Active Living For Albertans: A Role For Government
By Mary Anne Kelner

"Aerobic guilt." That's how Lyle Makosky describes it. The federal Assistant Deputy Minister, Fitness and Amateur Sport, speaks of a philosophy that says if you aren't exercising three times a week at a speedy heart rate, you aren't doing anything worthwhile.

"We have given Canadians a prescription that is narrowly health-oriented and aimed solely at preventing heart disease. The model is limiting because it has separated the body and cut off the mind, the spirit and the emotion," he stated at the Focus on Active Living '92 - School Initiative Mega Meeting.

Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation is a key player in the joint federal/provincial initiative to promote Active Living to Canadians. Makosky defines the movement as "a way of life that values physical activity as part of one's larger existence." Punch Jackson, Tourism, Parks and Recreation's Active Living and Community Community.

With the federal government, under the Focus on Active Living Secretariat's coordination, provincial/territorial governments, including Alberta, recently released a "community resource kit." In it, a video, practical planning guide and collection of encouraging ideas provide tools for users to make active living come alive in their communities.

Also, the department is busy working with 125th anniversary staff in Alberta. Though the active living concept was released in 1990, the formal launch of activity will take place in Edmonton at a one-day conference in June, 1992, year of Canada's 125th anniversary. Federal and provincial ministers responsible for fitness are expected to kick off the conference and address (continued on page two)

Volume Three, Number Two
Active Living: Back To The Basics

By Judy Setton, PhD

Active living is a relatively new concept in the grand scheme of things, but to me it is merely a reflection of the lifestyle ingrained in me when I grew up in rural Saskatchewan. Living actively was simply part of my family's every day existence. My father was a lineman for SaskPower and spent his working hours climbing power poles, either connecting or reconnecting the line for grateful farm families.

Active living was part of his work life and he loved it. My mother made a conscious decision to stay at home to look after my brother and I and our house was always a picture of organization and cleanliness - a task which took many dedicated hours of active cleaning.

Dad and my brother took care of digging and planting the garden every spring while mom did most of the weeding and I usually helped with the picking and canning. Yard work was Dad's domain and still is today. Aside from the daily home maintenance tasks, my brother, Dad and I were always out throwing a softball or football, skating on our outdoor rink, or swinging a golf club (depending on the season).

My folks still maintain an active lifestyle by keeping a garden, delivering meals on wheels, dancing every Friday night (during the winter months) and doing all their own home maintenance in addition to many other activities.

My grandma was another active living practitioner. She lived on the family farm and always kept chickens and turkeys as well as a large garden and an immaculate house.

When I went to visit, it seemed that I never sat down. I always had to help (!) with gathering the eggs (although I was always scared to put my hand under the chicken), making dinner, picking raspberries or strawberries, and cutting the grass. I don't remember watching much TV at her house--we were always too busy!

When Grandma left the farm to live in town, you could always see her walking to the hospital to visit or to have a cup of tea with her many friends. She would always turn down car rides and, at 92, she still exhibits the active living philosophy.

I am sure that a number of you can relate to my personal experiences and would agree that the term active living really exemplifies the way many of us were brought up - living actively--a family tradition. It is just that type of living I believe we are trying to instill once again as a Canadian trademark--we are trying to encourage people to "get back to the basics!"

(continued from page one)

special topics of interest. Two hundred of Alberta's key movers and shakers will be invited to share in the department's overall strategy for cooperation and five to ten year vision.

Jackson outlines more examples of the department's role as coordinator: linking with the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation to develop supplemental resource materials, doing statistical research with the Fitness and Leisure Branch. With all partners in the field, there is joint action to standardize terms like wellness, lifestyle and active living for common understanding.

And the future? Jackson pictures the department's anchoring role as an umbrella, "...a place from which ideas spawn and partners come together to become a family, still retaining their own uniqueness, but able to share and cooperate."

Mary Anne Kelner is a freelance writer and wellness consultant in Edmonton.

Page Two
Editorial

By Jackie Webber

"Just do it." Easy to say, not so easy to do. What is it that keeps many of us from making changes in our life for the better--such as increasing our activity level and making positive lifestyle changes?

For some reason, many of us like to live in little bubbles and maintain status quo. The experts say we do this for several reasons: we fear failure, straying from the expectations of others, looking silly, standing out or just plain falling on our noses.

You've heard of the "self-fulfilling prophecy": if you believe you are going to fail...you will. We sometimes set ourselves up for failure--we read the statistics and say to heck with it. Why bother?

The result: anxiety, stress, unhappiness, addictions, poor health, bad relationships, job dissatisfaction, chubby thighs and coach-potato kids.

Now these may be extreme cases of inactivity--both physical, mental and spiritual--but for many, these consequences are a grave reality.

In this issue of WellSpring, we explore active living--the concept, the issues and the initiatives. You will find that active living is more than just attending a fitness class. It is a holistic concept closely related to well-being. Please consider, on both a personal and professional level, the ways in which you can incorporate these concepts into your daily routine, lifestyle and philosophy.

Thank you for your recent newsletter. The content and list of contacts are very useful and professionally done. I look forward to reading these.

Sylvia Leskie
Education Consultant
Alberta Healthcare Association.

I have received my first copy of WellSpring and I am very impressed with both content and layout. I think you and your staff have produced an excellent publication.

Colin W. Reiche
Employee Program Services Consultant, Alberta Family and Social Services.

We appreciate your comments on articles past and present. If you wish to suggest future topics or areas of interest, please write:

The Editor
Alberta Centre For Well-Being
Third Floor
11759 Groat Rd.
Edmonton AB,
T5M 3K6

Volume Three, Number Two
Focus

Occupational Health Nurses
A Company Asset

By Nora Johnston

"The greatest good will be achieved by convincing those who are currently inactive to become active."

Several organizations in Alberta strive to achieve this ideal under the title of ACTIVE LIVING. Here is basic information about some of those agencies working in schools, community and workplaces in Alberta.

Schools Come Alive

This project, organized by the Health & Physical Education Council (HPEC) of the Alberta Teachers Association, is aimed at encouraging Alberta's youth to become physically active. For information contact: Margaret Schwartz (403) 454-4745

Be Fit For Life Network

Unique within Canada, the Be Fit For Life (BFFL) Centres are a key delivery network in Alberta made up of seven regional centres and one Provincial centre. The mandate of each centre is to provide leadership in the area of fitness and leisure lifestyle in addition to the promotion of healthy lifestyles. For information contact: The Fitness Unit University of Alberta (403) 492-4435

Active Living Alliance for Canadians with A Disability

The Alliance is a network of interested individuals, agencies, and national associations formed to positively affect the physical activity lifestyles of Canadians with disabilities. Call (613) 748-5747

An OHN has a broad base education combined with experience to meet the needs of industry. Starting with a needs assessment or direction from management, the OHN offers a variety of skills, including knowledge of government regulations, screening of employees (preplacement, health surveillance, relocation, return to work assessments). Other skills include first aid, safety, policy development and health promotion.

With health care and WCB costs soaring, other ways of providing health and safety to the workforce can be provided with the OHN assessing, developing, and implementing programs to enhance work performance, higher productivity and general well-being for all. 

Eloise Berry, RN, OHNC Chairperson-Public Relations Committee Calgary Chapter Alberta Occupational Health Association

Alberta Centre for Well-Being

Through its affiliation with Health & Welfare Canada's Workplace Health System, the Survey of Workplace Programs, and a recent partnership with Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation, the Centre's goal is for Active Living to become a part of everyday life for working Albertans.
By Cliff Burgess

Well-being: what does it mean for Albertans with disabilities? Since its inception in 1988, the Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities has asked this question, in different forms, throughout the province.

Understandably, the answers differ in content, but the majority have a common theme - the importance of living in a person’s own community with their family and friends.

The Premier’s Council feels that community living should be a right for persons with a disability and, as such, appropriate support mechanisms should be available. These supports include technical assistance (wheelchairs, hearing aids, and text enlargers), as well as personal assistance (attendants, job coaches, and interpreters).

For the most part, these supports do exist. However, an extensive consultation with stakeholders has allowed the Premier’s Council to understand the importance of community living as well as making it clear to the Council how inaccessible these supports can be.

For a person with a disability, accessing these supports may involve dealing with up to seven government departments and the twenty-odd programs that these departments manage. Each of these programs has different criteria, and is often not available locally.

In addition to these government-managed programs, there are many other non-government programs. The sheer volume of these programs often means duplication or gaps in service. The bottom line is often confusion and frustration for the person with the disability.

The Premier’s Council feels it has a viable solution - consolidation of the government programs into one Community Supports Program with one set of criteria, available locally throughout the province. It looks simple on paper, but the Premier’s Council realizes it is challenging the turf of many with a vested interest. Nevertheless, if it makes life easier for Albertans with disabilities, the Council believes it is worth fighting for.

If you belong to an organization that has any impact on people with disabilities, chances are a member of the Council will be knocking at your door at some point in the near future to explain the Community Supports Program in greater detail. We hope you’ll carefully consider the implications. In the meantime, if you have any questions, contact:

The Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities:
#250, 11044 - 82nd Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 0T2
Telephone: 403/422-1095
Toll-free: 1-800-272-8841
(Voice or TDD) ☏
Canadian
Children Prime
Targets for
Heart Disease

A University of Alberta study reports "approximately 40% of Canadian children have at least one risk factor for heart disease—reduced fitness due to an inactive lifestyle". Kids inactive? It's difficult to imagine.

This, according to Graham Fishburn, elementary education professor, is exactly what happens once our children enter school—they are expected to sit still. Those who display high activity levels are often punished or sent to a physician for medical assessment. Fishburn feels both the curriculum and the children are victims of an out-dated historical belief that the "brain is everything we are". As a result, 80% of a child's school time is spent on reading, writing and arithmetic.

"63% of Canadian schools don't meet the standards of quality physical education" says Roger Passmore, the Director of the Quality Daily Physical Education Project that sets the standards.

If the standards are met the advantages include the development of better health habits, increased physical fitness and a tendency not to smoke. In addition, kids play better together, are ready to learn when they return to the classroom, are less aggressive and perform well or better academically.

- Marilyn Dahl

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Cancer:
Prevention and Early Detection

Facts From the Canadian Cancer Society

For more information, please contact the Canadian Cancer Society at:
(403)228-4487

FACTS:

An estimated 670 men and 370 women in Alberta were diagnosed with lung cancer in 1990. Cancer of the lung causes more deaths than cancer of any other site. At least 80% of lung cancer could be prevented if smoking were eliminated. Second-hand smoke is a health hazard to non-smokers.

An estimated 850 people in Alberta were diagnosed with cancer of the colon and rectum in 1990. Eating the right foods can reduce the risk of developing this cancer.

Cancer of the skin is the most common of all cancers, and one of the most preventable. About 3000 new cases of skin cancer are detected each year in Alberta.

About one in ten women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime. 80% of all breast cancers are first found by the woman herself or her partner. A woman's best defense against cancer is early detection, which can be achieved with 1) regular breast self-exam; 2) mammography as recommended, and 3) clinical exam.

An estimated 320 women in Alberta were diagnosed in 1990 as having cancer of the uterus (includes cancer of the cervix and endometrium). The Pap Test can detect even a pre-cancerous change in the cervix.

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Chilling Facts About Kids and Physical Activity

*Children in Canada watch an average of 6.5 hours of TV a day,
*76% of elementary school girls and 26% of the boys cannot do one chin-up; many can't touch their toes.

*Half of all teenage girls and three-quarters of boys cannot walk up and down stairs more than six minutes without straining their cardiovascular systems.

*Canadian enrolment in high school physical education courses has dropped from 80% in the early 1970s to 30% today. In Alberta, only 17% take physical education in Grade 12.

*Experts say 150 minutes of physical education a week is the rock-bottom requirement, and not a single province recommends daily physical education in schools.

*In North America, depending on the source, 40% of five-to-eight-year-old children can be classified as obese.

- Marilyn Dahl

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WellSpring: Alberta Centre For Well-Being Newsletter: Spring 1992
By Beth Healey

The Lethbridge Community College Fitness Centre, in cooperation with the community, is now offering a Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise Program for the Lethbridge region. Recognizing that exercise and education are important elements of an innovative program such as this, and with access to St. Michael's Hospital and its emergency care facilities, the program began on a very positive note. A physician, registered nurse and fitness leader are in attendance at all classes which run twice a week incorporating an educational component with a fifty to sixty minute exercise session.

Designed for individuals who are considered high-risk or have experienced a cardiac event, the cost for a 6-week session is very reasonable as a result of additional funding from Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation and Bristol-Myers Squibb. Each participant is screened prior to involvement. The main objectives are to provide an opportunity for individuals to learn more about healthy lifestyles, assist in the transition from hospital care, increase their awareness of community services, and allow participants to share concerns.

Reaching Out For Wellness

In addition to the Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise Program, the Fitness Centre has been focusing on promoting active living and wellness in the Outreach Program. More and more Albertans are pursuing an active lifestyle. We feel it is important to show them not only typical fitness-related programs, but leisure activities that contribute to solid, continual physical fitness.

Be Fit For Life In Lethbridge

The Lethbridge Community College Fitness Centre offers numerous services and is part of the provincial "Be Fit For Life" Network. The Regional Fitness Centre works to promote regular physical activity and healthy lifestyle practices by offering fitness appraisals and nutrition counselling, sport team testing and conditioning programs, fitness for special populations (e.g., arthritis, diabetes, cardiac), fitness leadership certification and specialty courses, numerous recreational courses, and an Employee Leisure Lifestyle Program. These services are extended to surrounding communities, agencies, and groups through the Mobile Fitness Unit, which has been busy travelling throughout Southern Alberta promoting the value of positive lifestyle practices involving simple activity.

The Centre receives valuable input from a volunteer community advisory board which aims to ensure that local community needs are identified through resources available at the Centre. During the past year these needs have been addressed through such projects as "Fun Fitness Challenge", "Journey to the Moon", "Crowsnest Pass Winterfest '90", and two resource workbooks targeted to school/day care children and rural populations.

The Lethbridge Community College Fitness Centre is funded by the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation. Administrative support is provided by the Lethbridge Community College.

For more information about the programs and services offered by the Lethbridge Community College Regional Resource Fitness Centre contact Beth Healey at 382-6919.
Sports Medicine Council of Alberta

The Sport Medicine Council of Alberta (SMCA) is an organization of sport physicians, sport physiotherapists, athletic therapists and sport scientists. The cooperative function of these individuals is to promote and coordinate the provision of sport medicine programs and services for the Alberta sport community. These professional members provide their services to assist in making Alberta a healthy and safe environment for sport and recreational activities.

Sport Medicine Support Personnel

The services of a sport medicine professional may be required on and off the field; and before, during and after the game. The most obvious services are a part of on site coverage for games, training camps, competitions and tours, such as the assessment and treatment of athletic injuries, counselling, drug testing and education and nutrition assessment.

Education Program

Education courses are available for those individuals interested in upgrading or developing their knowledge and skills in sport medicine. Courses include: Athletic First Aid, Taping and Strapping.

Sports Nutrition and Drugs in Sport

Medical Event Coverage

Assistance may be provided for ensuring appropriate medical coverage at events and competitions. An SMCA liaison will act as a consultant to the Games Medical Planning Committee; guidelines are provided in our Games and Competition Medical Handbook; pre-event workshops and training are available for medical volunteers; and assistance with recruiting medical personnel.

Sport Medicine Equipment and Supplies

Comprehensive professional medical kits for physicians and therapists can be borrowed from SMCA in addition to athletic medical information cards and technical assistance in the development and purchase of sport specific medical kits.

Drug Education

Educational information on drugs in sport can be obtained from the SMCA. Formats include technical articles, individual consulting, drug testing, speakers and writers, resource materials for junior high school teachers and students.

Resource Information

The SMCA Resource Library has a variety of sport medicine materials available for loan: anatomical joint models, wall charts, educational packages, and audio-visual material. Also available is Pulse, a quarterly newsletter which highlights SMCA activities and current sport medicine information.

Conference and Support Services

The SMCA hosts and promotes sport medical, paramedical and scientific conferences, symposia and lectures.

Speakers and Writers Bureau

Medical, paramedical and scientific professionals are available for speaking or writing. Topic areas may include nutrition, physiology, psychology, taping and strapping, emergency protocol, athletic injuries, drugs in sport, strength and flexibility, safety standards and protective equipment.

To access any of the programs or services offered by the SMCA, please contact:

Sport Medicine Council of Alberta
11759 Great Rd
Edmonton, AB
T5M 3K6
(403) 453-8636
Heros of Social Marketing

No discussion of social marketing is complete without a few words on one of the most impressive and effective campaigns ever to hit our schools: The Heros program from the Injury Awareness and Prevention Centre at the University of Alberta. HEROS—A Program for Teenagers—promotes injury awareness and prevention among young people.

The project travelled across more than 45,000 km of Alberta before heading to Hamilton, Sarnia, London, Toronto, Ottawa and Trenton enabling 12,100 teens to experience the presentation.

This unique audio-video production uses multiple slide projectors and stereo sound effects to present a strong and vivid message of injury awareness and prevention to teens.

The next season of HEROS will see communities with step-by-step manuals to facilitate preparations for presentation. A Safe Communities Project will be facilitated with strategic project management assistance from IAPC.

The project has brought communities of varying backgrounds together to work towards making their homes, schools and their lives a safer place to live in. The messages: play safe, live safe, drive sober, act wisely and be a hero.

Marilyn Dahl

Assessment Types

There are three main types of assessment: formative research (the pre-testing of ideas, messages and products before they are used) process assessment (the ongoing monitoring of your program) and outcome assessment (the results).

Formative Research:
- set up focus groups
- conduct interviews
- conduct a pilot study

Process Assessment:
- count radio and TV time
- count printed articles
- count educational materials distributed
- count presentations
- count inquiries/requests

Outcome Assessment:
- compare people's awareness, attitudes and behaviour before and after the campaign
- conduct interviews with target group
- measure specific actions as a result of your campaign (enrolment in lifestyle programs, change in policy).

It's absolutely essential to evaluate all social marketing activities! That's the word from the newly released resource: Social Marketing in Health Promotion: A Communications Guide (Ontario Ministry of Health, 1991). No matter how big or small the program, these and many other authors contend that assessment and evaluation are important for the following reasons:

- to test ideas, messages and methods with members of your target groups before launching the actual campaign
- to determine how well your communications program has worked with your target audience
- to improve various parts of your social marketing project
- to convince others that your project is worthwhile and should continue
- to attract funding or sponsorship
- to promote or share your project with others.

Keep in mind:
- social change requires multi-faceted, long-term initiatives
- it is difficult to pinpoint the impact of any one message
- each individual responds in a different way to different messages and different media depending on their personal habits or health status, current social trends, government policy and legislation, and many other factors and issues.

To view a copy of Social Marketing in Health Promotion: A Communications Guide, please call or visit Kristy Hollingshead, ACFWB resource coordinator at 453-8692 or toll-free in Alberta at 1-800-661-4551
Comment

Active Living: Not Only Exercise

By Tammy Horne, PhD

For many people, the word "exercise" conjures images of pain and sweat. Research on exercise adherence has shown that 50% of people who start an exercise program drop out within the first six months. Time constraints and lack of self-discipline are common reasons for dropout.

The emphasis of organizations like Fitness Canada and ParticipACTION is shifting away from exercise toward a new approach called "Active Living". Active Living combines physical activity (not necessarily "exercise") with one's day-to-day lifestyle. Examples of this concept include walking to work, cycling with friends, playing active games with kids, and gardening or vacuuming.

Why the Switch To Active Living?

People may be more likely to stay active if their activities can double as transportation, visits with friends, family time, or house and yard work.

Furthermore, evidence is growing that moderate levels of fitness have greater disease prevention benefits than was once believed.

The greatest cardiovascular protective effects occur when people progress from being unfit to being moderately fit, with relatively small gains between moderate and high fitness levels. Moderate activity also tones muscles and controls weight. In older adults, moderate activity helps maintain mobility.

Most importantly, Active Living could have benefits that go beyond physical well-being. Sharing activities with family or friends could enhance emotional and social well-being through relaxation and time together.

A friendly, low-key game of baseball at a staff picnic could contribute to occupational well-being through shared fun among usually-serious employees.

A walk in a natural setting might promote intellectual and spiritual well-being through learning about and appreciating the power and diversity of nature.

The Alberta Centre for Well-Being is on the cutting edge of promoting Active Living in Alberta. We do this through research, resource materials, workshops, this year's summer promotion: The Wellness Wagon, partnerships with other organizations, and our Network of Networks. To find out more, call our toll-free number (1-800-661-4551).

Better still, let's arrange a Wellness Wagon visit to your community!

Pack A Picnic!

By Kim Layne

There is no better way to celebrate the end of a long, hectic winter than to prepare a nutritious meal and enjoy it outdoors. A picnic can be a gourmet meal for two, an energy break for hikers or a summer snack for the kids.

It is important to keep food fresh, cool and free from spoilage. Don't hesitate to pack unprepared foods to make up on site. Also, try not to include food products that spoil easily such as mayonnaise and oil. Remember to include a cold pack or two and keep your picnic basket out of the sunlight.

For the gourmet, picknick, try cold barbecued or baked salmon on a whole grain bagel with cream cheese with a small side of Greek salad.

For the active group, the fare must be compact, light, energy rich, refreshing and include lots of cold liquid. Muffins, whole grain breads, fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts provide complex carbohydrates, simple sugars and fluids.

Always consider the environment. Take reusable plates and avoid paper products and pack a damp towel with a squeeze of lemon for clean-ups. So get packing and enjoy the summer! ☺

Kim Layne is a graduate student at the University of Alberta specializing in nutrition.
By Kristy Hollingshead

Introducing... Kristy Hollingshead, BA, the new ACFWB Resource Coordinator. Having recently graduated from the University of Alberta with a specialization in Physical Anthropology, she brings to the Center a broad knowledge base.

After perusing this issue of Wellspring you will no doubt have garnered an appreciation for the concept of Active Living and what the initiatives encompass. To these treaties I would like to add a few points which I believe are important to emphasize, starting with what Active Living is not.

Active Living is not a fitness fad which focuses on the "no pain, no gain" principle - Active Living is a positive, ongoing life process at the individual, family, or community level. Active Living is a lifestyle - participating in a healthy amount of physical activity, being conscious of stressors and stress management measures, enjoying your work, and creating quality time for yourself and your family.

In such a fast-paced and ever-changing world, we need to seek out tools and resources to help us adapt and work towards optimal health and personal well-being. Active Living and well-being are closely linked and require a personal commitment and responsibility.

The Center's Resource Room and Network of Networks are a valuable source of print, video and human resources on Active Living. Listed below you will find a selection of good publications which will assist you in focusing on the various aspects of Active Living programs - from planning to implementation for individuals or groups.

Move Through The Years: A Blueprint for Action.

This comprehensive kit provides a plan of action to facilitate the promotion of active lifestyles for older adults.

Canada's Blueprint Toward Active Living in the Workplace. A planning guide which addresses the concept of Active Living and its applications and implications in the workplace.

Because They're Young: Active Living for Canadian Children and Youth. An informative guide that assists in realizing a vision of optimal health and fitness for children and youth.

Active Living for Canadians With a Disability: A Blueprint for Action.

This Active Living guide focuses on formulating a strategic plan aimed at increasing and enhancing opportunities and activities for Canadians with a disability. The guide recognizes the diversity and identifies the needs of Canadians with a disability and provides exciting and innovative guidelines for program planning and implementation.

Active Living: Building Active Living in Your Community - Resource Kit. This comprehensive kit includes a video and several booklets on special events planning, media relations, celebrating Canada's 125th birthday.

A Conscious Commitment

What I find exciting about Active Living per se is that it is based on a holistic model of well-being and reflects initiatives aimed at positive changes in attitudes and behaviors. Active Living involves a conscious commitment which begins at childhood and continues through out our lives. This involves being an active, involved participant in our personal well-being.

By being aware of and participating in positive health behaviors physically, intellectually, and spiritually, our potential for growth and achievement is limitless.

If you live in the Edmonton area and wish to view any of these or other resources, visit the Alberta Centre For Well-Being at our new address: 11759 Groep Road, or call Kristy at 453-8692 (1-800-681-4551 toll free in Alberta).

Kristy Hollingshead, BA, is the new resource coordinator for the Alberta Centre For Well-Being.
By Judy Sefton, PhD

In the fall of 1986, researchers at the University of Alberta, in collaboration with Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation (then Alberta Recreation and Parks), conducted a major study of the number of fitness and lifestyle programs available in Alberta companies.

The study indicated that health education programs were largely related to accident and safety prevention (40%), first aid (30%) and clean air policy (26%), while sports and recreation programs were predominantly social events (39%) and team sport ventures (23%) and that the number of programs offered increased as did the size of the company. A majority of the small businesses (20-49 employees) did not offer any form of wellness programs. Of the large Alberta companies surveyed, a majority (85%) of the petroleum sector offered programs compared with a small minority of the industry and manufacturing sector.

As the only Ministry with the mandate to be involved in employee fitness, Alberta Recreation and Parks became the key facilitator in the development and promotion of employee fitness by acting as a consultant-base and developing partnerships with industry. The Be Fit For Life Network and Alberta Centre For Well-Being were soon established.

And now it’s time to see how far Alberta companies have come. To this end, the Centre, in cooperation with the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Institute, the Canadian Centre For Active Living in the Workplace and a variety of provincial partners from across Canada is teaming up to conduct a national survey funded by Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation and the Recreation Parks and Wildlife Foundation. The results of this survey will be released in the fall.

By Mike Keeping

National Access Awareness Week is a chance for individuals, voluntary organizations, small businesses, corporations, and governments to ask themselves: "What can we do to ensure access for all persons with disabilities?"

Ensuring equal access requires more than just removing physical barriers; it also means changing attitudes and support systems so that people with visible as well as invisible disabilities (such as learning, intellectual, and psychiatric disabilities) can participate fully in all aspects of community life. NAAW has observed five focus areas where changes are needed: transportation, housing, employment, recreation and education.

Formula For Change

ASSESS services and facilities to determine their level of accessibility.
SET GOALS to measure progress throughout the year.
MAKE practical improvements.
CELEBRATE what has already been achieved by people with disabilities and other individuals during National Access Awareness Week.

For more information, please call 420-0898 or toll-free at: 1-800-661-NAAW.
"Cheese Please"

From the Dairy Nutrition Council of Alberta

Scientific research has established that choosing to eat hard cheese such as aged Cheddar, Swiss and Monterey Jack is not only nutritionally beneficial but also a wise dental choice. There are several mechanisms by which cheese offers protection against dental caries.

Eating cheese stimulates an abundant production of highly buffered, alkaline saliva which significantly increases the rate of clearance of sugar from the mouth. The saliva also raises the plaque pH, neutralizing organic acids and effectively inhibiting formation of caries.

Calcium and phosphate are slowly released from cheese while it is eaten. These minerals diffuse into plaque and inhibit remineralization of the tooth. Casein and fatty acids in cheese may also provide protection to teeth.

Individuals prone to dental caries would benefit from eating cheese alone at the end of a meal or after eating carbohydrate snacks. To obtain the antacarcinogenic benefit, the serving size need only be about 5 grams (slightly smaller than a 1/4" cube).

For more information on nutrition and dairy products, please call the Dairy Nutrition Council of Alberta at 1-800-252-7530.

By Carey Lee Gordon, R.D.

Are all restaurant meals high in fat? Read menus to find out.

Look for words like steamed, roasted, poached, broiled, charbroiled, baked, barbecued, or cooked on an open grill. Foods cooked using these methods tend to be lower in fat grams.

Stay away from breaded, battered, sautéed, fried, panfried, braised, crispy, creamed, in a cream or cheese sauce, au gratin or scalloped. These indicate foods of higher fat content.

If the menu provides little information, ask the waiter what foods accompany the entree, what type of milk is used, how the food is prepared, and if butter is added prior to serving?

Some restaurants will prepare foods at your request in a manner which lowers fat content. Gravy, sauces, butter, or salad dressings can usually be requested "on the side". Or, you can request that a high fat item be exchanged with a low fat item (green salad for French fries). Many restaurants participate in heart health programs.

Check the menu. Look at the fat content of your diet over a few days. It takes more than one meal to make or break good nutrition.

Most commercial diets focus on a reduced calorie intake. Unfortunately, this approach tends to have low success rates resulting in cyclic weight loss (yo-yo dieting).

Recent evidence suggests that decreasing fat intake is an important factor in losing weight. The Woman's Health Trial Intervention Study showed that a reduction in dietary fat is strongly associated with weight loss and more effective than simply reducing calories. In fact, the study suggested that a low fat diet with no emphasis on decreased calorie intake could be useful in promoting weight loss. However, unlike the low calorie diet, this method is not a "quick-fix." It requires dedication to a lifestyle change and has slower but longer lasting results.

The decreased fat diet parallels Health and Welfare Canada's recommendations to reduce overall fat intake and to increase complex carbohydrate intake to not only promote weight loss but reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease.

It is always important to consult the appropriate specialist before commencing any weight loss program.

This article was submitted by Jan Gerdes and Irene Kainer, fourth year Foods and Nutrition students at the University of Alberta.

All references available on request.
Getting The Words Straight

Active Living is the term introduced by Fitness Canada to push beyond traditional fitness activities and encourage Canadians to find enjoyment in everyday things.

But where does this leave physical activity and exercise? And how do they all relate to physical fitness and health?

Although definitions don't make for the most stimulating reading, now is a good time to pause and make sure we've got it all straight. This is especially important as the Active Living message grows. Individuals whom we advise will, no doubt, turn to us to clarify things for them.

Based on a review of Public Health Reports and Exercise, Fitness, and Health: A Consensus of Current Knowledge, professional staff at the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute offer these working definitions...

Physical activity is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles and resulting in energy expenditure. It can be categorized into occupational, household, leisure-time, and other activities.

Although the terms physical activity and exercise are often used interchangeably, there is, strictly speaking, a difference. Exercise is a subset of physical activity that is planned, structured, and repetitive. Its objective is to improve or maintain physical fitness.

Physical fitness, then, is a set of attributes that are either health- or skill-related (see the following list). The degree to which individuals possess these various attributes can be measured by specific tests.

Components of Physical Fitness

- Health-related fitness
  - Cardiorespiratory endurance
  - Muscular endurance
  - Muscular strength
  - Body composition
  - Flexibility

- Skill-related fitness
  - Agility
  - Balance
  - Coordination
  - Speed
  - Power
  - Reaction time

Active Living for Health's Sake

In the past, we tended to focus on exercise to improve physical fitness. More specifically, we encouraged individuals to pursue rigorous aerobic activities for the sake of their cardiorespiratory endurance.

But as the body of research grows, it is increasingly clear that even modest levels of physical activity can have a positive effect on health. Public Health Reports notes the following points:

- Extreme inactivity has significant detrimental consequences on health status.
- Physically active people at all ages exhibit fewer health problems than the very sedentary.
Calendar of Events

17th Annual National Wellness Conference.
July 12th to 17th, 1992, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Call (715)346-2172.

The 1992 Alberta Seniors Games.
August 19th to 22nd, 1992, Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Canadian Society For International Health:
"Community Health Development: Struggling For Strategies".
Rocky Mountain YMCA (TransCanada Hwy, Canmore, AB). May 22nd to 24th, 1992. Call 262-2622 to register.

Third Annual Rural Mental Health and Addictions Conference.
June 28th to July 2nd, 1992, University of Lethbridge. Call 329-2244 to register.

38th Annual CAHPER/TOBA 92 Conference.

Accountability 2000: Doing the Right Things Right.
The Mintburn-Vermilion and Vegreville Health Units are hosting the annual Public Health Association Conference at Lakeland College in Vermilion May 26th to 29th, 1992. Call 853-5270 to register.

Alberta Centre For Well-Being WATS LINE: 1-800-661-4551

Process of Recovery and Breaking the Cycle of Abuse.
Dr. Claudia Black will present these seminars on April 13th and 14th in Edmonton. Call Envisions, Inc. at (604)768-3522 to register.

Fun, Relaxation, Exercise: Yoga, Tai Chi, Pep, Fun & Fit Swim.
The Multiple Sclerosis Society is currently offering these programs. Please call Andy at 471-3034 to register.

Focus on Women in Business Retreat '92: Dare To Dream Big.
Carole Kanchier, PhD, ACFWB Communications Coordinator, Jackie Webber, BSc Pharm, MSA, and others will speak about balancing work and home, quality lifestyle management, networking for success, building instant rapport using your intuition, and setting and achieving the loftiest of goals. June 11th, 1992, Alberta Vocational College. Call 491-7359 to register.

Wellness For Women Conference: Alberta Healthcare Association

Division of Continuing Medical Education presents...Advance Treatment Directives: Confronting Death Together Symposium.
May 21st to 23rd, Banff Springs Hotel. Call 492-6346 to register.

Volume Three, Number Two
New In The Resource Room

New in the Centre's Resource Library is a video and resource guide developed by the Junior League of Calgary, entitled "Choices". The video which stresses the importance of making positive lifestyle choices, addresses the subject of teen pregnancy.

Examined are the options, decisions, and consequences surrounding the issue of teen sexual activity. Based on the concept of "Teens Talking to Teens", the young representatives share their personal stories with a group of their peers and respond to their questions. The resource guide which includes background information, statistics and suggested lesson plans, was developed in collaboration with Calgary Health Services. This program has been evaluated by the Calgary Board of Education and has been very well received.

The video and resource guide are available for $39.95 from the Junior League of Calgary, c/o Calgary Health Services, Sexuality Division, P.O. Box 4015, Postal Station "C", Calgary, Alberta T2T 5T1.

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Last Word...

Stress... The Bottom Line
By Colin Reichle and Steve Emmons

This is an excerpt from the article; "Stress and the Bottom Line", which appears in the December/January issue of "Canadian Society of Safety Engineers Contact".

Occupational stress is the industrial disease of the 90's. It is a phenomenon which is increasingly evident throughout the private and public sectors and is often the focus of attention by occupational health specialists, the medical profession and business management.

Occupational stress is invariably a factor in any environment—plunging employee morale, skyrocketing absenteeism rates, escalating benefits costs, and declining productivity.

Issues related to occupational stress are coming to the fore in some labour relations environments and are being used by some unions to make political statements in the collective bargaining process.

Every person has a different tolerance for stress at work and in their private lives. What develops as a serious stressor for one person may have a negligible effect on another. The affects of many occupational stressors are too a large extent controllable and can be directly influenced by both management and the affected employee.

It is incumbent on managers to recognize the potentially serious stressors in any given work situation, and to respond appropriately before the problem escalates.

Stress inducing agents include work overload, reduced or inadequate levels of staffing which can detrimentally affect the quality of family life leading to additional stressors away from the worksite.

Managers must consider the work environment, work processes and employment conditions.

The consequences of not controlling stress are escalating benefits costs, an unhappy and more often absent workforce, and ultimately, an inability to compete in these challenging times.

For a copy of this complete article which appears in "CSSE Contact", please write or call ACFWB Communications Coordinator, Jackie Webber at 11759, Groat Rd, Edmonton, AB, T5M 3K6.