



Spring has Arrived!

The weather is finally turning, which means walking and bike paths are once again being taken advantage of by students and their families. In addition, schools continue to improve nutrition and overall wellness in schools. March was National Nutrition month, but every month is a good month for wellness. Provide details of upcoming or past events, education opportunities, menu options, and any other ways your school district is improving school wellness. It's not only a great way to recognize school districts for their efforts, but an avenue to pass along ideas in furthering nutrition and physical activity in other school districts. Please e-mail Kate Balestracci at katebr@uri.edu.

Save the Date!

2011 RI Healthy Schools Coalition Breakfast for School Leaders
Friday, September 23rd 7:15am-10:00am at the Crowne Plaza

Sponsorship Still Needed!

The RIHSC needs to raise \$15,000 to be able to hold this very successful event that attracts over 300 school and community members. To pledge your breakfast sponsorship, please contact Dorothy Brayley at dbrayley@kidsfirstri.org

Staff Wellness Support by School Department

The staff in schools serve as role models for the students, so healthy behaviors by teachers, administrators and staff are important to adapt. South Kingstown school department showed its support for staff wellness this year by participating in the Shape Up RI program. As an incentive to get staff interested, the district offered to pay the \$20 registration fee for the first 100 individuals to join. In addition, they also used the district listserve to send frequent reminders, including motivational remarks from district employees who participated in the program in the past. The district ended up with 114 participants from seven schools in this year's completion. They're already talking about next year! Who knows? Maybe a RI school staff person will be the winner of the \$5,000 Whole Foods shopping card grand prize (awarded to a random participant who completed the 12 week program).

Upcoming Events:

♦ **SPARK PE Training** for PE teachers grades K-6. on June 4th and 5th from 8:30-4:00 at Alvarez High School in Providence. Apply via email at angela.ankoma@health.ri.gov. Deadline is May 17, 2011 at 4:00pm

Wellness Celebrations Around the State

March was National Nutrition Month, and many schools took advantage of the month's theme to promote wellness. Here are a few success stories submitted by Kids First's Healthy Schools Coordinator, Carole Toselli, and physical education and health educator at Narragansett Pier Middle School, Deb Ranaldi:

◆ Bristol-Warren

Health and Wellness Subcommittees work hard to improve their school district's wellness policies, procedures, and implementation of improved nutrition and physical activity innovations. One of the challenges facing Health and Wellness Subcommittees is finding new and creative ways to engage the entire school community in the activities of the committee. During the week of March 21st to March 25th, the Bristol-Warren committee sponsored a district-wide wellness week to raise awareness of wellness initiatives. Schools were encouraged to develop their own school celebrations, and the response was tremendous. The elementary schools had various activities and events, including:

- ◆ *Nutrition Detectives* program to teach 3rd graders how to read the Nutrition Facts Label
- ◆ *Operation Yummy*, an effort to encourage students to try healthy side dishes
- ◆ *Learning Doors*, a contest of the most original, colorful and interesting displays of

wellness-themed displays on classroom doors.

- ◆ Incorporating wellness topics into literacy lessons
- ◆ Fitness: Yoga for students, Zumba demonstrations, Chance to Dance, outdoor exercise breaks for the whole school, organized activities at recess, and before-school walking club run by parent volunteers.
- ◆ Smoothie demonstrations and tastings from the food service provider, Chartwells.

The middle and high school also participated in the wellness week, with such events as a "Color your Plate" slide show during lunches and whole grain and smoothie demonstrations and samples. In addition, various fitness activities were demonstrated, including wrestling and CrossFit.

Student and staff wellness advocates will be honored at the next school committee meeting. Parents were pleased to learn that Bristol-Warren is dedicated to creating healthy learning environments for their students and staff.

Congratulations to the Bristol-Warren School District for raising wellness awareness in their district!

◆ Narragansett

In collaboration with the American Heart Association, and Thundermist Health Center, the Narragansett Health and Well-



*Narragansett Wellness Walk
April 9, 2011*

ness committee sponsored a successful Wellness Walk. Over 90 community members participated in the walk, enjoying the physical activity on a sunny Saturday afternoon. The goal of the walk was to raise awareness of the school district's efforts and commitment to health and wellness. Community businesses donated water and healthy snacks. Chartwells had samples of featured items from the school meal program. Thundermist provided on-site health screenings and came with the dental van. In addition, the Narragansett town's planning department provided information about the final phase of the Narragansett's section of the South County bike path and Safe Routs to School grant.



*Healthy snacks provided at the
Narragansett Wellness Walk*