

Healthy Weight Initiative
Alabama Department of Public Health
The RSA Tower
 201 Monroe Street, Suite 1040
 Montgomery, AL 36130



NEWS AND EVENTS

SCALE BACK ALABAMA 2009

Scale Back Alabama is a statewide contest held the first of each year to encourage Alabamians to get healthier by losing weight and exercising. The 2009 contest will begin the week of Jan. 10, and we urge you to participate. We hope Alabamians will lose half a million pounds!

There is no charge to participate. All you have to do is go to a public weigh-in site (to be listed on the Web site in December) to register and weigh-in. The contest is geared toward adults, aged 18 and older.

Visit www.scalebackalabama.com for more information.

When: January 10-16, 2009
Where: Statewide

ALABAMA ASTHMA COALITION

The Alabama Asthma Coalition is a group of individuals with a common interest in learning about asthma and taking part in programs that are aimed at reducing the prevalence of asthma in Alabama.

Join the coalition for their upcoming meeting to hear about activities that target asthma. For more information contact Ruth Whitten at ruthwhitten@dph.state.al.us.

When: January 23, 2009
Where: Montgomery County Health Department, Montgomery
What time: 9:00am – 12:00pm

AMERICAN HEART MONTH/GO RED DAY

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and is a major cause of disability. The most common heart disease in the United States is coronary heart disease, which often appears as a heart attack.

The chance of developing coronary heart disease can be reduced by taking steps to prevent and control factors that put people at greater risk. For more information on heart disease and stroke, visit CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention at www.cdc.gov/dhdsp.

Heart Disease is the number 1 killer of women in America. Go Red for Women celebrates the energy, passion and power we have as women to band together and wipe out heart disease. Help raise awareness in Alabama and Wear Red to support Heart Month on February 6, 2009. Visit www.goredforwomen.org for more information.

When: February 2009
Where: Nationwide

ACEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 21ST CCLC TRAINING – SAILING THROUGH CHANGE

This year's conference will include "waves" of information. Keynote speakers will "Sail Through" interesting information for you. There will be speakers from ALSDE and other guests, interesting and informative break-out sessions, four general sessions, silent auction, vendor displays, exquisite dining, great entertainment and training information.

The conference will bring together professionals from After School Childcare Programs, 21st Century Community Learning Center grantees, Learn & Serve grantees, Dependent Care grantees and educators from across the state.

When: February 11-13, 2009
Where: Gulf Shores, AL

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH – EAT RIGHT

National Nutrition Month® is the perfect time each year to highlight the importance of good nutrition. This year's products, featuring the Eat Right logo help convey this important message. Our exciting collection of new National Nutrition Month gifts and promotional items is sure to make this year's celebration the best ever!

For event ideas and additional resources for National Nutrition Month and Registered Dietitian Day, visit www.eatright.org/nm.

When: March 2009
Where: Nationwide

WINTER 2009

Healthy Weight

INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER



NEW! 2008 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

For the first time, the US Department of Health and Human Services released the comprehensive science-based 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Emphasizing that nutrition and physical activity go hand in hand for a healthy lifestyle, these guidelines are comparable to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans were designed to give information and guidance on the types and amounts of physical activity that provide substantial health benefits for Americans over the age of six. These guidelines set achievable goals for everyone and can be customized according to person's interests, lifestyle and goals.

Major research findings described in the report include:

- Regular physical activity reduces the risk of many adverse health outcomes.
- Some physical activity is better than none.
- For most health outcomes, additional benefits occur as the amount of physical activity increases (higher intensity, greater frequency, longer duration).
- Most health benefits occur with at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week.
- Both aerobic (endurance) and muscle-strengthening (resistance) activities are beneficial.
- Health benefits occur for all age groups and in every studied racial and ethnic group. They also occur in people with disabilities.
- The benefits of physical activity far outweigh any possible risks.

There is a section in the guidelines specifically devoted to activity in Children and Adolescents. Here are the key guidelines for youth aged 6-17:

- Children and adolescents should do 1 hour (60 minutes) or more physical activity every day.
- Most of the 1 hour or more a day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity.
- As part of their daily physical activity, children and adolescents should do vigorous-intensity activity at least 3 days per week. They should also do muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activity on at least 3 days per week.

To access the guidelines visit <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>.

COOL KIDS COOK



CoolKidsCook.org is a faith based, non profit organization created to promote hands on cooking classes for kids ages 5 to 16 years old in the River Region (Autauga, Elmore, Lowndes, Macon, and Montgomery counties). Cool Kids Cook recognized the combined need for an effective method to fight against childhood obesity, type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol and to provide quality cost effective free after-school activities in the community. Therefore, Cool Kids Cook set out to establish a hands-on back to the basics cooking program for youth to address some of the issues. The Cool Kids Cook seven-week program not only teaches children how to cook, but also provided behavior-focused nutritional lessons; focusing on families eating together and bringing cooking back into the homes.

Program Objectives:

- Learn alternatives to fast food
- Learn to read food labels
- Learn to clean and prepare food
- Learn lessons in science, language, math and creativity
- Learn the food pyramid
- Learn how to incorporate more fruits and vegetable in daily meals
- Learn to lower salt, sugar and fat intake
- Learn to pack a nutritious lunch
- Teach parents how to help their children make healthier choices
- Teach parents how to cook with their children

Contact information: www.coolkidscook.org; (334) 220-3651

THE ALABAMA NATURE CENTER

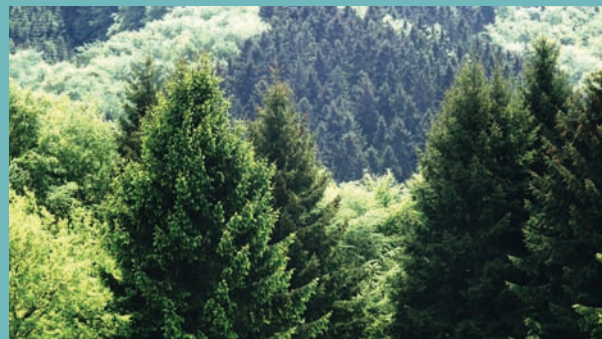
The Alabama Nature Center, located at Lanark in Millbrook, Alabama, is a Planned-Use Outdoor Education Facility offering hands-on, outdoor-based educational programs and activities for students, educators, church and civic groups, and the general public.

Lanark and the new Alabama Nature Center contain 350 acres of striking forests, fields, streams, wetlands, and ponds that are traversed by five miles of boardwalks and trails in three regions: Turkey Ridge, Hilltop Pass, and Still Creek Run. Key destinations include the Tree Top Walk, the Gum Pond, Natural Spring, and the Still Creek Riparian Forest, just to name a few. Conservation education programs at the Alabama Nature Center focus on using these natural resources as fun and exciting hands-on learning tools.

There are many ways to enjoy the outdoors. Take advantage of everything the Alabama Nature Center has to offer:

- General Public Weekends (every third weekend of the month)
- Additional General Public Bonus Days
- Lanark Field Days (customized field trips for Alabama Schools)
- Special Educational Programs for all ages on General Public Weekends
- Lanark Pavilion available for rent
- Fishing available for organized groups such as church groups, school groups, scout groups, senior citizen groups, and other such groups for a small fee
- Future opportunities include: After School Programs, Summer Day Camps, Wildlife Seminars, and more!

For more information on the Alabama Nature Center, visit www.alabamawildlife.org



HEALTHY READING

Could a novel with an embedded message about good health help overweight girls develop the motivation to lose a few pounds? In an effort to find out, Duke University researchers assigned one group of 31 severely overweight 9 to 13 year old girls in a weight-management program to read *Lake Rescue*, part of the Beacon Street Girls series. The book deals with an overweight girl who worries about going on an outdoor school trip. She makes friends, improves her self-esteem and learns about appropriate levels of physical activity.

The second group of 33 girls in the weight-management program read another book with no storyline about being overweight and a third group of 17 girls in the program weren't assigned to read any books. Then the body mass index of the girls in the three groups was compared up to six months later. On average, the girls who read *Lake Rescue* gained better control of their weight, moving from the 98th to the 97th percentile.

The book helped the girls stay at the same weight while they were growing or even helped them lose their weight. Could books that contain some diverting plot, but are really about eating well, being active, or losing weight help with sustained weight loss? It's really too soon to tell, but encouraging reading is always a good idea, for kids and everyone else.

A similar book for older teen readers that explores issues of over weight and self esteem is *Artichoke's Heart* by Suzanne Supplee.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama provides assistance to schools in support of improving quality of education throughout the state of Alabama by implementing the Healthy Reading Initiative.

The target population includes grades K-6. Alabama Schools have an opportunity to participate in a reading project which focuses on Healthy Minds and Bodies. The goal is to develop and/or increase reading comprehension among students in grades K-6.

Schools are randomly selected to participate in the program which is offered during the fall and spring. For more information go to: www.bcbsal.org/about/community/education.cfm



WHAT MOVES U CHALLENGE

What Moves U Challenge, is a 6-week in school challenge to get students and staff physically active for 60 minutes every day. The goal of the Challenge is to encourage students to get 30 minutes of daily physical activity at home and to help schools incorporate 30 minutes of physical activity into the school day in fun, innovative ways. To help schools do this, What Moves U has created new classroom and school-wide resources available for free download on their new website americanheart.org/whatmovesu. Included in the free Challenge resources are:

- Details on the 6-week Challenge and how to get students to sign up
- Ideas on how to promote the Challenge within your school in fun, creative ways