

# BE ACTIVE . . .



"Promoting Healthy Lifestyles Through Physical Activity"



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## New Council Chair Comes On Board

**E**lanna Farnham, Community Wellness Service of Eastern Maine Medical Center, was voted in as the new chair of the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports at the Council's recent annual meeting on July 12th. Elanna, who also serves as the coordinator for the Move and Improve program at EMMC, will bring a wealth of physical activity experience to the Council and has been serving as the

Vice Chair for the past year. The Governor's Council's mission is to improve the quality of life for all individuals in Maine by promoting healthy lifestyles through increased levels of physical activity, sports, and leisure activities and by supporting the cooperative efforts of schools, communities, businesses, and health institutions.

## Moderate Activity on a Daily Basis is Healthy

**I**f you think it takes a sweat suit and a lot of effort to get in some beneficial daily exercise, think again.

A small study published in the journal *Nature* found that moderate daily activity—such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking your car further from your destination—can add up and effectively boost the amount of energy you expend each day.

The study closely tracked the day-to-day activities of 30 people over a period of two weeks. Activity levels were broken out into those of low intensity (sitting, lying down), moderate intensity (walking, bicycling), and high intensity (active sports, strenuous housework). Although there was some high-intensity activity recorded during the study, it took up too

little time in any given day to be a predictor of energy expenditure. In the end, time spent in moderate activities was found to be the best predictor of increased energy expenditure.

*Source: Mayo Clinic Health Letter, August 2001.*



## ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously)

The Governor's Council was pleased to promote and sponsor the 13<sup>th</sup> annual ACES Day (All Children Exercise Simultaneously) which took place on May 2, 2001.

This year, 65 schools and one daycare reported taking part in ACES Day with over 15,000 participants! This is certainly an increase over the 27 schools and 5,000 participants that reported back last year. Our goal is to have at least 50% of the elementary schools taking part in this program. We are well on our way to reaching that goal. Participating schools were presented with a certificate signed by the Governor.

Next year ACES will take place on Wednesday, May 1, 2002. For further information on ACES, check out their web site at [www.projectaces.com](http://www.projectaces.com).

For a list of schools that participated in this year's ACES program in Maine, check out our website at [www.mainephysicalactivity.org](http://www.mainephysicalactivity.org).



# Special Olympics Maine

Special Olympics is a year-round athletic training and competition program for persons with mental retardation of all ages. The purpose of the games is to teach sports skills, allow the athletes the opportunity to train and compete with each other, develop self esteem, achieve a deep sense of satisfaction, and a positive self image.

Maine serves over 2,500 athletes from all across the state and holds numerous sporting events throughout the year. In June the Summer Games are held at the University of Maine at Orono and in January the Winter Games are held at Sugarloaf USA. Throughout the year, athletes can compete in such events as the State Swim Meet, Gymnastics Meet, Equestrian Competition, Sailing Program, Basketball Tournaments, and more! In addition to the sports training and competition, Special Olympics Maine (SOME) also offers a variety of social opportunities like their victory dances; winter and summer camping opportunities at their camp in Poland, Maine, Camp Tall Pines; and leadership opportunities for

athletes by having them serve on their Board of Directors, work as coaches, volunteers, advocates, public speakers, officials, and staff members.

For further information on becoming involved in Special Olympics Maine as a volunteer, coach, athlete, or sponsor, please contact: Special Olympics Maine, 125 John Roberts Road, #19, South Portland, ME 04106; phone - 207-879-0489; e-mail - [SOMEemail@aol.com](mailto:SOMEemail@aol.com); or visit their web site at [www.specialolympicsmaine.org](http://www.specialolympicsmaine.org).



Special Olympic Participant Christian Cooper and Medal Winner Jeff Mason.

## And They Call Some of These People "Retarded"

A few years ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, eight contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash.

At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run the race to the finish and win. All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry.

The other seven heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back...every one of them.

One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will

make it better." Then all eight linked arms and walked together to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes.

People who were there are still telling the story.

Why? Because deep down we know this one thing: What matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves.

What matters in this life is helping others win, even if it means slowing down and changing our course.

For more information on Special Olympics, contact Mark Capano at 207-879-0489.

# Legislative Fitness Day

The Maine Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, along with the Maine HMO Council, the Maine Public Health Association, and MAHPERD, sponsored a Legislative Fitness Day on February 22, 2001, at the State House Hall of Flags.

Blood pressure screenings, cholesterol screenings, and strength testing were among the services offered to the legislators and other participants who joined us. The Maine HMO Council, along with Aetna U.S. Healthcare, Cigna Healthcare, and Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield set up exhibits with informational material. Other exhibitors included the Maine Bicycle Coalition and the Move & Improve program. Many other health and physical activity materials were distributed at the request of other organizations that were unable to attend.

The afternoon brought Governor Angus King and the HMO Council's Director, Robert Downs, talking to the gathered group about the importance of physical activity and good health. The day concluded with the Governor accepting a fitness challenge from Diane Atwood, HealthBeat Editor, News Center 6.



## Governor's Workplan Summary

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports' workplan for the year 2001-2002 will be a very busy year. The Council of 21 members and 20 liaisons are preparing for a very active year. Some of the major projects of the Council will include a Legislative Fitness Day, Contest for Communities, and the ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously) project.

Our mission continues to be one where improving the quality of life through increased levels of physical activity, sports, and leisure activities is important. Please take the time to check out our website for information about the Council and its activities.



For more information about the Maine Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, please contact Saskia Bopp at Medical Care Development, 11 Parkwood Drive, Augusta, ME 04330; Tel: 622-7566, ext. 220; e-mail: [saskiaj@mcd.org](mailto:saskiaj@mcd.org) or [www.mainephysicalactivity.org](http://www.mainephysicalactivity.org)

## Contest for Communities

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports celebrated its third annual "Contest for Communities" at an award celebration that took place at the State House Hall of Flags on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Governor King was on hand for the celebration and spoke to those gathered about the importance of being physically active. Awards were presented to the following people and programs to recognize their involvement in promoting physical activity in Maine.

- Deb Smith, South Portland Parks & Recreation (individual category)

- Walk to Hawaii, Lincoln Academy, Newcastle (adult category)
- Senior Fitness, USM Lifeline Center (senior category)
- Physical Education Leadership Course, Windham High School (youth category)
- Wellness, Inc., Rumford Community Hospital (community category - tie)
- Health Education Center, Blue Hill Memorial Hospital (community category - tie)
- Pulmonary Exercise & Education, USM Lifeline Center (special populations category)



Deb Smith and Governor King.



Physical Education Leadership Course participants, Windham High School.

## Move & Improve

Year five of the Move & Improve program was a banner year. There were 7,848 participants from more than 272 sites across the State of Maine. This year people from 334 communities in the State participated. People had access to the program from site coordinators in their local communities as well as Internet access with [moveandimprove.org](http://moveandimprove.org).

The program appealed to all age groups; the oldest participant was 102 from Old Town, Maine.

More than 44 schools participated, 190 worksites, and 44 other sites to include churches, girl scouts, weight watcher groups, senior centers, etc. Eight-hundred plus came together in June to celebrate their physical activity. Surveys tell us that people had fun, felt better, lost weight, and changed eating habits to fit their new lifestyle.

Congratulations to all that participated!



**Fact:** Inactivity can lead to obesity, which is closely tied to diabetes. Diabetes kills 180,000 Americans a year, and the disease is rising sharply.

# Tobacco-Free Athletes

Tobacco-Free Athletes is an exciting new program created by the Partnership for a Tobacco-Free Maine through a supplemental grant from the CDC. The idea is to distribute Tobacco Free Living Kits to coaches throughout Maine. The program will start by distributing the kits to soccer coaches interested in promoting tobacco free soccer games and plans to include basketball, baseball, and softball in the future. The kits will include a coach's manual, Tobacco-Free Athletes water bottles, sneaker stickers, and information on how to get tobacco-free signs for the playing field. Each manual comes with recommendations for coaches, drills suggested to develop soccer skills as well as developing skills for leading a tobacco-free life. A letter is provided in the kit to be copied and sent to the parents with the season schedule and a Pledge to be signed by the players to stay tobacco-free for life and once signed by

the entire team it is to be forwarded to PTM.

Here are some of the reasons why the program is considered so important:

- The Tobacco Industry spends \$14 million every day marketing their deadly products to children.
- Over 90% of adult smokers began smoking when they were teenagers, with the average starting age being thirteen years old.
- Over one in four Maine high school students use tobacco products, and 33% more think they will be using tobacco within the next year.
- 3,000 young Americans start smoking every single day, and one thousand of them will die prematurely from their tobacco addiction.

For more information or to obtain copies of the kit, contact Mary Bourque at the Partnership for a Tobacco-Free Maine (207-287-4625).

## March Into May Greater Portland



On reflecting back over the past MIM programs and looking into its future, it seems easy to say that MIM will just keep improving. Back when we started in 1999, 15 companies got involved with 1,400 participants. In 2000, the number of worksites doubled itself to 30 and increased the number of ready and willing to play enthusiasts by 300. Presently in 2001, MIM still has 30 companies registered but improved in participant size by 176%! That's right, the number of employees exercising in this event jumped from 1,700 to nearly 4,700.

The goal of March Into May is to increase an awareness of the benefits of physical activity, to increase individual's activity level, and thereby improving

the health and lives of those participating. One of our short-term goals this year is to see an improvement in the number of both employers and employees participating in MIM. Long-term...hopefully this will lead to implementation of year round programs, changes in policy and administrators beliefs, and possibly driving a cultural shift in the workplace which would impact the community as well.

Currently we are in the process of recruitment for 2002. If you are interested or even just curious, please call Stacey Brewer, MIM Coordinator, at 874-8618 or e-mail [slb@ci.portland.me.us](mailto:slb@ci.portland.me.us). Come join the fun. It is a Win-Win situation!

**Fact:** Only 25.4% of adults met government recommendations for physical activity in 1998--virtually unchanged from the beginning of the decade, the CDC said. Almost 30% reported no physical activity at all.

# 2001 NAHF National Meeting Summary

The 24th annual conference for the National Association for Health and Fitness took place May 2-5, 2001, in Tempe, Arizona. This conference offered many opportunities for networking, sharing, and learning innovative ways to promote health and fitness. The theme for the conference was "Partnerships in Physical Activity: Empowering Populations Through Sustainable Change."

Elanna Farnham, Council Chair, and Saskia Bopp, Council Staff Director, represented Maine at the conference this year. Following is a summary by Elanna of the sessions offered.

The Cost Benefit Connection--presented by Dr. Chenowith. This presentation provided a framework for analyzing the effects of physical activity (PA) in relationship to loss productivity. It was concluded from his presentation the cost of Physical Inactivity outweighs medical costs. Statewide analysis is important and should include 1) type of data, 2) demographic data, 3) medical care costs, 4) worker's comp, 5) risk factor prevalence, and 6) productivity loss cost by employees.

Executive Chef Jean Paul Harris. A very entertaining cooking demo by a very knowledgeable chef in the area of nutrition. He recommended Fast Food Nation as reading material.

Anti-aging and Longevity--presented by Dr. Arthur Mollen. Dr. Mollen recommends a diet in low animal protein. No more than one animal protein meal daily. "If you don't take time to care for your exercise, you will take time to care for your illness." People

might be able to relate well to this statement. He also mentioned there is a new heart rate formula being used that allows people to exercise at a higher rate.

ParticipAction - Empowering your Partnerships for Substantial Change, presented by Russ Kisby. Behavior change takes time and you must create a public awareness and education for the public. Given the time that ParticipAction has been around, their media campaign created an 89% awareness for the population of Canada. This is important to the success of the program. He also shared Guidelines for Communication that will be helpful as the Maine Council looks to getting its message out about PA.

Partnerships for Promoting Healthy Eating and Active Living--presented by Dr. James Hill. "Unintended consequences" make it difficult to maintain healthy lifestyle behaviors, i.e., technology, tv remote, elevators, and fast foods to name a few. Medical cost of obesity is at \$100 billion annually. To make behavior change we must first address:

- Individual issues
  - Environmental issues
- Bill Dietz, CDC. Mr. Dietz discussed the CDC State Funded programs and identified the four strategies for State Prevention CDC money:
- Breastfeeding for children
  - Reduce TV time for children
  - Physical Activity across the population (not just worksites)
  - 5-A-Day

Communities that cross cut PA/Nutrition have the best shot for CDC money.

## Getting to School Safely Community Action Kit

Children travel to school in many different ways - walking, bicycling, and riding in school buses and public transportation and private cars. *Getting to School Safely* is a program launched in 2000 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and a broad range of national organizations committed to child safety to address the full range of school transportation safety issues. This planner has been designed to help teachers, administrators, school transportation directors, parents, and concerned citizens plan activities at the community level to ensure that all students get to school safely during the coming school year and beyond. To order an Action Kit, go to [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/media/catalog/Index.cfm](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/media/catalog/Index.cfm) and scroll down the page until you come to item number. Insert item number 6P0146.

## Master of Public Health in Physical Activity and Public Health

The Norman J. Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina is proud to announce a new Master of Public Health in Physical Education and Public Health. This is the first degree of its kind and is designed for individuals who have a career interest in physical activity. The "MPH in Physical Activity and Public Health handbook" is available at <http://www.sph.sc.edu>.

# Tidbits

**Kids Lead The Way.** Last year on October 4th, hundreds of thousands of students, parents, and community leaders across the United States hit the streets on foot in celebration of International Walk to School Day.

This year's event promises to be even bigger and more exciting. The date is scheduled for Tuesday, October 2, 2001. Check out the website to see what it's all about -- [www.walktoschool-usa.org](http://www.walktoschool-usa.org).

**Physical activity may help prevent mental decline,** especially in those who carry the so-called Alzheimer's gene, according to a study of 347 older Dutch men. Those who were physically active more than one hour a day had about half the risk of a decline in cognitive abilities over three years compared to less active men. Moreover, active men who carried the gene had only about one-quarter the risk of cognitive decline as carriers who were less active. Exercise may help protect the brain by increasing oxygen supply, promoting nerve cell regeneration and reducing cortisol, a stress hormone that affects cognitive functioning.

*From: Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise, May 2001.*

**Coordinating School Health Programs.** The new CSHP website is up and running! Locate them at [www.maineeshp.com](http://www.maineeshp.com) to get the latest information on:

- Funding opportunities
- Data
- Hot topics
- Guidelines for Coordinating School Health programs
- Calendar of events, trainings, etc.

For more information, contact Bill Primmerman, Director, Coordinating School Health Programs, Department of Education, 23 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0023. Phone: 207-624-6698 • e-mail: [bill.primmerman@state.me.us](mailto:bill.primmerman@state.me.us)

**Land Use, Transportation, and Public Health:** CDC's Active Community Environments (ACEs) work group website contains copies of two working papers designed to better understand how the natural, built, and social environment influences physical activity. Look for "How Land Use and Transportation Systems Impact Public Health: An Annotated Bibliography" at <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa.aces.htm>.

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