



BE ACTIVE . . .

“Promoting Healthy Lifestyles Through Physical Activity”



PREMIERE EDITION

Welcome to the First Edition of the Maine Governor's Council of Physical Fitness and Sports Newsletter. We hope to bring you this Newsletter twice a year to focus on events and information about physical activity and health as part of our mission.

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is beginning its third full year of existence. It is our mission to improve the quality of life for all Maine citizens by encouraging increased levels of physical activity, sports, and leisure activities and by supporting the cooperative efforts of schools, communities, business, and health institutions. To that end the Governor's Council supports a number of initiatives.

ACES

The Council has been involved with promoting ACES (All Children Exercising Simultaneously) in which kids at 50 schools participated last May. Look for this program again in 1999 in your local schools. Ask your area Physical Education teachers if your schools are planning to participate. If not, encourage your schools to get involved. Call Saskia

Janes at 622-7566 for more information.

National Girls and Women in Sports Day

Maine, for the second year consecutively, hosted the largest number of events in the country. As co-sponsors of the state awards reception the Council Chair,

(continued inside)

Dean Paterson, spoke and presented awards to recipients. The 1998 recognition saw over 3,900 Mainer's participate in 32 events throughout Maine. We plan to actively promote and participate in the 1999 event which will be held Saturday, February 6th.

Award Winners

High School Student

Lisa Nowak - '97, Mt. Ararat

Stephanie Peters - '98, Brunswick

College Student

Cindy Blodgett - '98, UMO

Professional

Lauretta Gregoire - '97, YWCA

Olympia Snowe - '97, Senator

Joanne Palombo-McCallie - '98, UMO

Lifetime Commitment

Paula Hodgdon - '97, USM

Susan Lougee - '98, Presque Isle

For more information, call Tina Aldrich, State Coordinator of National Girls & Women in Sports Day/Coordinator of Portland Campus Recreation, USM, at 780-4630.

Media Campaign

The Council has plans to work with the media to develop an ad campaign about the importance of physical activity.

Diane Atwood and Channel 6 have expressed interest in pursuing this idea.

Worksite Programs

The CDC has developed a project called "March into May," a program designed to promote physical activity behavior change in the work place. The Council has decided to look into developing this program in Maine. Ask your local businesses if they would like to be part of a pilot project. For more information call Pat Jones at the Bureau of Health, 287-5379.

Research Update

Two recent studies have shown what many have been recommending-- that people with diabetes can reap substantial benefits from engaging in regular exercise. In one study, a group of diabetic women walked for 50 minutes every day for a week. There were no changes reported in these women's weight or body composition. One week is not sufficient to produce noticeable changes in these measures. However, one very important change was found. All of the participants experienced significant improvement in insulin sensitivity index and fasting blood insulin level significantly decreased after only seven days of exercise. (Annual Research Review. "Improvement in Insulin Sensitivity." Brown, et al.; 1997.)

In the second study, diabetics were found to have significant improvements in glycemic control and a significant increase in muscle endurance at the end of a three month circuit resistance training program. There was strong evidence that the improvements would have been greater if the study had gone on for a longer period. (Annual Research Review. "Resistance Training in the Treatment for NIDD." Erickson, et al.; 1997.)

These studies show that diabetics should be encouraged to participate in both aerobic exercise and strength training on a regular basis to improve control of blood sugar.

SPECIAL BULLETIN

The first Surgeon General's report to address physical activity and health was released in 1997. The main message of this report is that Americans can substantially improve their health and quality of life by including moderate amounts of physical activity in their daily lives.

The major conclusions of the report are:

- ♣ People of all ages, both male and female, benefit from regular physical activity.
- ♣ Significant health benefits can be obtained by including a moderate amount of physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week.
- ♣ Through a modest increase in daily activity, most Americans can improve their health and quality of life.
- ♣ Additional health benefits can be gained through greater amounts of physical activity. People who can maintain a regular regimen of activity that is of longer duration or of more vigorous intensity are likely to derive greater benefits.
- ♣ Physical activity reduces the risk of premature mortality in general, and of coronary heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes in particular.
- ♣ Physical activity also improves mental health and is important for the health of muscles, bones, and joints.
- ♣ More than 60% of American adults are not regularly physically active. In fact, 25% of all adults are not active at all.
- ♣ Nearly half of American youths 12 to 21 are not vigorously active on a regular basis. Moreover, physical activity declines dramatically during adolescence.
- ♣ Daily enrollment in physical education classes has declined among high school students from 42% in 1991 to 25% in 1995.
- ♣ Research on understanding and promoting physical activity through schools, work-sites, and health care settings have been evaluated and found to be successful.
- ♣ Regular physical activity is necessary for maintaining normal muscle strength, joint structure, and joint function and weight-bearing physical activity is essential for skeletal development during childhood and adolescence and for achieving and maintaining peak bone mass in young adults.
- ♣ Strength training and other forms of exercise can reduce the risk of falling in older adults.
- ♣ Physical activity can have a favorable affect on body fat distribution.
- ♣ Physical activity appears to relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety and improve mood.

1997-1998 Council Membership and Staff

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Saskia Janes, Staff

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