Project Healthy Schools Goals

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Make better beverage choices
- Include at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week
- Eat less fast and fatty food
- Spend less time in front of the TV and computer

Did you know?

- You can learn more about how PHS is helping improve the health of Michigan’s middle school students by watching our new five-minute video! You can access it on our website at: www.projecthealthyschools.org
- This year, over 10,000 people participated in Champions for Charity’s Big House Big Heart race which raises money for Project Healthy Schools and other charities.
- The American Heart Association recently awarded PHS a $5,000 Community Action Grant. The money will be used to expand the gardening programs in Detroit.

PHS events in Detroit

In addition to participating in weekly Project Healthy Schools (PHS) lessons, students at the four participating Detroit schools increased their physical activity, learned about health and safety, and tasted healthy new foods this spring during numerous PHS-sponsored events. The events included a 5K fun run, a health and safety fair, monthly food tastings, and gardening activities. These events and the PHS programs in Detroit are made possible by generous funding from the Thompson Foundation and AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation.

HFA holds first annual 5K

A week long break between regular school sessions was the perfect time to schedule the first annual Henry Ford Academy (HFA) 5K Fun Run! Imagine over 600 students running through the streets of Detroit led by Teresa Stuck, their physical education teacher and HFA wellness champion. Ms. Stuck monitored the run for the entire six hours on roller blades! Kudos go to Ms. Stuck and PHS Wellness Specialists Diana Rusz and Alison Heeres for making this May 10, 2012 inaugural fun run a tremendous success.

All students (grades 6-11) participated in the run/walk that took them through the streets of Detroit led by Teresa Stuck, their physical education teacher and HFA wellness champion. Ms. Stuck monitored the run for the entire six hours on roller blades! Kudos go to Ms. Stuck and PHS Wellness Specialists Diana Rusz and Alison Heeres for making this May 10, 2012 inaugural fun run a tremendous success.

UPA Middle School hosts first annual health and safety fair

PHS was a proud co-sponsor of the first annual Health and Safety Fair at University Prep Academy (UPA) Middle School on April 26, 2012. The after-school event brought together a host of local Detroit vendors and fitness specialists to promote

Students from Henry Ford Academy (HFA) in Detroit participate in a jump rope competition following the first annual HFA 5K Fun Run which was held on May 10, 2012.
Scores of students from Clague Middle School in Ann Arbor biked to school on May 10 to celebrate National Bike to School Day. The bike rack was filled to capacity by the time the morning bell rang! Students were greeted by teachers, administrators, community members and Officer Jason Gold, community liaison to the Ann Arbor Public Schools. Officer Gold stressed the importance of helmet use and bike safety. The Washtenaw County Health Department provided blinking reflector safety lights to participating students and entered their names into a drawing for bike helmets, odometers, mirrors and other bike safety equipment. Erica Briggs of the Clean Energy Coalition helped PHS coordinate the event which included free after-school bike tune-ups from Two Wheel Tango Bike Store.

PHS in the spotlight at UMHS Leadership Day

Leadership Day is an annual event at the U-M Health System (UMHS). It is a day of renewal, development and re-energizing for 250 of the health system’s top executives. Project Healthy Schools received the high honor of being one of the five programs highlighted at the event on April 23. This year’s theme, “Improving Health Care Access: Creating a Model for Tomorrow” focused on disparities in health care and what UMHS is doing in the community to address the many causes of unequal health care access. Each of the five programs was featured in a short video. The PHS video shown at this event can be viewed on the PHS website at: www.projecthealthyschools.org

PHS featured at women’s heart health event

On May 17th, Ms. Dorothy Gerson graciously hosted a luncheon for 50 ladies at her home in Franklin, Michigan to discuss Women’s Heart Health. Kim Eagle, M.D. and Elizabeth Jackson, M.D. from the University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center presented information about the nation’s leading killer, heart disease. Dr. Eagle explained, “Clearly, if we are to make a significant dent in heart disease in this country, it will come from concerted efforts to better understand and target heart disease in women and the growing epidemic of obesity in their children”. The women, who were widely concerned about the growing rate of obesity in today’s youth, were encouraged by the work PHS is doing to combat childhood obesity.

Go you chicken fat, go!

Having fun and getting active go together at Slauson Middle School in Ann Arbor. Each week this spring as morning announcements concluded, the “Chicken Fat” song started to play and everyone stood up and moved to the lively beat as they sang along!

On the last day of the program, Slauson Principal Chris Curtis, Ph.D. and Assistant Principal Doug McIntyre dressed as giant chickens to mingle with their ‘peeps’ in the school cafeteria.

The original “Chicken Fat” music was written in 1962 by Robert Preston with words by Meredith Wilson. It was originally called the “Youth Fitness Song.” President John Kennedy commissioned the song for the newly formed President’s Council On Physical Fitness. A copy of the recording was sent to every school in the U.S. to encourage schools to get active, just like Slauson is doing today!
Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti schools have Snack Attacks

In March, an attack took place in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti middle schools – a Snack Attack, that is! In celebration of National Nutrition Month students sampled hummus and fresh vegetables, fruit parfaits and trail mix. The Snack Attack is one way PHS introduces students to healthy new foods. Many students were unfamiliar with hummus and tried it for the first time at the Snack Attack. PHS worked with Chartwells Dining Services, the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti school food service provider, to make the Snack Attacks possible.

Wellness Champs share ideas at Summit

Project Healthy Schools held its first ever Wellness Champ Summit on May 23. The summit was attended by six wellness champions from three different school districts. Wellness champions are usually school employees. They serve as PHS’ eyes and ears and help facilitate the program at their schools.

The purpose of the summit was to recognize the accomplishments of the wellness champs, allow for sharing of ideas and networking and provide answers to questions about the wellness champ role. Everyone agreed that the time spent at the summit was worthwhile. Wellness Champ Lori McNutt, a teacher at Ann Arbor’s Slauson Middle School, summed up the experience when she said, “I loved hearing about all the different successful healthy school events.”

PHS Participating Schools

Ann Arbor Open School
Ann Arbor - Clague Middle School
Ann Arbor - Forsythe Middle School
Ann Arbor - Scarlett Middle School
Ann Arbor - Slauson Middle School
Ann Arbor - Tappan Middle School
Chesaning Middle School*
Corunna Middle School*
Detroit - Henry Ford Academy
Detroit - University Prep Academy Middle School
Detroit - University Prep Science & Math Middle School
Detroit - YMCA Detroit Leadership Academy
Harper Woods - Tyrone Elementary School**
Laingsburg Middle School*
Ovid-Elsie - E.E. Knight Elementary*
Owosso Middle School*
Owosso - St. Paul Catholic School*
Perry Middle School*
Royal Oak Middle School**
Ypsilanti - Lincoln Middle School
Ypsilanti - Willow Run Intermediate Learning Center
Ypsilanti - Ypsilanti Middle School

* In partnership with Memorial FIT Kids, funded by Memorial Healthcare Foundation in Owosso, Michigan.
** In partnership with Beaumont Health System and Children’s Miracle Network.

Attendees at the Wellness Champ Summit on May 23, 2012 share ideas. Clockwise from left: Kortni Evans, PHS; Laura Hurst, Scarlett Middle School; Cathy Fitzgerald, PHS; Connie Shelton, Ypsilanti Middle School; Sarah Frantom, Tappan Middle School; Ellen Hopkins, Clague Middle School; Becky Dahlke, Memorial FIT Kids; Carol Durgy, PHS; Lori McNutt, Slauson Middle School; Susan Aaronson, PHS.
wellness and safety at the school and in the community. The fair was attended by over 100 UPA students, parents and community members.

PHS provided an health information table in the gym, along with jump rope demonstrations followed by a well-attended jump rope and double Dutch competition. PHS Manager Jean Durussel-Weston led a team of nurses who offered free cholesterol and blood pressure screening (as well as counseling) for adults. PHS Wellness Specialist Alison Heeres shared her cooking skills at a wildly popular black bean quesadilla station. The long lines confirmed that students really will eat a healthy snack loaded with vegetables, fresh herbs and lean protein. Other activities included yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, Zumba and belly dancing demonstrations; a cardio fitness station; and informational tables from Wayne Farmer’s Market, SEED, Fresh Food Share/Gleaners, Fair Food Network and Our Children Count.

Special shout-outs go to PHS Wellness Specialist Diana Rusz who organized the event with help from UPA Wellness Champion and Physical Education Teacher Earl Moore and Assistant Principal Damon Pitt.

Spring cafeteria events provide opportunities to taste new foods

At monthly cafeteria events held March through June in all four PHS participating Detroit schools, students sampled a variety of healthy foods that many of them had never tried before. The events included tastings of citrus, whole grain breads, asparagus, spinach and strawberry salad, as well as an interactive session called, grapefruit and ugli fruit for the citrus tasting. PHS Wellness Specialists Alison Heeres and Diana Rusz, planned and staffed the events, interacting with the students and getting them to try the new foods.

Green grow the gardens in Detroit

Over 350 students participated in tending the gardens at the four Detroit schools, either through garden clubs or class visits to the gardens. Planted in this year’s gardens are strawberries, kale, collards, sugar snap peas, green beans, broccoli, spinach, lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, beets, carrots, radishes, potatoes, herbs, zucchini, cucumbers and eggplant. At University Prep Science and Math Academy (UPSM) the produce has been used on the school salad bar and for cooking demo's in the cafeteria. Students even have taken produce home to their families.

Through the gardening programs and PHS gardening lessons, students have connected the idea of energy and food as being from the earth. They have learned about whole foods and gained skills for preparing them. In addition, they now know that urban gardens are a source of fresh produce and they understand the connection between fresh fruits and vegetables and physical health.

Thank You PHS Supporters!

Thank you for your on-going support:
AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation
Champions for Charity
Memorial Healthcare Foundation
Thompson Foundation
University of Michigan Health System

Thank you for your recent donations:
American Heart Association

To make a donation or for a complete list of donors visit www.projecthealthyschools.org