

Heading Upstream

Health Promotion News

Welcome to the June 2011 Health Promotion Newsletter. *Heading Upstream* is produced by Latrobe Community Health Service and provides an update on activities and projects which the Health Promotion team is currently involved in.

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Websites of interest

Department of Planning and Community Development Evaluation Tools

www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/communitydevelopment/community-sector/evaluation

Public Health Nutrition Website

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nutrition/>

New Gentle Exercise Group to Commence in Morwell

The Morwell East Residents Group (MERG) members are increasing their physical activity with the creation of a gentle exercise class being run out of the Morwell Neighbourhood House.

The gentle exercise class, which is based on electronic exercise games, such as the Wii fit gaming system and exercise DVDs, will be launched on the 9th of June with the support of Latrobe Community Health Service, Latrobe City Council and GippSport.

Naomi Downing, Community Health Nurse for Latrobe Community Health Service will present a 'Healthy Lifestyle' talk to community members attending the launch. According to Naomi, there are a number of small steps individuals can take to eat healthier and incorporate more physical activity into their daily lives.

"This new exercise class is ideal for people who have not been very active for a long time or those who are looking for a gentle way to exercise. Participants are able to follow along with the computer or DVD instructor on the big screen," said Ms. Downing.

Sustainability and cost are common barriers which can prevent people from exercising more often. Chris Stanlake, Program Coordinator for GippSport, says "Trying to obtain instructors to run a class can become quite costly and this affects the long term sustainability of the program. This class is perfect in the way it is run by the residents, so they're not relying on an instructor and it is cost free".

"This is a great way for the residents and people in the surrounding area to keep fit in a fun and friendly environment" says Chris.

MERG welcomes anyone interested to come along and give their exercise class a try. For more information contact Chris Stanlake on 5135 8335 or email chris@gippsport.com.au



Mental Health Promotion - What is it all about?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies Mental Health as: “A state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”.

For this to be achieved, the Health Promotion Team looks at what factors affect the social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of members of the community. These factors are commonly referred to as determinants of health, and can include social exclusion, discrimination, education, and early life experiences. These affect our lives in different ways depending on our mental health, resilience and ability to cope. Everything is linked to mental health; it is just having the skills to change these things that make the difference.

Social Connectedness and Mental Wellbeing is a priority area that LCHS Health Promotion Officers work on each day. Our goal is **by June 2012 to have an increase in social connectedness and mental wellbeing for residents in small towns and neighborhood renewal areas, refugees and vulnerable communities, those on low incomes, young people and women.**

The way in which we work with communities to achieve our goal is through various programs:

- Connecting Rural Communities project in Boolarra, Glengarry and Yallourn North
- Support Latrobe Valley New Arrivals to improve social connectedness at the local level
- Community Kitchens for social connectedness as a way of reducing social isolation
- Community Arts
- Mind Matters program in secondary schools
- Blue Earth – self esteem / physical activity in primary schools
- Capacity building / skills development with Latrobe Valley Sudanese Women’s Network
- Latrobe New Arrivals Driver Education Program

Through these various programs we are enabling people to link in with others, learn new life skills and take responsibility for their mental wellbeing. The social determinants will be addressed through these programs, and partnerships formed to ensure sustainability.





'Go for your life' Education Vans

Early in May, the 'Go for your life' education van visited the Latrobe Valley as part of the Kids - 'Go for your life' initiative. Over 4 days, 10 schools and more than 1,000 students took part in the program which encourages healthy eating and physical activity. Over the past several years the Health Promotion Team has worked closely with local primary schools and early childhood settings to support them in becoming health promoting schools.

The Community Education Program provided health resources for all life stages, 'come & try' physical activities, interactive stage presentations, and organised group activities with a focus on healthy eating and physical activity. Each student received a lunchbox, skipping rope and swimming cap for participating in the day.

While the students were out having fun and learning life lessons, the teachers and principal of the schools were attending a professional development session with Health Promotion Officer, Claire Watts. The aim of this session was to help the schools achieve Award Status with Kids - 'Go for your life'. To achieve Award Status, each school needed to meet 7 criteria and explain how their school is meeting these criteria. The 7 criteria are:

- Move, Play and Go
- Limit 'Sometimes' Foods
- Tap into Water Everyday
- School Policy
- Turn off, Switch to Play
- Plant Fruit & Veg in your Lunchbox
- Stride and Ride

Currently there are 6 schools awarded in the Latrobe area, with several more nearing completion. With the support of the 'Go for your life' Community Education Program, 10 more schools are closer to achieving this status and over 1,000 students have learnt skills that they will keep for life .



Quiz: What do you know about refugees?

1. **How many refugees and asylum seekers are there in today's world?**
 - a. 13 million
 - b. 23 million
 - c. 33 million
 - d. 43 million
2. **Which continent hosts the most refugees?**
 - a. Middle East
 - b. Asia-Pacific
 - c. South-West Asia
 - d. Africa
3. **What percentages of all refugees in the world does Australia receive?**
 - a. 0.2%
 - b. 2%
 - c. 12%
 - d. 20%
4. **From which countries did the largest numbers of refugees in Australia come from in 2009-2010?**
 - a. Sudan
 - b. Afghanistan
 - c. Burma
 - d. Iraq
5. **How many refugee people entered Australia in 2009-2010?**
 - a. 1,370
 - b. 13,700
 - c. 137,000
 - d. 1.37 million
6. **How many 'living' languages and dialects are there in Sudan?**
 - a. 4
 - b. 12
 - c. 75
 - d. 133
7. **Which country is host to the largest number of refugees worldwide?**
 - a. Egypt
 - b. Pakistan
 - c. Iran
 - d. Thailand
8. **Which country has the largest number of refugees worldwide?**
 - a. Afghanistan
 - b. Sudan
 - c. Burma
 - d. Iraq

Answers: 1d, 2b, 3a, 4c, 5b, 6d, 7d, 8a

Sources: 2009-2010 Annual Report of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC); Amnesty International Australia; Global Trends.