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## Whitemouth

### Wellness Fair Creates a Buzz

K-12 students at the Whitemouth School have received some hands-on education thanks to a CDPI-sponsored Wellness Day. Students, parents, and community leaders all had input into the comprehensive fair, which featured over 100 active and informational sessions. In addition to more traditional seminars like healthy living and heart health, students were given a chance to participate in interactive demonstrations involving martial arts, yoga, snowshoeing, boxing, and even hip-hop dancing. Students were divided into three age groups and rotated between sessions that also included lessons in team building, relationships, drug awareness, stress relief, and body image.

The overall focus of Wellness Day was to expand the students' knowledge of what health means and what they can do to

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maintain their long-term health. CDPI funds were used to bring in presenters, such as outdoor educators and hip-hop professionals, and the North Eastman Health Association provided several resource people. A Healthy Lung session was a big hit, with experiential activities that included the students working with actual cow's lungs – some found this engrossing, while others were a bit grossed out!

A nutrition display was the spot to find some healthy snacks. Some of the parents decided to use the new Canada Food Guide to design four tables stocked with food in relation to the recommended portion of food for each group. There were grains, meats, and dairy on hand, and of course far greater amounts of fruits and vegetables that included some varieties that many of the students had not tried before.

A number of other health initiatives in the area are on the go, including stealth nutrition<sup>1</sup> and grocery store nutrition promotions. CDPI funds were also used to purchase additional racquets and birdies for the badminton club in Whitemouth. In the nearby community of Reynolds, the K-6 school started a healthy lunch program using CDPI funds to buy pots, pans, salad bowls, and other supplies. The students enjoyed learning about healthy eating and helped make the lunches. The

<sup>1</sup> Stealth Nutrition: A way of getting finicky eaters, especially children, to eat healthier foods by changing popular foods ever so slightly to make them more nutritious. For example, putting spinach instead of iceberg lettuce into a salad or sandwich, or gradually reducing salt and sugar in a family's diet.

curling club featured fun spiels to increase participation in the life-long sport. Future plans include a pole-walking program, poster contests, and introducing the teen smoking cessation program, NOT on Tobacco, to Whitemouth School.

Wellness Facilitator Caroline McIntosh said the community support for the Wellness Fair was outstanding, and the event's success created momentum for a Community Wellness Day that may feature student leaders doing the teaching. A lot

of people in the Whitemouth area are community-minded, which helps to get new events running and puts the word out. "The more people you have helping out, the more people are talking about it," McIntosh said.

**Contact Information:**

Caroline McIntosh

204-345-1220

cmcintosh@neha.mb.ca

Take Note

**Canadian Eating Habits:**

Almost half of Canadians (46%) say that their eating habits are "excellent" or "very good."

- 72% of Canadians who rate their eating habits as "excellent" or "very good" are concerned about the amount of fat in their food. Of these, 90% are taking steps to reduce the amount of fat in the food they eat.
- 59% of those who rate their eating habits as "fair" or "poor" are concerned about dietary fat, with 77% taking action to reduce fat consumption.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/population/national\\_health\\_survey-enquete\\_nationale\\_sante-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/population/national_health_survey-enquete_nationale_sante-eng.php)