

SHIP LOG

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The Cottonwood-Jackson-Redwood-Renville SHIP is creating partnerships for healthy people in healthy places. The Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) aims to help Minnesotans live longer, healthier lives by reducing the burden of chronic disease.

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Worksites Selected for Comprehensive Employee Wellness Initiative

CJRR is please to announce the selection of two worksites by the Community Leadership Team (CLT). The CLT had a very difficult decision to make from several very good worksite wellness applications. The two sites that have been selected to implement comprehensive employee wellness policies are **Heron**

Lake BioEnergy and Renville County. Two very different worksites, but two worksites that will have a large impact on the health and wellbeing of their employees, families and community.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield of MN Center for Prevention will support the CJRR SHIP efforts at Heron Lake BioEnergy and Renville County by working closely with a Worksite Wellness Team to assess current policies and practices for the health and wellbeing of its employees. Next they will help to implement comprehensive worksite wellness policies that "provides health assessment with follow-up coaching; ongoing health education, and has policies and envi-

ronment supports that promote healthy weight and healthy behaviors" for the employees. This comprehensive employee wellness initiative is a thoughtful approach to ensuring that the work environment, policies, and programs support positive lifestyle behaviors such as physical activity, healthy eating, no tobacco exposure, and low stress.

Congratulations and good luck to Heron Lake BioEnergy and Renville County in creating a healthy worksite!

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Renville County

**Healthy Choices in Childcare Centers**

Little Huskies Daycare Center in Jackson and Preschool along with **The Learning Funhouse** in Bird Island are working hard to implement the "Learning About Nutrition Through Activities" (LANA) curriculum. Through implementing this curriculum the children and their families will be introduced to a variety of healthy fruits and vegetables that they might not have tried before.

The LANA curriculum is centered around environmental change to promote fruit and vegetable consumption,

with support from classroom activities and the home environment. Through menu and mealtime activities to increase opportunities for children to eat more fruits and vegetables, tasting and cooking activities to increase children's preference for and knowledge of fruits and vegetables, and family involvement to give them information about the program and activities to do at home, children and their families will be able to make healthier nutrition choices.

Another area that children and their families can improve their health is through physical activity. Both Little Huskies and The

Learning Funhouse have communicated an interest in increase the physical activity of the children through a curriculum called "I Am Moving, I Am Learning".

The overarching goals of *I Am Moving, I Am Learning* are to:

- Increase the quantity of time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity
- Improve the quality of structured movement experiences intentionally facilitated by teachers and adults;
- Improve healthy nutrition choices for children every day.



A yummy, nutritious snack: "Bagel Face" with broccoli, cherry tomatoes and sugar snap peas prepared by the children.

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Communities Looking at Safe Routes to School

The communities of **Redwood Falls** and **Jackson** are accessing ways to make routes to school safer and more appealing for students. **Safe Routes to School** programs enable community leaders, schools and parents across the United States to improve safety and encourage more children, including children with disabilities, to safely walk and bicycle to school. In the process, programs are working to reduce traffic congestion and improve health and the environment, making communities more livable for everyone.

The Active Living groups in both communities have learned there are

many benefits to increasing physical activity for students as well as all community members. Some of those are: improving air quality, reducing noise pollution, enhancing a person's overall fitness, help in managing physical weight, reducing stress and is a healthy mode of transportation.

Schools and community leaders can work together to follow the lead of the Childhood Obesity Task Force, a White House Task Force established as a part of the Let's Move! Campaign. They released an action plan to solve the problem of childhood obesity within a generation. Safe Routes to School is discussed within

the Physical Activity section of the report and several SRTS-related recommendations are made, including a benchmark for success — to "increase by 50% by 2015 the percentage of children ages 5-18 taking safe walking and biking trips to and from school."



Farm Produce Going To Schools

Farm to School is a national program being implemented in many schools across the country to help fight the obesity epidemic in children. It connects farmers with schools and brings fresh fruits and vegetables into the schools for the students. **Jackson**



County Central, Windom Area Schools, Westbrook-Walnut Grove School and Redwood Area Schools are

partnering with local farmers to use their fresh produce in the schools' cafeteria's. These schools began work this spring before school was out for the summer to find farmers they could purchase produce from this fall and use in the schools' menus. Schools plan to start out small with possibly one "Farm to School" fruit or vegetable introduced in the menu with hopes of expanding the program throughout the years to come. Each local Farm to School will also incorporate classroom activities.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

"Experts believe that a complex mix of societal factors -- from shifts in eating habits, to greater reliance on cars and increasing hours logged in front of the TV or computer - has been behind the rise in childhood weight problems in recent decades."

- American Journal of Epidemiology, online May 20, 2010.

"If unchecked, the growing problem of childhood obesity will undermine the long-term health and economic vitality of every community in America. By promoting active living and healthy eating in schools and communities across the country, mayors, city council members, and other municipal leaders can take practical steps now to help reverse the epidemic."

- National League of Cities, Combating Childhood Obesity,

UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 23: Walkable Community Workshop, Redwood Falls

July 21: Building and Maintaining Successful Community Leadership Teams, Windom

July 26: Walkable Community Workshop, Jackson

SAVE THE DATE:

Aug 3 & 4: Statewide SHIP Conference, Minneapolis area

For more information about any of these events, contact CJRR SHIP staff.

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