

# Landulph School Healthy Newsletter

September 2009

Welcome to the first healthy schools newsletter of the new academic year. The newsletter was started in February and is a great vehicle for sharing information about many issues which affect the health of our children and families. Landulph School is striving to maintain an environment, which promotes health and well being for all our pupils, staff and families. We support the link between health, behaviour and achievement; which is about creating happy and healthy children, who do better in learning and life. This year, we will be working towards an award called "Healthy Schools Plus". To find out more, please visit their website [www.healthyschools.gov.uk](http://www.healthyschools.gov.uk)



## **Are you getting enough....Exercise???**

Exercise has many health and psychological benefits, and best of all; it is a great way for families to enjoy doing fun things together. The most important benefit is that exercise burns up excessive energy that would otherwise be stored as fat. If you are very inactive, even normal amounts of food can lead to weight gain. Many people think that you only burn calories during activity, in fact exercise raises your metabolic rate for many hours afterwards, continuing the energy-burning process.

One of the key messages we give the children is that moving is a great way to keep healthy. Our bodies were built for action, not for sitting in front of the TV! Using energy adds strength to your body, is great fun, helps you to relax, and makes your heart and lungs work better. You'll feel better in your mind and body.

## **Exercise makes you feel good**

If you lead an active life, you have a reduced risk of suffering from depression. Exercise causes your body to produce a brain chemical transmitter called serotonin, which leads to improved mood, reduced anxiety and makes you feel better about yourself. Physical activity is also an excellent way of combating stress and it helps you sleep!

## **Did you know??**

Many people who suffer depression have found that regular physical activity improves their mood and decreases their need for medication.

**Children have loads of energy they need to expend, and it can be harnessed to do fun, safe, physical activities.**

## **How active does my child need to be?**

Children and young people should do at least 60 minutes of at least moderately intensive activity every day.

Moderate intensity activity means when you are exercising, your heart beats faster, your body starts to feel warmer or a little sweaty and you breathe more deeply, but you are still able to speak comfortably whilst exercising.

Children are programmed to play and have fun and they can be active in hundreds of ways. They can skip, skate, stretch, swim, walk, run, leap, jump, jog, chase, bounce, cartwheel, dance, climb, balance, sprint, catch, kick, dive.....

As parents, we can try and encourage our children to be more active by aiming to limit screen time to less than two hours a day. My work with the weight management team in Plymouth has highlighted this as a significant barrier for many families, as the average time many children currently spend watching television, using the computer, playing on games consoles, is more than 5 hours a day.

## How active do adults need to be?

For general health benefits, adults should do at least moderately intensive physical activity on five or more days of the week for at least 30 minutes a day. You DON'T have to go to the GYM or do a vigorous SPORT. Simply doing what you usually do, but in a way that uses A BIT MORE ENERGY will make a HUGE DIFFERENCE!! You will notice a difference in just a few weeks.

Activities such as walking to school, work or shops, climbing the stairs and cycling are all moderately intensive physical activities and count towards your quota for the day. Also you don't have to do 30 minutes all in one go. Shorter bursts of 10-15 minutes a few times a day are just as good. So go on SWING YOUR THING! One of the best exercises for improving breathing, stamina and balance is skipping-that's why boxers do it. Build up to 10 minutes continuous skipping.

GET SWEATY! Put on some energetic music and dance. Probably the most fun and the best exercise there is.

## Run in England

Run in based on the philosophy of locally accessible running for all, with groups being created for women, mixed sex groups, schools, workplaces and families. The aim is to create a social environment in which **any fitness level** can participate at their **own level** and to offer **achievable goals and activities** to **enhance health and life**. We are exploring the possibility of setting up a group in Landulph to support the school and local community. Please contact me for further information or register your interest with Marie, and I will let you know of future developments. For further information about run in England, visit the website [www.runinengland.co.uk](http://www.runinengland.co.uk)

## Lunchbox Ideas

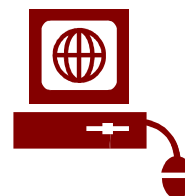
Almost half of the children in this country take a packed lunch to school, but making a packed lunch every day in the rush before school, can become a real nightmare. Packed lunch can often be seen as a healthy option but in practical terms this is often wishful thinking.

A healthy lunchbox should

- Help to improve your attention, behaviour and learning in the afternoon
- Provide one third of your child's daily requirements of nutrients
- Contain protein to keep your child alert, complex carbohydrates for slow release energy, protein and calcium for growth, fat for staying power, and fruit and vegetables for vitamins and minerals.

Visit the following sites for great ideas about how to create a healthy lunchboxes which are tasty and your child will enjoy and eat!!

- [www.netmums.com/food.lunchboxes](http://www.netmums.com/food.lunchboxes)
- [www.annabelkarmel.com](http://www.annabelkarmel.com)
- [www.food.gov.uk/toplunchboxtips](http://www.food.gov.uk/toplunchboxtips)



If you are a new parent, please have a look at some of the previous editions of the newsletter which can be found on the school website. As always, please give me your comments and suggestions for any topics or issues you would like me to discuss. Please contact me either via school or when you see me during school pick up if you would be interested in supporting the healthy schools committee. Please let me have any of your lunchbox ideas and recipe ideas for the next month's newsletter.

## Water in school

Thank you for your support in sending your child into school with a water bottle for use during the school day. Please could I remind you that in order to benefit from the health advantages water offers, these bottles do need to contain only water. Please could flavoured water and squashes be kept for break or lunchtimes?