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

Wellness Champions have been a great addition to Ann Arbor’s Project Healthy Schools (PHS) this year. What’s a Wellness Champion? It’s a person who helps facilitate PHS in their school and who engages, encourages, and works with staff and students to create a healthier school environment. Wellness Champions are key to the continuing success of PHS and they are a big part of the PHS sustainability plan. They make it possible for PHS to continue in existing schools while freeing up PHS staff to expand the program into new schools.

The Wellness Champion model provides a three-year path to self-sufficiency for schools implementing PHS.

- **Year one** - PHS works with a school and a Wellness Champion is identified.
- **Year two** - the Wellness Champion observes and assists PHS staff in implementing and executing the program components.
- **Year three** - the Wellness Champion runs the program with PHS support via online chats, phone and email.

Each Wellness Champion receives a document that outlines the PHS “must do” items. Wellness Champions also stay in touch and share ideas with other Wellness Champs using an online forum. An annual Wellness Champ meeting is planned to allow for face-to-face interaction.

Ann Arbor middle schools were the first to implement PHS and all five Ann Arbor middle schools have worked with PHS for more than five school years, with a PHS staff person assigned to each school. PHS first piloted the Wellness Champion model in two Ann Arbor schools where it was well received. This year all Ann Arbor middle schools have Wellness Champions in place who are learning their roles as they assist the PHS staff person. Next year will be the third year of the model outlined above, meaning the Wellness Champions will be in charge of PHS at their schools.

PHS wants to recognize these groundbreaking Wellness Champions and give

Did you know?

- PHS received over $400,000 in donations in 2011 allowing PHS to reach more children in more communities.
- 21 Michigan schools are now participating in PHS.
- PHS was taught in 85 classrooms in January.
- Over 13,000 sixth graders have participated in PHS activities since 2004.
- PHS has provided wellness screenings for over 2300 students.

**Mark Your Calendars!**
(These events raise $ for PHS)

April 15—Big House Big Heart Run
May 13—Ready, Set, Fly run at Skyline High
Six members of the Project Healthy Schools Advisory Board saw Project Healthy Schools in action when they visited two Detroit charter schools on November 1. The board visited the cafeteria at Henry Ford Academy to observe the salad bar and a chef demo made possible by a grant from Whole Foods. Then they drove past the community garden on the way to University Prep Science and Math Middle School (UPSM) where they observed a PHS lesson led by PHS Wellness Coordinator, Alison Heeres. The board was impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by the students and the visit generated many new ideas.

Members of the PHS Advisory Board visited this UPSM classroom to observe Alison Heeres delivering PHS’ “A Rainbow of Color” lesson to an enthusiastic group of sixth graders.

Clague Wellness Team organizes Relay for Hunger

On November 15, Clague Middle School participated in its first Relay for Hunger, organized by the PHS Wellness Team. Modeled after the American Cancer Society’s “Relay for Life,” Clague hopes that this will become an annual fall event. All students rotated in three shifts and walked for a total of 90 minutes. In addition to learning about why exercise and healthy eating is important for overall health and cancer prevention, students donated 3,094 cans of food to Food Gatherers. Arlene Degutis from the American Cancer Society motivated the students with inspirational facts about hunger in the community.

MCORRP summer interns assist with PHS research efforts

For three months each summer, a group of college students with an interest in medicine and cardiovascular outcomes research participate as summer interns in the Michigan Cardiovascular Outcomes Research and Reporting Program (MCORRP). MCORRP was developed to study common cardiovascular conditions among large populations with the goal of presenting and publishing scientific results at regional, national and international meetings and in peer-reviewed publications.

The interns are a diverse group of undergraduate, graduate and medical students from various schools across the country. They work with the PHS database (and other databases) under the guidance of physicians and MCORRP faculty and staff, helping collect and enter data. Then they design a project using the data, develop a hypothesis, compile statistics and present their results. Many of their projects, like those listed below, are submitted to a national conference or publication.

- Racial Differences in Physiological and Behavioral Responses to School Based Wellness Program. Submitted to American College of Cardiology (ACC), March 2012.
- Gender Differences in Physiologic Markers and Health Behaviors Associated with Childhood Obesity. Submitted to American College of Cardiology (ACC), March 2012.
- Response to a School-Based Wellness Intervention Program in Four Communities with Differing Resources. Submitted to American College of Cardiology (ACC), March 2012.
- Immediate Impact of a 10-Week Middle School Intervention to Improve Health Behaviors and Reduce Cardiovascular Risk Factors – Project Healthy Schools in Michigan. Submitted to American College of Cardiology (ACC), March 2012.
- Self-Emptathy and Cardiovascular Health in 6th Graders: An Insight from Project Healthy Schools. Submitted to American College of Cardiology (ACC), March 2012.
Skyline High School seniors serve as Health Ambassadors

Four seniors from Skyline High School in Ann Arbor, Matt Laubach, Kelsy Lee, Kyla Dames, and Madison Chadwick, became PHS Health Ambassadors and taught the 10 PHS lessons to sixth grade students at Ann Arbor’s Forsythe Middle School this fall. Three of the four Skyline students attended Forsythe and participated in the PHS lessons when they were sixth grade students.

Typically, U-M students in health-related majors serve as Health Ambassadors in Ann Arbor middle schools, assisting teachers with leading PHS activities. Jeff Bradley, a long time PHS partner and the Health and Medicine magnet lead teacher at Skyline suggested preparing high school students to lead PHS activities. He wanted to expose his students to ‘real world’ opportunities.

As part of the Science of Wellness class, Bradley’s students worked through the PHS activities, first as they were written and then in a more in-depth manner applying scientific principles and doing experiments. Each week they observed a U-M Health Ambassador teaching the lesson, then they practiced teaching the lesson and finally they went to their assigned classroom and presented the PHS activity. Afterwards, the students debriefed among themselves and with Barbara Campbell, RN a PHS community volunteer who worked with the students at the middle schools.

Using high school students to teach PHS activities was a success last fall and PHS is eager to continue this exciting partnership. In January, two Skyline Health Ambassadors from last fall were joined by another Health and Medicine magnet student in teaching PHS lessons at Ann Arbor’s Slauson Middle School. Campbell and Bradley continue to provide support, supervision and encouragement to these highly motivated high schoolers.

Ypsilanti Farm to School events funded by grant from Allen Foundation

Last year, Ypsilanti students enjoyed samples of regional produce in the middle school cafeteria and weekly produce bowls in their classrooms. In the fall, a registered dietitian and a farmer’s advocate visited 52 Ypsilanti classrooms (47 kindergarten to sixth grade and five middle school classrooms) while discussing and illustrating where food comes from and sharing the nutritious benefits of locally grown produce. Generous funding from the Allen Foundation made all of this possible.
them a big thank you for the work they are doing.

- Matt Hughes & Laura Hurst (Scarlett - Special Ed)
- Jackie Stouppe (Forsythe - Counselor)
- Ellen Hopkins (Clague - 8th grade Mathematics)
- Sarah Frantom (Tappan - 7th grade Mathematics)
- Lori McNutt (Slauson - 6th grade Reading)

Being a Wellness Champ is not a full time job. It is an additional duty that individuals choose to take on so PHS offers a small stipend. In return, Wellness Champs serve as PHS' eyes, ears, and hands at the schools.

As the eyes of PHS, Wellness Champions understand the culture of their school. They can identify others, including staff and students, who share an interest in establishing a healthier school environment and ask them to be a part of the health team. Wellness Champions often lead the school's health team and bring issues they observe to the table. They can determine areas where the school currently supports wellness and see areas where improvements can be made.

As the ears of PHS, Wellness Champions listen to what others are saying. Is the staff interested in a wellness activity? What did the kids think of the latest health team event? Are cookies or candy being planned as a reward? Is the staff zany enough to dress up in costumes to make an activity more fun? Getting input and ideas from others is important since each school is a unique environment.

As the hands of PHS, Wellness Champions work in many ways to make PHS thrive in their school. They put up monthly bulletin boards, email PHS staff members, write announcements to submit to various people and organizations, post to an online forum where Wellness Champions share insights and issues with each other, and coordinate schedules.

In short, Wellness Champions are not only key to the long term survival of PHS in their schools, they are key to the future growth and expansion PHS.

AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation funds PHS in Detroit for second year

PHS is pleased to announce that our partnership with the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation has been funded for a second year. PHS will receive a generous grant of $170,613 to support expansion efforts aimed towards serving low-income, underserved African American middle school students in Detroit, Michigan. Funding will support PHS implementation in two additional middle schools in Detroit, including additional physical activity opportunities, fresh produce/Farm to School programs, and the completion of an online website promoting physical activity for all PHS students and their families. The generous support of the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation will enable PHS to continue our work in Detroit to improve the health of adolescents in forming lifelong health behaviors in a school-based program that supports healthy children and families. The need for intervention in Detroit is clear. Statistics for Detroit youth are even higher than national and state measures with 40% of Detroit youth overweight and 20.8% considered obese. We are grateful for the support that the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation has given in 2011 and look forward to a successful partnership in 2012.

2011 Turkey Trot raises $4590!

Over 1600 runners and walkers of all ages participated in the 2011 Turkey Trot at Hudson Mills Metropark, competing in the 1 mile fun run, 5K, 10K and the Iron Turkey (a combination of both the 5K and 10K). The enthusiasm for this annual event and the generosity of Champions for Charity and all of their super volunteers made possible a donation of $4590 to PHS!

Thank You PHS Supporters!

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

Thank you for your recent donations:
Ms. Patrice Kahn Aaron
Mr. James H. Danto
NuStep, Inc.
Schwab Charitable Fund