



Wellness Matters

Healthy students, healthy families, healthy schools

Volume 2, Issue 2

Wellness Committee

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Wellness 101

Small changes, both in and out of school, that align with the wellness policy are great to share. Designing new lessons, rethinking incentives and rewards requires reframing and creativity!

Melissa Peterson wrote a note to the Wellness Committee on her experience as a Kindergarten teacher at **Sacandaga School**.

Change is good. Perhaps a bit daunting, intimidating and overwhelming at times, but change helps you grow. So I heard when my first reaction to the new district wellness policy was "What about the gingerbread man?" Veteran kindergartners, (and kindergarten parents) know that at some point during the year we read the famous folk tale about the runaway cookie man, bake him and then spend the week searching for him after he runs away. This experience helps build connections with the school community and is just plain fun for everyone. But...he is a cookie. And we decorate him with M&M's. Swedish Fish and other candy treats. How would the new policy affect my ability to share this and the many other cooking experiences we do throughout the year? I took a deep breath, weighed my options and decided that it was all still workable. Our gingerbread man is now decorated with dried fruits. He tastes just as good and more authentic to the story.

When we cook now, much more emphasis is placed on finding healthful alternatives to the choices I traditionally made. I have learned that you can cut a carrot into just about any shape possible and that rice cakes are a great alternative to a sugar cookie when we need a circle for a head...and believe it or not...the kids are eating more and throwing away less. Birthday celebrations focus much more on celebrating the child and less on who has the sweetest treats. Remember...everything you really need to know you learned in kindergarten And I hope that the nutrition lessons that my students learn will last a lifetime.



Motivational Speaker **John J. Pelizza, Ph.D.** presented at the March 9th District Faculty Meeting. His message is powerful and yet simple. **Think: Know** what is important to you and get involved. **Act:** Action equals change and brings energy to your life. **Invest:** Your time and your energy should be used to create positive changes in your life and in the lives of others. Helping others enriches your life too!

Type I Diabetes - Sharing Our Story-

Take a Few Steps Along the Path of Ally's Story

Ally is an 11 year old fifth grader, and like other 11 year olds, she likes to play with her puppies, take walks, and ride her bicycle. Ally just celebrated a birthday, and one week before her birthday she had her D-day, her diagnosis day, the anniversary of the day that she was diagnosed with Type I Diabetes. She is in her fifth year living with Type I Diabetes. Here is the beginning of her story.

It was February 23, 2005, a routine phone call to the children's doctor's office was made to schedule their yearly appointments. At the end of the call, I asked the nurse, "I have a question, my younger daughter has been urinating a lot, seems to be losing weight, a bell is going off telling me something is just not right". "She could have Diabetes." the nurse replied. Diabetes...I remember looking through 'My Child's Health' book following her symptoms over the past four weeks. Never did it occur to me that what she was going through was something that would not just 'go away'.

The nurse gave us an appointment the very next morning for Ally to be seen. Having no idea what was going to happen, I made arrangements for my best friend to meet us there - for Ally also has a younger brother who was not even 3 and an older sister who at the time was 9.

So as Ally and I waited in the office the doctor came in and said, "She has glucose in her urine you need to go to Albany Med right away."

So there we were, February 24, 2005, my little first grader - on winter break from school, exactly one week before her 7th birthday, with a **Type I Diabetes** diagnosis. We knew nothing about Type I Diabetes, what it was, or how it would impact every day life.

At Albany Med we were taught how to check her blood sugar, how to administer insulin, how to count carbs. Over the next two days, we had an intensified training on Type I Diabetes - what it was, what it meant to live with it, and what resources there were for us.

It has been 4 years. Although we are now much more knowledgeable, it does not change the fact that she simply cannot ignore her condition. Ally has to check her blood sugar, sometimes 14 times a day. Everything she eats, every activity she does - whether it be taking an academic test to

From p. 1 academic test to running a race - effects her diabetes. From carb counting to changing her infusion site (she wears an insulin pump), to checking her sugar and then knowing what to do. Ally does not have the typical 'normal' life that any other 11 year old should have. She knows that there is no cure for diabetes, and looks forward to the day that a cure is found.

Type I Diabetes is a chronic life threatening auto immune disease. Although it is very treatable, there is no cure. It effects every aspect of everyday life. So Ally, and many individuals with diabetes, have to live with this every day. And she does LIVE with this every day - unlike most childhood illnesses, a cold, chicken pox, or a broken bone, **Type I Diabetes** does not heal or go away with an antibiotic. Ally will LIVE with this disease until a cure is found.

Many of us have children, or remember as a child ourselves, getting out of bed in the morning, getting dressed, eating breakfast...Not having to think about or worry about much of anything. But when you are a child with Type I Diabetes, life is not always so simple. We are a family of five, and like all families, we are very busy. Going here, going there - soccer practice, music lessons, school activities...But when we run out the door, we need to make sure we have our SIXTH member - our diabetes supplies - test kit, extra strips, juice boxes, snacks if we go low...going out to eat - is your sugar level okay? Are we going to have a low that needs to be corrected before we eat? Will we know the carb count of our food?...As I stated previously, Type I Diabetes effects every aspect of every day. Every day there are accommodations that need to be made to get through the day. Ally's diabetes can not be ignored or the complications could shorten her life, or even take her life away.

Like any other family who has been through a medical situation, never at any point in our life did we think we would be faced with something like this that would change everything. But that which does not kill us makes us stronger, and I have to say that Ally is one of the strongest children I have ever known. In addition to living life as a regular kid, she also needs to take care of her condition. It is a lot for anyone to have to deal with. Children living with Type I Diabetes are amazing, and they are just kids. In writing this, our hope is to raise awareness and understanding of Type I Diabetes. In coming months watch for more stories along Ally's path, to raise awareness and inspire us. For this is where our family's path has lead us, and we hope to walk our path all the way to finding a cure.

After-School Sports Gives Students Real Sports Experience

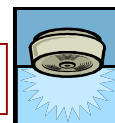
Students in grades 4&5 may participate in the after-school sports at their elementary school. Year-long activities are provided for students beginning in the fall, with trips to Whispering Golf Course. The course owners, Mark, Kurt and Brett Armstrong, provided the students with driving and putting lessons. Parent chaperones helped students with the skills and monitor safety.

Students at Lincoln and Sacandaga Elementary schools have gone to Scotia Rolling Greens Lanes and Schenectady Boulevard Bowl respectively. Boulevard Bowl participates in the "Learn to Bowl in School Program" and allows schools to borrow the carpeted lanes, plastic pins and soft rubber bowling balls so students can practice before using the actual lanes. New this year at Sacandaga, is the addition of a 2-week long bowling unit of instruction in physical education classes. Look for pictures on the district web site at: <http://scotiaglenvilleschools.net/Pressreleases/sacbowling109/sacbowling109.html>

Students have also utilized the Schenectady County Recreational Facility on Route 50, in Glenville for indoor ice-skating. Rink manager, Michael McConkey, works closely with the schools to provide a safe and exciting time for the students. This community facility is open year around.

For the last trip of the year, students participated in indoor rock climbing at the Electric City Rock Gym, on State Street, in Schenectady. Owner Andy Gilpin, provided students with climbing safety instruction, including the proper technique for using the climbing harnesses. Rock Gym employees and parent chaperones worked as belayers, those who actually hold the spotting ropes, and provide for the safety of the students, as they climb and descend the 40 foot wall. The "Fish Bowl" and the "Cave" are two additional places for students to practice climbing without ropes and harnesses. These areas are only 6 foot high and have a matted landing area. This is essential for bigger groups because only 5-6 students can climb on the big wall at once. A second climb is planned for the future at the Electric City site, which is good news. A second wall would allow schools to take up to as many as 40 students at a time. All of these intramural trips allow elementary students to experience some real lifetime activities that will encourage them to stay active. Many thanks to the business owners and to the parents that chaperone! Note: Parents are encouraged to pack healthy snacks and drinks for their children on these trips.

From the Nurses...



As you turned your clocks in March, did you remember to change the batteries in your home's smoke and carbon monoxide detectors? In order to make sure your family is fully protected, you should have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each level of your family's home. It is important to check smoke detectors monthly. It is equally important to have a "family plan" of escape in the event of an emergency and to *practice it*. As spring arrives and we all begin our "spring cleaning," it is a perfect time to inspect our homes for potential dangers such as overloaded outlets, over use of extension cords, and light fixtures for correct bulb wattage. For more tips, check out the parent page at www.KidsHealth.org.

Spring Fitness Center Hours

Monday-Thursday 3-7 p.m.

Friday 3-5 p.m.

Free to community members

