



March 16, 2010

CALL TO ACTION

The OBESITY EPIDEMIC

1 in 3 Children in the U.S. is overweight or obese!

Childhood obesity remains an unprecedented public health crisis and is expected to result in the first generation of Americans whose life expectancy is shorter than that of their parents.

March is shaping up to be one of the most important months in the FOCUS Program's prevention efforts. By now you should have received information regarding the Public Service Announcement (PSA) Competition, addressing Childhood Obesity, being held in conjunction with the **7th Annual "Rally for Awareness"**.

Please take time to consider the importance of participating in this student-led prevention activity. Not only will the winning school receive \$500.00, students will learn more about the importance of maintaining a healthy weight by proper nutrition and exercise.

Guideline For Theme As Students Prepare Their PSAs:

The CDC has six target areas for weight loss and improved health, which are:

1. Increase physical activity.
2. Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.
3. Decrease consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.
4. Increase breastfeeding initiation and duration.
5. Decrease consumption of high energy-dense foods.
6. Decrease television viewing.

Strategies to work toward are:

- Providing access to healthy foods and to places to be active.
- Strengthening obesity prevention and control programs in preschools, child care centers, work sites, and other community settings.

Research suggests small changes can make a difference in this epidemic. YOU Can Make a Difference, too. Visit www.thefocusprogram.com for details on how to submit your school's PSA for judging or view the contest flyer ([http://www.thefocusprogram.com/uploadedFiles/Flyer%20for%20Childhood%20Obesity\(1\).pdf](http://www.thefocusprogram.com/uploadedFiles/Flyer%20for%20Childhood%20Obesity(1).pdf)) for more information.



Rally for Awareness (<http://www.thefocusprogram.com/rally-for-awareness/>)

Registration is now open! Register online at www.thefocusprogram.com/rally-for-awareness/!

7th Annual Rally for Awareness Brochure

(<http://www.thefocusprogram.com/uploadedFiles/2010%20Rally%20Brochure.pdf>)

Jeh Jeh Pruitt, FOX 6, will be Master of Ceremonies and Keynote Speaker for Opening Session!

When: April 29, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.: Sign-in and Pictures of Individual Schools Groups

9:00 a.m.: General Assembly begins PROMPTLY

1:45 p.m.: Dismissal

Where: Shocco Springs Conference Center in Talladega, AL

\$10.00 Registration Fee Per Person (Includes Lunch, Materials, and T-shirt)

Registration Deadline: April 22, 2010



National Nutrition Month

The theme for **March 2010** is "***Nutrition from the Ground Up.***"

Fact Sheet

Purpose

National Nutrition Month[®] is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Registered Dietitian Day, also celebrated in March, increases awareness of registered dietitians as the indispensable providers of food and nutrition services and recognizes RDs for their commitment to helping people enjoy healthy lives.

History

Initiated in March 1973 as a week-long event, "National Nutrition Week" became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition.

Sponsor

The American Dietetic Association's mission is to promote optimal nutrition and well being for all people by advocating for its members. With more than 70,000 members, ADA is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The majority of ADA's members are registered dietitians and dietetic technicians, registered.

Further Information

NNM inquiries should be directed to nnm@eatright.org. For media related information contact ADA Public Relations at 312/899-4802 or 4769 or media@eatright.org.

Event Ideas for Schools

- Create a "nutrition quiz corner" with a nutrition question every day for the entire month of March. Students complete an answer form and place it in a box, which is emptied daily. You may award a daily prize, or enter the name of every contestant who answered correctly in a weekly prize drawing. Prizes could be NNM promotional items.
- Conduct a "Fear Factor"-type event. Provide unusual vegetables and fruits cut into bite-size pieces. Offer an opportunity to taste and guess the food.
- Contact the local library and schedule a story time, movie, nutrition program or a poster/coloring contest for kids.
- Ask children to begin carefully saving empty food product boxes. Spend some time reading labels and comparing calories, fat, sugar content, vitamins, etc. Expand this into a menu-planning opportunity, with children dividing into teams. See which group can plan the healthiest meal. As a math exercise, add up the calories from various products.
- Celebrate a "Salute to the Troops." Invite local soldiers and veterans to lunch. Serve Hero Sandwiches, Patriotic Potato Chips, All-American Apple and Military Milk.
- Sponsor a pentathlon with entry fee being five cans of food. Contestants will engage in a tug-of-war, running an obstacle course, push-ups, sit-ups, biking, or whatever activities can be accommodated at the location.

- Have an ethnic food night, i.e., Asian cuisine, Mediterranean, French, Cajun, etc. This may be done by inviting local restaurants to participate, or have your own organization provide the food.

Event Ideas with a Family Focus

A food and nutrition fair is always a popular event to celebrate National Nutrition Month. It can be adapted to many different settings such as a school gym, a church, community center, library meeting room or health care facility. Some suggested fair activities:

- **Eating the Rainbow**
Use "Eating the Rainbow" as a theme and provide examples of colorful fruits and vegetables that are yellow, orange, red, green, blue and purple. Give tips on including more fruits and vegetables in meals and snacks.
- **Voting Booth**
Ask participants to vote for their favorite vegetable or fruit. Post a tally board to record votes. Use a vegetable or fruit theme for booth decorations.
- **Sizing It Up Display**
Set up a display with food models and household items to represent food portion sizes. Let participants try to match up foods with the appropriate serving size item.
- **Easy Moves for Couch Potatoes**
Recruit a trainer to demonstrate/teach easy tips for increasing physical activity using items available around the house. Or, ask a yoga instructor to provide a demonstration.
- **Guess the Protein**
Have a jar filled with dried beans and ask "How many grams of protein?" or "How many ounces of meat does it equal?" Give a NNM prize or a copy of ADA's "Complete Food and Nutrition Guide."

Event Ideas to Get Everyone Involved

- Ask the city mayor or state governor to declare March "National Nutrition Month." A proclamation form will be provided on this site in December.
- Supply radio stations with healthy breakfast baskets. This may initiate an opportunity for on-air interviews with registered dietitians.
- Promote National Nutrition Month on billboards. Write to nnm@eatright.org for information.
- Send out an NNM "Tip of the Day" via e-mail to staff or clients.
- Conduct a series of healthy weight and fitness sessions at the workplace with National Nutrition Month T-shirts or other promotional items for all participants.
- Invite the author of a nutrition book to speak at your group's meeting. For ideas, visit the "Good Nutrition Reading List" for a collection of nutrition books.
- Conduct a cooking demo. Restaurant chefs are often agreeable to preparing food in a school or church kitchen, as this encourages subsequent visits to the restaurant itself.
- Sponsor a wellness expo, and have health care professionals check cholesterol, blood pressure, etc. Provide free nutrition handouts from the "Eat Right Nutrition Tips" available below. These sheets may be downloaded and copied for

distribution at no cost. Eat Right Nutrition Tips.
(<http://www.eatright.org/NNM/content.aspx?id=11421>)

- Sponsor a "dial-a-dietitian" night through a local radio station. For two hours, callers may ask questions of dietitians. Even better if a local television station will participate.
- For more ideas, visit the Resource Library of the Team Nutrition Web site.
(<http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/popularevents.html>)



Congratulations to **Ider High School** for being selected as March's FOCUSED & Featured School!

Ider High School's FOCUS Program, facilitated by Laura Lawrence, currently enjoys a membership of approximately 14 students.

As Haiti continues to struggle with the tragic effects of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck on January 12, 2010, and the numerous aftershocks that have ranged in magnitude from 4.2 to 5.9, many people are offering assistance to the millions of residents in Haiti that are in need of help. Ider High School is no exception and has committed to helping Haitians in their time of need.

In order to aid Haiti in this difficult time, Ider High School FOCUS students are selling and delivering hand-made valentines with personalized messages. The proceeds from the valentines will be donated to the America Red Cross for disaster relief in Haiti.

Once again, congratulations to Ider High School for being selected as March's FOCUSED & Featured School!



Welcome to Our New FOCUS Schools!

Holly Pond High School
Cullman County

The FOCUS Program website has been recently updated! Visit the Participating Schools (<http://thefocusprogram.com/focus-schools/>) webpage and you can view all participating schools by their county!

FOCUSED & Featured

The FOCUS Programs wants to acknowledge your school's hard work through our new FOCUSED & Featured section!

The FOCUSED & Featured section of The FOCUS Program was created to acknowledge schools that have implemented the FOCUS Program within their school and, as a result, have created a successful prevention (of HIV/AIDS and other adolescent risk behaviors) activity or project that they would like to share with others.

Each month a school will be selected out of the entries and will be highlighted in the upcoming month's FOCUS eNewsletter. In order to submit your school's successful prevention activity or project simply fill out the FOCUSED & Featured Form ([http://www.thefocusprogram.com/uploadedFiles/Focused%20&%20Featured%20Form\(4\).pdf](http://www.thefocusprogram.com/uploadedFiles/Focused%20&%20Featured%20Form(4).pdf)) and email the completed form to April Smith (asmith@thefocusprogram.com). In order to be considered for the upcoming month's eNewsletter all FOCUSED & Featured Forms must be submitted by the **7th of each month**.

In early March the top three prevention activities or projects will be selected and those three schools will be awarded FREE registration for 20 students and 2 facilitators for the 2011 Rally for Awareness.



Health observances are days, weeks, or months devoted to promoting particular health concerns. Teachers, students, community groups, and others can use these special times to sponsor health promotion events, stimulate awareness of health risks, or focus on disease prevention. Materials available from sponsoring organizations range from a single flyer to packets of promotional materials. For more information on monthly health observances visit the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services website (www.healthfinder.gov/nho).

March Health Observances

1-31: National Nutrition Month

7-13: National Sleep Awareness Week

8-12: National School Breakfast Week

10: National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

15-21: Brain Awareness Week

April Health Observances

- 1-30: Alcohol Awareness Month
- 1-30: National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- 1-30: National Minority Health Awareness Month
- 1-30: National Youth Sports Safety Month
- 1-30: Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
- 5-11: National Public Health Week
- 7: World Health Day

facebook

The FOCUS Program is now on Facebook!

(<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=49776916454>) Become a member of our group and join us in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other adolescent risk behaviors!

For more information and assistance with your prevention efforts please utilize the following web sites.



Have you been to our website recently? Be sure to check it out at www.thefocusprogram.com!

The FOCUS Program's eNewsletter provides links to articles and websites with information on current events, research, funding opportunities and other items related to the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other adolescent risk behaviors. The inclusion of this information does not imply endorsement by the FOCUS Program and the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position, policies or views of the FOCUS Program.