

Life Balance INITIATIVE

A PUBLICATION OF GRAND TRAVERSE AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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October 2009

A Happy Fall to All

Welcome to the October edition of our monthly Life Balance Initiative Newsletter. We are happy to say the program is thriving and excited that both students and parents understand that fresh, wholesome foods offer more nutrients and help increase attentiveness in the classroom. Once again, it's a pleasure to accommodate the palates of varying age groups from the smallest mouths in elementary to the caloric needs of a high school student!

You are what you eat!

Recently on the Omelette and Finster Show on WKLT a discussion about the quality of food in schools took place. One of our GTACS students called in to say how good the food was at GTACS. One announcer jokingly made the remark that regular food was not good enough for our school. Cheri Julien who works at St. Francis took this to heart and called the show and stated on air that our meats come from Rice Farms and we make soups, salad dressings, and entrees from scratch. She was asked if it was true that we have water and not soda in our pop machines which she said was true. Way to defend the Life Balance Initiative, Cheri!

Did You Know?

American adults eat 22 teaspoons of sugar a day and teens a whopping 34 teaspoons?



The American Heart Association says it's time to cut back on our sugar consumption. Most of that added sugar comes from soft drinks. A 12 – ounce soft drink contains about 8 teaspoons of added sugar. That puts most women over the recommended daily

allowance of 6 teaspoons or 100 calories. A man's daily recommended allowance is 9 teaspoons or 150 calories. Interestingly, the American Heart Association didn't recommend general limits for added sugar for children. A national health survey has shown that kids ages 14 to 18 consume 34 teaspoons of added sugar a day. How can this be? It's not that hard really when you figure 355 calories is the equivalent of drinking two- 12 ounce cans of soda and eating a 4 ounce chocolate bar. Other notables are fruit-flavored yogurts with 6 teaspoons, 8 ounce chocolate milk with 4 teaspoons, and one cup frosted whole grain cereal with 3 teaspoons. To check for added sugar, label check for a variety of ingredients including corn syrup, fructose, dextrose, molasses, or evaporated cane juice. So remember to read labels! This is the reason we make most everything from scratch at the L.B.I!



October is National Apple Month

This flavorful staple in school lunch programs is Michigan's largest and most valuable fruit crop, with the value of about \$100 million dollars annually to the apple grower. Michigan plays a vital role in processed apples with about 60 percent prepared into apple sauce, juice, butter, cider, and pie filling. The most prevalent variety is the Red Delicious followed closely by the Golden Delicious. Recent interest has been with the Honey Crisp variety. This sweet apple is best for eating fresh and also a great addition for salads. I like to add blue cheese, toasted walnuts, and dried cherries over mixed greens with this juicy variety. Honey mustard vinaigrette compliments this salad quiet nicely!

Recipe for Honey Mustard

¼ cup honey
¼ cup Dijon
¼ cup vinegar (rice or apple cider)
2 tablespoons tap water
Salt and white pepper (to taste)
3 ounces soy oil

In a blender add all ingredients except soy oil. Pulse, and then slowly drizzle oil into blender. Season to taste with salt and pepper

If vinaigrette is not thick enough, add more oil. If vinaigrette is too thick, thin it with water. Enjoy!

Tips to help pack the perfect school lunch

Although many of our students take the LBI hot lunch, some students still prefer to bring their own. Did you pack or provide your child with nutritious, delicious, energy-packed lunch ingredients? Studies out of the University of Texas have shown that 71 percent of parents didn't include enough fruits and vegetables and 96 percent didn't supply enough fiber.

First let's talk healthy drinks. Many drinks contain almost as much sugar as soft drinks. Remember to check the labels. Pick drinks that have zero or few calories. Here are some good choices.

- Water
- Low fat milk
- 100 percent juice
- Lightly sweetened tea
- Water- again

Another option is to make your own fruit drinks. Puree some fresh berries and add it to water with a drop or two of honey. Mix and enjoy!

Only 1 in 4 children consume enough fruits and vegetables daily. Instead of packing potato chips, crackers, pretzels, or cookies, choose some healthy alternatives such as:

- Carrot sticks
- Celery sticks
- Apple slices
- Fruit salad
- Olives
- Almonds or cashews
- Raisin
- All other fruits

For those looking for convenience there are selections at your local market called Lunch- able meals. Oscar Mayer and Armour are two of the bigger companies out there. One of the selections is Bistro ham and provolone sandwich which costs \$2.50 without any additional items.

The focaccia bread alone had 28 items in it!



Another product available is the Lunchmakers Loco Nachos Fun Kit. It is accompanied with berry blue typhoon drink. This colorful dish contains Red # 40, FD&C Blue#1, FD&C Blue #2, FD&C Yellow # 5, FD&C, Yellow#6. It is accompanied with Wonka Nerds which have sugar, dextrose, and corn syrup with blue 1, blue 1 lake, blue 2, blue 2 lake, red 40, red 40 lake, yellow 5, yellow 5 lake, yellow 6, and yellow 6 lake, Wow, it doesn't sound healthy when you look at the ingredients in this way! If your child hasn't already tried the LBI lunch program, encourage them to do so.

Even our youngest palates are trying Black Bean Soup and other healthy options. Encourage your child to take a small bite of something that is "new" to them so they can sample it. Many have found that Sweet Potato Bisque and Quinoa are delicious, nutritious and surprisingly good.



A third, non-healthy option (see right) is convenient for parents, but does not provide a child with the nutrients needed to sustain them throughout an afternoon of learning! This pre-packed lunch contains crackers, cookies, and a flavored-sugar packet to add to the water (the only healthy item in this combination).



How does your garden grow?

Located just outside the doors of St. Francis High School in the bell tower alcove, grows a small garden of vegetables already used by our Life Balance Initiative (LBI) lunch program. Cucumbers and tomatoes, as seen here this summer, have been growing nicely in this mostly sunny spot maintained by Brigid Wilson, our LBI Chair and friends, throughout the summer. We hope to continue this each year and add more varieties.

If you are interested in helping with this garden or adding to it, please call Cindy Weber at 995-8425 or cweber@gtacs.org

If you have photos of your family garden, please send them to the email above and we'll try to include them in the next issue.



Bon Appétit,

Chef Michael Bauer