

Wellness News to Watch

Georgia PTA Health & Wellness Committee

July 16, 2009



In this issue:

- *The Next Course – Why Children Are Key Players in Michelle Obama's Food Policy Moves* – Washington Post article
- *How Will You Promote Healthy Lifestyles this November* – PTA Healthy Lifestyles Award
- *Students Take Charge for Healthy Schools Video Contest* – Action For Healthy Kids news
- *A Fit Body Means a Fit Mind* – article from Edutopia by Vanessa Richardson

The Next Course -Why Children Are Key Players in Michelle Obama's Food Policy Moves

By Jane Black, Washington Post Staff Writer, Wednesday, July 15, 2009

It was the ultimate photo op. Thirty-six smiling fifth-graders eating a healthful meal they'd cooked themselves at a picnic table in the First Lady's Garden. The story line was as simple as it was seductive: They came. They planted. They harvested. In three short months, Michelle Obama had accomplished what other food advocates could only dream about. Good food was no longer just virtuous. It was cool. Visit the link below to read more and view photos:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/14/AR2009071400669.html>

How Will You Promote Healthy Lifestyles This November?

In November 2008, in celebration of PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month, some PTAs introduced students to new fruits and vegetables. Others started year-round student walking clubs or planted community gardens. How will your unit encourage healthy habits this November?

As you start planning, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Think strategically about the events that you plan and what their long-term effect on your school community might be.
- Hold activities in areas that are accessible to wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers—and offer activities at different times of the day and on different days of the week to accommodate a variety of schedules.
- Organize all your notes, fliers, and forms as you go along. They can serve as a reference when it comes time to plan next year's events.
- Visit http://www.pta.org/healthy_lifestyles.asp to learn how to apply for **up to \$1,000** to support your unit's PTA Healthy Lifestyles plans. While there, take a look at the five step planning process and list of other things to consider.

New Healthy Lifestyles Resource - PTA has created new posters to help families make healthy choices. The PTA Healthy Lifestyles Health and Wellness Facts posters offer dietary, physical activity, and sleep recommendations for kids ages 2 to 18 and are available online at http://pta.org/healthy_lifestyles.asp. Look in the *Official PTA Kit* for a printed 20" x 30" poster too.

PTA Healthy Lifestyles Awards of up to \$1,000 are available for selected Local Units and Councils.

Apply by Sept. 11. Visit the following link for more information: http://www.pta.org/pta_healthy_lifestyles_award.asp.

Students Take Charge for Healthy Schools – Action for Healthy Kids News

As part of Action for Healthy Kids' youth advocacy program *Students Taking Charge*, high school students across the country created videos to show what makes their schools healthy places to learn. Nearly 600 votes were cast through Facebook. Congratulations to grand prize winner *How BHS Stays Healthy* from Berlin High School! Runner-up videos were submitted from students at The Academy of our Lady of Mercy-Lauralton Hall and Thomas A. Edison High School. Students will receive cash prizes, and AFHK will make a donation to support each school's physical activity and nutrition programs. Watch the winning videos at www.ActionForHealthyKids.org.

A Fit Body Means a Fit Mind – article from Edutopia by Vanessa Richardson

Forget the term "dumb jocks." According to the latest research, that's an oxymoron. New findings from biology and education research show that regular exercise benefits the brain in numerous ways.

Not only can regular workouts in the gym or on the playground improve attention span, memory, and learning, they can also reduce stress and the effects of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and even delay cognitive decline in old age. In short, staying in shape can make you smarter.

Read more at <http://www.edutopia.org/exercise-fitness-brain-benefits-learning>