percent of females and 39 percent of males say it is acceptable for a boy to force sex if the girl is high or drunk.¹²
- **Violence.** Children who start drinking before age 15 are 12 times more likely to be injured while under the influence of alcohol and 10 times more likely to be in a fight after drinking, compared with those who wait until they are 21 to drink.¹³
- **School.** Student substance use precedes, and is a risk factor for, academic problems, such as lower grades, absenteeism and high dropout rates. Alcohol can interfere with a student's ability to think, making learning and concentration more difficult and ultimately impeding academic performance. In fact, the more a student uses alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, the lower his grade point average is likely to be and the more likely he is to drop out of school.¹⁴
- **Driving.** When young people drink and get into a car, they tend to make poor decisions that impact their safety. Traffic crashes are the number one killer of teens and over one-third of teen traffic deaths are alcohol-related.¹⁵

Tips for Parents

Parents can take the following steps to encourage their children to abstain from alcohol:

- Spend time together regularly.
- Listen and talk with your children. Try to understand the pressures placed on them and don't criticize their beliefs.
- Keep track of where your children are, what they are doing, and who their friends are.
- Get them involved in after-school activities so they won't be able to just "hang out" with friends in the afternoon. This is when children are most likely to experiment.
- Praise or reward children often. If they feel good about themselves, they will be more confident and better able to resist peer pressure.
- Be a positive role model for your children. Don't abuse alcohol or drugs.

For more information about talking with your teen about alcohol, tips for your teen to handle peer pressure, and warning signs of a drinking problem, please refer to: The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's pamphlet: [Make A Difference: Talk to Your Child About Alcohol - Parents Booklet](#) 



Check in with your kids

Family Nutrition Corner

A Dose of Joy by Dr. Kerri Vacher

What better time to talk about Joy and Happiness as medicine, than April- National Humor Month. Joy can be defined as an experience of wellness, wholeness, happiness, a feeling of upliftment, humor and/or peace. The levels of joy and happiness we have in our lives play a huge role in how we experience all of our other experiences AND there are a lot of experiences out there that we come across that directly affect our happiness.

Happiness is not a gorgeous body, lots of money or the perfect relationship. It is an equal opportunity experience which doesn't discriminate on the basis of looks, genetics, wealth, etc. It is simply a felt sense of well-being and contentment AND it is unique. For some, happiness is a day of fishing, a garden planted, a conversation with a friend, the first rose, the first snow fall, a warm cup of tea first thing in the morning.

There are so many ways that we can find happiness in our daily lives. It is our job, as our own best self, to find the ways to treat ourselves to some of it or else we can fall back to the images from the outside world that tell us we need to be, do and have to be truly happy. Experiencing joy or happiness, especially when brought about with intention, has the power to change our perception of our circumstances, our health, our illness, our capacity for change, and our power to heal. There is even data out there to support happiness and laughter as a powerful healing tool! Why wait! Try it now! Here is your Happiness Prescription:

Put the fun in your calendar. A colleague of mine says she asks her patients to take out their planners and show her when the fun happens. It's a funny thing at first but asking ourselves to get concrete about what makes us happy and putting that into our routine is important.

Brainstorm a nourishment list. Spend 5-minutes writing down any activity or experience that makes you happy...just write non-stop. Then go back and check the items you regularly experience already. Look at the list again and circle any things that would be easy to add to your routine. It could be anything, from spending an hour at a coffee shop once a week, to watching funny movies. Then, right at that moment, get your schedule and put at least one of these into your routine for the next 4 weeks.

Write to acknowledge happiness. Buy a spiral bound notebook and spend time every night reflecting on your day. With the intention of increasing happiness, write down things you were grateful for today, things you enjoyed and what you were satisfied with. This practice can really help you start seeing what in life is enjoyable already and has the added benefit of drawing more of those experiences to you.

Watch funny movies. What is the last movie that really made you laugh? Go rent it, watch it daily until you stop laughing. Typical dose is 3x! Have it on in the background and go about your life. When you stop laughing, pick a different movie and do the same thing.

Practice telling jokes. Laughter interrupts negative patterns of thinking and retrains the brain. This practice puts us in the habit of feeling good.

EMPTY BOWLS DINNER**Rescheduled:**

Come fight hunger in our community!

The THMS Culinary Arts Club rescheduled the Empty Bowls Dinner. Please check the THMS web site and district web site for new April date.

Suggested donation: \$15

Time: 5:30 pm

Bowls crafted by the Belfast Area High School's Arts Honor Society and local potters.

All proceeds donated to a local food bank.

**Get Growing!**

Now Accepting Applications for the 2011 camp season!

Get Growing! is an experiential summer program for youth entering grades 6-8. Learn about the growing cycle of plants, organic gardening methods, insect control, cooking plus more by working in the THMS garden & greenhouse.

Monday & Wednesday

9:00 am to noon

June 22nd though Aug 4th

Fee: \$20



To register or for more information contact:

Ellen Sawyer, Admin Ass't, THMS

Phone: 338-3320 or Email: sawyer@rsu20.org

National Youth Sports Safety Foundation Injury Prevention Tips

Playing sports is a great way for your child to stay fit and healthy, to learn about teamwork, make friends, and develop a sense of personal satisfaction. In addition, taking part in youth sports may lead to greater leisure-time physical activity as an adult [1]. However, kids' [injuries from playing sports are on the rise](#), perhaps due to several factors [2]:

- Physical stress from the demands of training on kids' growing bodies
- Life stress (which increases the risk of injury)
- Improper training
- Poor coaching

Each year, more than 3.5 million sports-related injuries in children under age 15 are treated in hospitals, doctors' offices, clinics, ambulatory surgery centers and hospital emergency rooms in the United States, according to the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Tips for Preventing Injuries in Youth Sports:

- Enroll your child in organized sports through programs that are committed to injury prevention. Make sure coaches and support staff are CPR and First Aid certified and the program has emergency protocols in place.
- Make sure your child's coaches are educated on proper use of equipment, that equipment is maintained, and coaches enforce rules regarding proper equipment use.



Want to feel happier and have more energy?

Then you need to boost the levels of your "happy hormone" – serotonin. It's a brain chemical that's triggered by certain things. So here's how to trigger it, courtesy of Dr. Pamela Peeke and *Woman's World* magazine:

- [Eat popcorn](#). The smell of popcorn gives you more energy, and the complex carbs boost serotonin production. And unlike sugary foods, complex carbs increase your feelings of well-being without a blood-sugar crash afterward. You can also boost serotonin production by eating turkey, eggs, nuts, beans, fish, and hummus.
- [Get more vitamins](#). Studies show that walking 20 minutes a day and taking a multi-vitamin that includes folic acid, B vitamins, selenium and vitamin D can boost the moods of mildly depressed people by 50 percent. And as an added bonus, 25 percent of the people in the study who took supplements also lost weight without trying.
- Another happiness-booster: [milk](#). A study in the Netherlands found that the "whey" in milk boosts serotonin production.
- Boost your happiness with [chocolate](#). Studies show that dark chocolate contains a blend of calming ingredients which activate the feel-good chemicals in your brain.

So, to lift your mood, munch popcorn, take a multivitamin and go for a daily walk, drink milk and eat some dark chocolate.

- Invest in proper gear for your child's selected sport. Teach your child how to properly care for and use sports and safety equipment.
- Include warm-ups and cool-downs as part of your child's sport participation. Warm-up exercises help minimize the likelihood of muscle strain and make the body's tissues more flexible. Cool-down exercises help loosen muscles that tighten during exercise.
- Encourage hydration during sport participation. Whether you choose water or sports drinks, ensure your child hydrates frequently while active.
- Ensure your child wears sunscreen and a hat (when possible) during outside activities.

Treating Injuries:

For immediate treatment of sprains and strains, remember **RICE**

- **Rest** - Reduce or stop using the injured area for at least 48 hours.
- **Ice** - Put an ice pack on the injured area for 20 minutes at a time, four to eight times per day. Wrap the ice pack in a towel prior to use.
- **Compression** - Consult your doctor on the best option to compress an injured area.
- **Elevation** - Keep the injured area elevated above the level of the heart to decrease swelling.

Always consult your doctor regarding any severe injuries or injuries with prolonged swelling and/or pain.

More resources

- Check out this excellent guide from the National Institutes of Health on [Childhood Sports Injuries and Their Prevention](#). It has tips on treating and avoiding sports injuries, and even has "scorecards" with information about specific sports.
- [The Young Athlete](#), from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), describes how young athletes are different, and what to watch out for with kids involved in sports.



Q: What is a horse's favorite sport?

A: Stable tennis!

Q: What's a cow's favorite vegetable?

A: A cowat!

Q: What is the easiest way to count a herd of cattle?

A: Use a cowculator!



Q: Where do rabbits learn to fly?

A: The Hare Force



Humour Month



Sausage and Spinach Soup

20
Minutes



Ingredients

- 10 ounces sweet turkey Italian sausage
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- ½ cup water
- 1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (14.5- ounce) can stewed tomatoes, drained
- 1 (14-ounces) can fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1 Tbs chopped fresh basil (or 1 tsp dry)
- 2 tsp oregano (or ½ tsp dry)
- 2 Tbs grated fresh Romano cheese
- Cooking spray

Nutrition Facts

Servings per Recipe: 6
Amount Per Serving

- **calories:** 261 Cal
- **total fat:** 8.6 g
- **cholesterol:** 62 mg
- **sodium:** 842 mg
- **carbohydrates:** 23.2 g
- **fiber:** 5.4 g
- **protein:** 20.9 g
- **Iron:** 3.4 mg

Serve with a toasted baguette
Courtesy: Cooking Light March 2007

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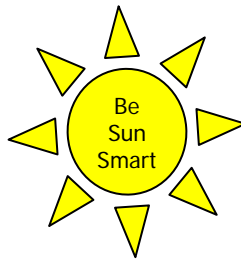
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*"When you're learning to
face the path at your pace,
every choice is worth your
while."*
- Indigo Girls

Cooking Instructions

1. Remove casing from sausage.
2. Cook sausage and onions in a large saucepan coated with cooking spray over high heat until meat is brown, stirring to crumble.
3. Add garlic and cook 2 minutes more.
4. Stir in ½ cup water, beans, tomatoes, and broth. Cover and bring to a boil.
5. Uncover and cook 3 minutes or until slightly thick.
6. Remove from heat and stir in spinach, basil and oregano.
7. Ladle 1 ½ cups soup into 4 bowls and sprinkle with cheese



Sun Safety and Prom



Everyone wants to look their best for Prom. But it only takes one blistering sunburn or a few trips to the tanning salon to dramatically increase your teens chances of developing skin cancer and also prematurely age your teens skin. If a tan is what you teen are after, use a **sunless self-tanner** and protect their skin at all times when they're out in the sun by generously applying sunscreen of SPF 30 or more.

Quick Facts about Teens Tanning:

- Approximately 65-90% of melanomas (the most dangerous type of skin cancer) are caused by too much exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation.
- Less than half of all teenagers use sunscreen.
- One out of three teenagers say they tan because it looks healthy. In fact, in an AAD survey, more than 80 percent of people aged 25 and younger said they looked better with a tan.
- The skin of teens is thought to be more vulnerable than adults'. Teens may be especially susceptible to skin cancer because their cells are dividing and changing more rapidly than those of adults.
- A 2002 study in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that using indoor tanning devices increased the risk of skin cancers – 2.5 times for squamous cell carcinoma and 1.5 times for basal cell carcinoma– compared with nonusers.



Asthma tips to keep your teenager healthy...

Take control of your asthma – it needn't interfere with your life. Keeping your asthma in control can be easy if you follow these tips:

- Always carry your blue reliever puffer with you – you use this when you have asthma symptoms
- Talk with your parents, school nurse and doctor about a written Asthma Action Plan
- Visit your doctor at least every six months to check your asthma and discuss your written Asthma Action Plan
- Remember to take your medications. They are your key to freedom from asthma
- Know and avoid your triggers
- Exercise to stay healthy
- Develop an Asthma 3+ Visit Plan with your doctor
- Know your asthma symptoms and how to treat them
- Recognize signs of worsening asthma and following your written Asthma Action Plan
- Know your Asthma First Aid Plan and how to use it
- Tell your family and friends about your asthma and how they can provide asthma first aid