

## **30+5 Springfield Update Spring/Summer '09**

### **The End and the Beginning**

30+5 finished their HRSA grant working with middle schoolers and was awarded another three year HRSA grant to continue to spread their message to elementary school children in Springfield and Bellows Falls. They will now be moving into Elm, Union, and Park Street Elementary Schools in Springfield and Central Elementary School in Bellows Falls, trying to improve school lunches by working with the Wellness and Nutrition Committees and by getting physical activity into the classroom with "energizers" and other innovative programs.

### **Prescription For Wellness**

The Prescription for Wellness Program was a collaboration between 30+5 and the Southern Vermont Health and Recreation Center to target Riverside Middle School students who needed guidance on nutrition and exercise. Students were referred to the program by the school nurse and would go to the Rec Center twice a week to work out with a trainer and meet a registered dietitian during lunch twice a month. The Rec Center has taken over the program, now calling it Fun and Fit, and has run the latest group with monetary support from 30+5.

### **Community Garden**

With help from the local Master Gardeners, and spearheaded by Bill Sheldon, the Springfield Family Center garden is off to a wonderful start this season. Last season, the 30+5 staff, Nancy Schaefer and daylyn finnegan, got permission from the Springfield Family Center to create and tend a community garden, but unfortunately the lack of a fence meant that the produce was sampled by the local wildlife.

This season, not only was a fence put up, but plots were made, some were given to local gardeners, and the rest will be tended by the Master Gardeners in the area. The bounty from the summer harvest will be given to the Family Center to use for their lunch and food shelf. The autumn harvest will be donated to the school lunch.

### **Garden donations/Plant a Row**

30+5 asks community members to plan on planting an extra row of vegetables in their garden in hopes of giving the excess to the schools to incorporate into school lunch. Last year, the program was blessed to have Blais Farms donate extra produce but would like the public to help out this year. As your bounty comes up, think about giving whatever you do not need to your local school cafeterias.

### **Cooking with the FACS Class**

In the third year of their grant, 30+5 cooked with the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders at Riverside Middle School in their Family and Consumer Science classes under the direction of teacher JJ Whittemore. Favorites this year included a pesto pizza with Grafton cheddar cheese, yogurt blueberry pancakes, and a maple-mustard dressing for a mixed greens lettuce lesson. A curriculum with lesson plans and recipes will be given to Ms. Whittemore and a

list of donation sources for local food to use in her lessons. The Springfield Coop has offered assistance to her by offering members of the Coop to earn member-hours by helping out.

### 30+5 Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey Results and BMI Results

For the third year in a row, the staff handed out a physical activity and food preference survey to students in Riverside Middle School and State Street and Windsor Schools. 322 kids filled out the survey this year, and the answers are a little upsetting in some categories. More kids are saying "No" to questions like, "Do you have a desire to be more physically active?" and "Do you have a desire to eat healthier?" The overwhelming majority still knows that fruits and veggies are healthier than fries. But what are they eating for lunch? Deli is the most popular, followed by pizza, then hot lunch, then salad bar. The reason most given for not being more physically active is, "Don't have time," and the numbers of children playing outside regularly have dwindled. If you'd like a full print-out of the questions and answers, e-mail [dfinnegan@svahec.org](mailto:dfinnegan@svahec.org).

The BMI results for this year are:

Riverside Middle School	Total # Measured	At Risk BMI 85-95 percentile		Overweight BMI > 95 percentile		Underweight BMI < 5 percentile	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade						3	3
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	81	19	23	13	16	2	2
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	95	13	14	27	28	0	0

### Various Presentations

30+5 did a variety of presentations in the last few months informing how their program promotes physical activity and nutrition in the schools and their plans to move to elementary schools. Presentations were given at VT FEED functions at both Billings Farm and Champlain College and for AHEC Nursing Grand Rounds over all VIT sites in Vermont, and to the Southern Vermont AHEC Board of Directors.

### VT FEED Workshop

30+5 is sponsoring a Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day) workshop for cafeteria employees from Windsor, Bellows Falls, and Springfield. The program secured \$1,500 in donations from local sources to help send 30 workers on August 19 and 20, 2009. This 4-hour workshop will familiarize participants in handling, storage, and preparation of fresh produce. All workers will receive a \$50 stipend to attend.

### 30+5 and the Nutrition Committee

30+5 continues to attend the Springfield Schools' Nutrition Committee meetings. We are accompanying them in their efforts to offer healthy school foods. There are no more meetings this school year. 30+5 will increase participation on these committees.

The "30+5" Intervention is a Rural Health Services Outreach project dedicated to encourage increased physical activities and healthier food choices. "30+5" is funded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration with matching contributions from consortium partners in the Springfield and Windsor communities.

