

Welcome to the March 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...

Mental Health Foundation of Australia (Victoria)  
<http://www.mentalhealthvic.org.au/index.php?id=109>

Waste less food, save money and our environment:

<http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/>

## Community Fun Day Hailed A Success

Almost 70 community members from across Gippsland came together in January for a Community Fun Day organised by their local resident groups. Buses collected community members from Morwell, Moe and Traralgon and transported them to Lake Guthridge in Sale, where they enjoyed a healthy barbeque, getting active and socialising with each other.

The 'Community Fun Day' (formally Big Day In) is an initiative jointly organised by local resident groups of Morwell East, Moe Heights and Traralgon East and is supported by the Latrobe Valley Neighbourhood Alliance (LVNA). The Health Promotion team at Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS) are active contributors to the LVNA Action Plan 2009-2012 and have supported this event through their involvement with the LVNA and attendance at resident group meetings.

Activities for kids on the day included tennis, games and giveaways organised by GippSport's Chris Stanlake and Latrobe Leisure's Sam Fenton. Children also enjoyed the playground equipment in the Botanic Gardens whilst their parents were able to chat with other local residents over lunch and a cuppa.

Attendees reported that everyone enjoyed the day and that many people, particularly older adults, felt more involved as a result.



## SMILES 4 MILES

Smiles 4 Miles is an initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria and aims to improve the oral health of young children in our community. LCHS Health Promotion is involved as a partner and has been supporting Latrobe Valley pre-schools and childcare centres become involved in the Smiles 4 Miles Award Program.

The Smiles 4 Miles Award Program is currently being run throughout twenty-two early childhood settings in the Latrobe City region.

Smiles 4 Miles encourages children to take care of their teeth by familiarising them with three cartoon characters, each of whom carry a key message that children can relate to. *Clean Well* is the third key message of the Smiles 4 Miles campaign and is introduced to children through the character of "Brush Boy".

Many children are at risk of tooth decay; however, regular and thorough tooth brushing can help remove plaque (a sticky film of bacteria that forms on our teeth) and assist in maintaining healthy gums. The bacteria in plaque use sugars from food and drinks to produce acid and frequent exposure of the tooth surface to this acid increases the risk of holes forming in teeth over time.

### The Smiles 4 Miles characters:



**Water Boy** promotes the Drink Well message. He has hydro-powered super powers to help him fight gum disease.



**Munch Girl** promotes the Eat Well message. She has secret powers activated by eating healthy foods.



**Brush Boy** promotes the Clean Well message. With his secret weapons, a brush and dental floss, he fights disease and protects teeth.

### "Clean Well" Key Messages:

- Brush teeth gently and thoroughly with a children's fluoride toothpaste and a soft compact head toothbrush designed for children
- Clean teeth at least twice a day, once in the morning and once before going to bed
- An adult should assist a child to brush their teeth (usually until the age of 6 or 7)
- Use low fluoride toothpaste from 18 months to 6 years of age, unless otherwise recommended by a dental professional (a pea size amount is usually enough). Examples of low fluoride toothpaste include Colgate My First and MacLean's Milk Teeth
- Ensure children have regular dental checkups - don't wait for a problem to occur



dental health  
services victoria  
oral health for better health

## Introducing Oferya Kicheni Refugee Health Nurse



The Refugee Health Nurse Program is one of many initiatives that have been put in place in a coordinated response by the state government to the health and wellbeing of refugee communities in Victoria. It aims to increase access to primary health care services, improve the response of health services to refugees' needs, and enable individuals, families and communities with a refugee background improve their health and wellbeing.

Oferya Kicheni has worked in the role of Refugee Health Nurse with LCHS for the past two years.

"As part of my role as Refugee Health Nurse, I provide assistance to community members who have recently arrived in the Latrobe Valley by supporting them in their healthcare needs. Beginning with an initial health needs assessment, my responsibilities include facilitating and coordinating the provision of health services to meet the clients' requirements. By working in tandem with external agencies and organisations, service gaps for clients with a refugee background can be identified and addressed through the provision of assistance and resources."

"The mental health and wellbeing of refugee clients is another significant area of my role," said Ms. Kicheni. "Due to the severe hardships experienced by people from a refugee background, there may be war related injuries, nutritional deficiencies and post traumatic stress disorder symptoms. All of these factors can lead to poor concentration and may interfere with the important task of learning English, which in turn can affect the individual's ability to assimilate in their new environment."

"Social isolation may also influence the process of settlement, particularly for women. I work closely with a wide range of African women's cultural and social groups and assist in connecting members of the community with support programs within the Latrobe Valley," Ms Kicheni said.

In addition to directly supporting members of the community from a humanitarian background, the LCHS Refugee Health Nurse is instrumental in providing information and education to the newly arrived, either on a one-on-one basis or to a targeted group. Oferya Kicheni works at Latrobe Community Health Service on Thursday and Friday and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday on alternate weeks. She can be contacted on 1800 242 696.

## Blueberries

Blueberries come from a perennial plant which belongs to a family of cultivars, the predominant species for which are native to North America. The berries are generally harvested in Victoria between late spring to mid-autumn, depending on the variety of blueberry, but are readily available in frozen form all year round in the supermarket. The plants have been grown on a commercial scale in Australia since the 1970s and are relatively resistant to pests.

Blueberries contain a diverse range of micronutrients, with notably high levels of manganese, vitamin B6, vitamin C, vitamin K and dietary fibre, and are low in kilojoules.



Blueberries are naturally high in antioxidants and in laboratory testing researchers have found that they may help protect the brain from oxidative stress and reduce the effects of age-related conditions such as Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

Fresh berries should have a lively, uniform colour and be covered in a whitish bloom. The fruit should be stored free from moisture as the presence of water will cause the fruit to decay. It is therefore best not to wash the berries until right before eating as washing will remove the bloom that protects the berries' skins from degradation. If kept out at room temperature for more than a day, the berries may spoil.

The fruit can be used in jams, smoothies and baking.



### Ingredients:

- 2 cups self raising flour
- ½ cup caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup light sour cream
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

### Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C
2. Combine flour, sugar, eggs, oil and sour cream in a bowl and mix lightly
3. Gently fold through the blueberries and spoon the mixture into muffin cases or tins
4. Bake for 25 minutes or until cooked through

Mix the ingredients until just combined, as over-mixing the batter will make the muffins hard and chewy. If using frozen blueberries, keep them in the freezer until ready to use or the mixture will be too wet. Light sour cream can be substituted with plain yoghurt if desired. Muffins are suitable to freeze and make a healthy addition to lunchboxes, for adults and children alike.

