



# Balance

A Health Promoting Schools Newsletter

## LUNCH WITH A TWIST - EXPLOITING A REVERSE LUNCH

Sending children out to play *before* they eat lunch is earning an A+ from at least two CCRSB elementary schools.

Maple Ridge and Elmsdale Elementary Schools are using reverse lunch strategies, and both report fewer afternoon behavior problems, increased teaching time, less litter on the playground and less food waste.

Elmsdale Vice-Principal Natalie McInnis says that instead of barely eating lunch in their haste to get outside, students now come in after play ready to eat "and more calm and focused."



"The socializing is done by the time they come in, wash their hands and go to the cafeteria," she continues. "Cafeteria staff

is reporting reduced noise. After the children eat, teachers come in the cafeteria and escort them quietly back to the classroom."

Another huge benefit to reverse lunch: increased teaching time.

"The amount of time we recaptured is phenomenal," says Maple Ridge Principal Heather MacKeil. She says that instead of waiting for children to line up outside after play, and then waiting again for them to settle in the classroom, the students are already settled as they quietly walk from the cafeteria to class.

The transition has netted Maple Ridge 55 minutes of increased instructional time per week. That's equal to 2,200 minutes a month, or 7.3 days per school year.

The reverse lunch movement began in the United States about a decade ago.



## PHYSICALLY FIT BODIES AND BRAINS

Increased physical activity produces not only healthier kids, but smarter kids, says a new study.

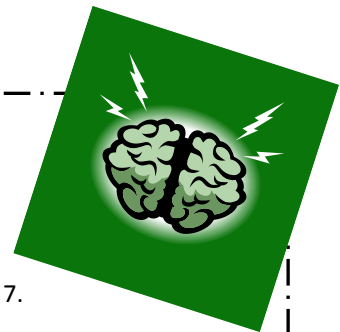
Researchers at West Virginia University evaluated the fitness levels and standardized academic test scores of 725 Grade 5 students, and re-examined the results two years later when the children were in Grade 7.

The study found academic performance dipped when the students' fitness declined, and increased when fitness improved. The children with the highest test scores were also the ones who were fit at the start and end of the study.

But the children who ranked second highest were those who were not fit in Grade 5, but became fit by Grade 7. The children with the worst academic performance were the ones not physically fit in either grade, the study found.

"If we can intervene on those children who are not necessarily fit and get them to physically-fit levels, we may also see their academic performance increase," says Lesley Cottrell, the study's co-author and an associate professor of pediatrics.

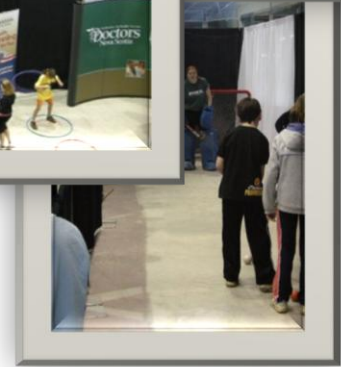
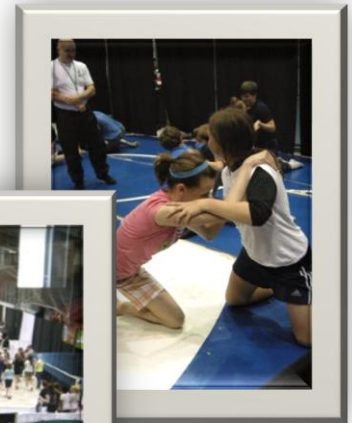
(Reprinted from *The Globe and Mail*)



# MILK SPORT FAIR

Anyone who's been to the Sport Nova Scotia Milk Energy Fair will tell you how amazing it is.

The fair will be hosted for the first time in our school board at the Amherst Stadium from May 5 - 7, 2010. Over 3,000 of our students from grades 3 - 8 will have the chance to drive a golf ball, take a slap shot, shoot a basket, spike a set, swing a bat, do a karate kick, and even paddle a kayak. Representatives from Provincial Sport Organizations and their volunteers will encourage students to give their sport a try. The end result for students is a fun filled day and the opportunity to fall in love with a sport they will participate in for years to come.



## GIRLS HEALTHY LIVING WEEK UPDATE

Yoga, skiing, self-defence and swimming were some of the 100 events offered region-wide during Girls Healthy Living Week February 15-19.

More than 2,300 girls took part in free school and community events throughout the week. The events were diverse, fun and interesting, and included taste-testing, team building, Olympic Games, motivational speakers, spa days, and healthy cooking. Teachers, volunteers and local organizations all helped make this week very successful.

The annual Girls Healthy Living Week is a terrific way to highlight and model the importance of being an active young woman for optimum long-term health.



## BOYS HEALTHY LIVING WEEK UPDATE

Over 1,000 boys participated in the CCRSB Health Promoting Schools Region-wide Boys Healthy Living Week April 19 – 23, 2010.

The boys had an opportunity to participate in approximately forty free active healthy lifestyle school and community events. Some of the events included: Tae Kwon Do, Canadian Diabetes presentations, yoga, cooking and taste testing, field Hockey, capoeira, canoeing, and a father-son bike ride.

Participating in Boys Healthy Living Week celebrates and highlights the importance for young males of being active and taking charge of their own long-term health.

## DOVE SELF-ESTEEM SLEEPOVER

Usually students and staff are heading home late Friday afternoon, but recently a group headed back inside South Colchester Academy, bringing with them sleeping bags, pillows, and great big smiles.

The school's Girls Leadership team of high school students held a Dove Self Esteem Sleepover for grade 8 students. A group of 24 girls enjoyed a fun-filled night at the school. They practiced yoga, enjoyed hummus with fresh veggies & crackers, and heard an inspiring speech from guest speaker Lenore Zann on how she overcame challenges to becoming an MLA.

After healthy dinner, the girls got energized on a fitness circuit led by Shot Conditioning, and had free time in the gym. Once settled into their sleeping bags, they watched a movie and snacked on healthy treats. In the morning, they started the day with a healthy breakfast before heading home.

The night was a resounding success, and the Girls Leadership students are planning to host a sleepover for grade 7 girls later this year.



## FUNDING SOURCES

**Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion & Protection** has a variety of different funding sources including Regional Development Program and Train Maintenance Program. Check out their website at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/pasr/grants.asp> or contact Jim Campbell (Colchester, East Hants, and Cumberland County) at 893.6215 or [jim.campbell@gov.ns.ca](mailto:jim.campbell@gov.ns.ca) and Gerard MacIsaac (Pictou County) at 863-7380 or [Gerard.macisaac@gov.ns.ca](mailto:Gerard.macisaac@gov.ns.ca)

**Community Health Boards** – Community Wellness Fund. CHB provides funds to community groups and schools to address the underlying determinants of health and keep people healthy. Contact your local Health Authority for more information.

Many recreation departments offer grant programs – please contact your local recreation department for further information.

**IWK Community Grant** – This program makes funds available to organizations that embody the vision, mission, and values of the IWK Health Centre. Childhood Obesity has been identified as a priority for community health initiatives. Please contact the IWK Heather Centre Foundation at 1-800-595-2266

## FIELD DAY ACTIVITIES

### Balloon Race

Have start and finish lines. Everyone lines up at the start and blows up their balloon. Don't tie it off. On 'go', everyone releases their balloon. You must run to your balloon, blow it up and release. You can only advance as far as your balloons goes. The goal is to cross the finish line! It's very entertaining to watch!



### Ping Pong Push

Each competitor is required to push a ping pong ball over a short course -- with their nose. Fun to watch, and even funnier if the course requires the player to push the ball around a corner!

### Hand Ball

Teams form a line and try to get a ball from one end of the player area to the other by passing the ball backwards over their heads with outstretched arms to the player behind. As soon as a player has passed the ball, they run to the back of the line ready to receive the ball again with it reaches him/her. Game stops when the team reaches the other end of the field / room.

### Hoola Hoop Pass

Players form a circle and join hands. Break the circle by separated one pair of hands and put a hoola hoop on one of the participant's arms and have them rejoin hands. The circle must pass the hoola hoop around the circle without using their hands!



### Ice Cube Melt Relay

Divide into teams. The first person on each team holds and rubs the ice cube until their hands get too cold. Then they pass it to the next person, and so on, until the ice cube melts. Whichever team melts their ice cube first wins.