



CROSSROADS

A CCCSIG Publication Where Health, Safety & Schools Come Together.

• February 2012 •

CCCSIG promotes a safe and healthy working environment for Contra Costa County school district employees.

Annual Employee Health & Safety Recognition Program

Do you know of a school district employee who has inspired or lead others to be healthier or safer? CCCSIG is currently seeking nominations for employees who have demonstrated a commitment to employee health and safety.

Who is eligible?

Member school district employees

How will the award recipient be recognized?

One nominee will be selected. The award package for the selected nominee will include:

- A certificate of recognition
- A \$25 gift card to a local health foods store
- A feature article in Crossroads newsletter and on the CCCSIG website (with permission from winner)

How do I nominate an individual?

Please complete a nomination form which is located on our website by clicking [here](#). Nominations must be submitted by 5 p.m. on April 2, 2012 in order to be eligible for consideration.

Any questions related to the nomination or selection process should be directed to Abbie O'Toole at 1-866-922-2744 ext. 235 or aotoole@cccsig.org.

Suggested Uses for Crossroads:

- 5-minute health and safety brief at staff meetings.
- Place a copy in your Injury and Illness Prevention Plan binder.

Smart Tips for Heart Health

February is American Heart Month. Consider protecting your ticker! Did you know that most risk factors for heart disease can be eliminated or reduced by a healthy lifestyle? Follow these tips to lower your risk:

- Choose healthful foods including plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grains
- Minimize your sodium intake (consume less than 2,300 mg/day)
- Exercise regularly
- Quit smoking
- Monitor your blood pressure and cholesterol. Call your health plan to schedule these screenings today!

off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



Safety Best Practice: Designated Areas for Hanging Backpacks

By: Steve Webber, CCCSIG

As schools become more and more crowded, classroom space comes at a premium. It is hard to find room for classic standbys such as a reading corner, let alone the extra desks that come with larger classroom sizes. Keeping your school classroom well organized is crucial to keeping you and your students safe and on task. A tidy classroom minimizes distractions caused by clutter and tripping hazards.

Safety Best Practice: Wall of Backpacks

Some of the biggest space-wasters in a classroom are backpacks and coats. Often, these things are thrown over the backs of chairs, where they inevitably slide off, or are put directly on the floor. Either way, they become a big trip hazard in the classroom. Get them up and off the floor by hanging hooks on the wall specifically for backpacks and coats. A backpack/coat wall keeps these items off the floor, which enhances safety and maintains organization.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend Green Valley Elementary (SRVUSD) for doing your part in creating a clutter free and safe environment for your staff and students by supplying outdoor backpack hooks!

If you would like to share your site's Safety Best Practice, contact Abbie O'Toole at aotoole@cccsig.org.



Outdoor backpack hooks at Green Valley Elementary





To be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness. —Bertrand Russell

Meal in Minutes!

Pasta with Zucchini, Sultanas & Pine Nuts

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 medium zucchinis
- 1 clove minced garlic
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2-3 Tbsp Marsala
- 1/4 cup sultanas (golden raisins)
- 2 Tbsp pine nuts
- 8 oz. egg pappardelle
- 3 Tbsp freshly grated Parmesan
- small bunch fresh parsley, chopped



Preparation

1. Heat the butter and oil in a saucepan. Cut zucchini into round slices; add to pan along with garlic, salt and pepper. Cook over a medium-low heat for ~45 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. While cooking the zucchini, warm the Marsala, pour it over the sultanas and let them plump, ~15 min.
3. Once the zucchini are cooked, add the sultanas and their juices. Stir.
4. Toast the pine nuts until golden brown.
5. Cook the pasta according to package directions. Add the zucchini mixture, pine nuts, parmesan and parsley. Gently toss and enjoy!

Makes 6 servings

Source: www.kp.org

Nutrition Facts (per serving):

Serving Size = 1/6 of recipe

Calories: 261	Fat: 8g
Sodium: 337mg	Protein: 8g
Cholesterol: 7mg	Fiber: 3g

Ask the Health & Safety Experts

Foods for Dry Skin?

Q. My skin gets very dry in the winter and someone suggested that I take fish oil or flaxseed oil capsules. Will these help my skin? If not, what food(s) will help to combat dry skin?

A. The kind of dry skin that you are describing is most likely being caused by the dry heat that you are being exposed to by being indoors during the winter. The only dietary recommendation that has been proven to help with this is to increase your fluid intake. The best source of fluids for this would be water. You also get some fluids from fruit, vegetables and soups. Of course there are also things outside of your diet that you can do to help with your skin.

There are numerous health benefits to increasing your consumption of omega-3 fatty acids, but improving dry skin is not one of them. This does not necessarily mean that it won't help your skin; it just means that it has not been proven to do so. According to the American Heart Association, research has shown that omega-3 fatty acids

- decrease risk of heart arrhythmias,
- decrease triglyceride levels,
- decrease growth rate of atherosclerotic plaque,
- lower blood pressure (slightly).

The recommendation is to get your omega-3 fats from fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, lake trout, herring, sardines, and albacore tuna at least twice a week. Children and pregnant and nursing women may be at increased risk of exposure to the mercury in fish, so these recommendations would not be suitable for them.

Source: www.medicinenet.com

Toning Shoes Fact vs. Fiction

By: Mike Griffith, CCCSIG

“Tone your muscles, accelerate healthy weight loss, make it easy to get in shape!” -www.skechers.com

In 2009, the shoe industry started one of the latest fitness crazes with the introduction of toning shoes. The basic design is a rounded sole beneath the heel and forefoot, which serves to de-stabilize the body while walking, forcing the wearer to use core and stabilizer muscles to compensate. It is claimed that the use of additional muscles is said to not only tone your body, but to increase the amount of calories burned, thus promoting weight loss.

A recent study commissioned by the American Council on Exercise at the University of Wisconsin, Lacrosse set out to determine if toning shoes actually provided the advertised benefits. The research team compared toning shoes from Reebok, Skechers, and MBT, against standard running shoes during medium and fast walking speeds on flat and inclined surfaces. While the subjects were walking, their muscle usage was monitored at various sites on the lower body and torso. Upon completing the trials the results showed no significant difference in muscle usage between any of the toning shoes and running shoes.



So what if you already own toning shoes and have experienced good results? While the toning shoes do not increase the effectiveness of a walking workout, they do not decrease it either, meaning that you are still burning calories and still getting a workout. The bottom line is, if toning shoes are comfortable on your feet, and you like walking in them, stick with them! Just remember, there is no substitute for consistent exercise when it comes to staying in shape!