



Community Programs

1st serving of the ewba newsletter!

Welcome to our 1st newsletter, celebrating some of the fantastic activities in our communities of Murray Bridge and Morphett Vale.

eat well be active Community Programs has been working hard with family day care, child care centres, schools, preschools, youth centres, local councils and community agencies since late 2005.

Our stakeholders have made many changes to support healthy eating, active play and develop more active environments. Key messages (seen below) and promotional displays for 0-5's and primary schools have been embraced by all and Youth Peer leaders are working on new messages for their fellow students.

Snapshots from our schools and communities showcase the practical changes and community energy for positive healthy food experiences, active play and building relationships to support physical activity and healthy eating options with the Aboriginal community.

As we fast approach the festive season the ewba team wishes everyone a safe, happy and relaxing Christmas time. Many thanks to all our Stakeholders and hard working Action Group members. We look forward to working with you all in 2009.

Marian McAllister & Nadia Masterson
Project Managers

Our highlights for 2008

Key action in under 5's settings

- Family Day Care developed their own physical activity policy to complement their existing healthy eating policy
- All pre-schools and child care centres have developed their own healthy eating policies
- 'Talking to Families about Nutrition and Active Play' training and manual delivered to 20 preschool, childcare and health service staff
- 30 'Active Packs' for home loan, with active toys and parent resources, given to child care, preschools and Family Day Care
- Over 20 water facilities installed or upgraded

What's been happening in primary schools?

- ¾ of schools have developed a healthy eating policy
- 2/3 of schools have a classroom fruit, veg & water break
- 10 schools have added playground line markings
- 13 schools have built edible gardens
- 50 students trained as ewba peer leaders
- Over 350 teachers attended Physical Activity training
- Canteens have contributed to a ewba recipe book
- Over 30 water facilities installed or upgraded
- 20 schools involved in the 'Safe Routes to School' program
- 7 schools registered with 'Active After School Communities' program

Youth & Community highlights

- 66 secondary students trained as ewba peer leaders
- 'Nutrition Wellbeing' sessions for 158 school staff
- 26 early childhood, schools & agencies have become 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here' sites
- Nutrition training and manual for over 50 Youth Workers
- Improvements & student involvement in a local park redevelopment
- Delegation from the Australian Health Promoting Schools Conference visited ewba Murray Bridge to hear about our programs.

Talking to families about nutrition & active play

Research shows the tremendous importance of the role of the family in supporting young children to enjoy nutritious foods, and develop lifelong enjoyment for participation in active play and physical activities. Building relationships with parents and caregivers is fundamental to early childhood settings, with these staff being well positioned to be positive role models and support families in relation to healthy eating and being active at play.

To support early childhood workers in this role, *eat well be active* Morphett Vale ran training workshops and provided the resource for early childhood workers on 'Talking to Families about Nutrition and Active Play'. *ewba* made additions to an existing, useful resource ("Talking to Families about Nutrition"), originally developed by Gowrie Adelaide, Noarlunga Health Services and the Children's Health Development Foundation. The renamed resource includes additional sections on active play, impact of screen time on activity levels and communicating with hard-to-reach families.

Melissa Alyward, Director of **Emu Children's Centre Inc.**, whose staff completed the training, reported all staff enjoyed and valued the training. Melissa commented the workshops "reinforced what staff did know about nutrition & active play and what they could put forth to parents". She reported the workshop and resource were very practical & gave staff the confidence to share this key information with parents through planned and opportunistic discussions.

Local primary students "Fit to Lead"

"Fit to Lead" in primary schools is the latest peer-based education offered by *eat well be active*. "Fit to Lead" was developed for high school girls, by Melanie Smith & Sandy Alston from Children's Health Development Foundation in 1997. *ewba* modified the program to suit upper primary school students.

The program teaches students practical ways to conduct physical activities for their peers, as well as leadership and communication skills. A key component of the training was trialling and developing lunchtime games suitable for children of different ages.

In 2008, 5 *ewba* schools completed the "Fit to Lead" primary school training and now over 50 students have become leaders at their school. The leaders will be in full swing in 2009, with each school receiving a Physical Activity equipment pack to support their activities.

Reading, writing and...radishes!

John Morphett Primary School students have been learning in and out of the classroom this year, with the addition of a new vegie patch. Principal Paul Megson reports the garden has provided many learning experiences, including growing, picking and tasting a bumper crop of radishes.



Garden-based learning is becoming a recognised education tool in schools. John Morphett students were involved in the design and measurement of the vegie patch, which includes a planting bed for each class, sensory garden and chook house. The costing was also computed in the classroom, factoring in recycled bricks from around the school. Principal Megson credits a whole of school commitment to the garden's success, which has transformed a previously unused area of the school.

Throughout the year, students have harvested a number of crops including carrots, broccoli, beetroot, and the recent radishes. Taste testing washed vegies straight from the patch, has proved very popular. Several students have also brought in siblings and family after school to share the produce. Research suggests that creating a desire to taste vegies is a positive "first step" in developing healthier eating habits among children. (*Morris et al. 2001*).

Most of the ongoing support has come from students and staff however families have also helped out over weekends and holidays. Principal Megson admits watering during the summer will be an issue, but is confident vegies can be replanted next year, and other new features added such as a work farm. While a consistent effort is required to maintain the garden, Principal Megson is enthusiastic about recommending vegie gardens to other schools - "If they think it will work for them, the school should go for it"

Get up
be active

be active
at
play every day

Drink more
Water

Eat fruit
and
vegetables

Youth lead the way

The Youth Leadership Program is designed to increase Youth action and leadership on issues that affect their healthy eating and active living choices, both within the high school setting and their local communities. The program recognises that young people are capable of contributing to and supporting positive change and gives them the skills and knowledge to make these changes.

The program involves training a core group of young people in a school to develop their own projects and action plans to promote healthy eating and regular physical activity to young people in their school. *ewba* also provides ongoing mentorship and student resources as well as funding to assist the student's implementation plan. This year the program has been run in **Murray Bridge High School, Unity College** and **Woodcroft College**, covering both *ewba* communities. Some added benefits to students involved in the program include the development of practical skills in teamwork, communication and leadership, increased understanding of the environmental, political, physical and social aspects that affect healthy eating choices and being active and understanding social marketing approaches to health promotion. The students will present their projects at the Youth Leadership Forum on December 2nd.



Student Krystal Gillespie from Murray Bridge High commented "I've really enjoyed being able to make positive changes around the school and provide more opportunities for healthy activities for other students".

Aboriginal Health Fair Day

The November 14th was the Aboriginal Health Fair Day at the Murray Bridge Race Course. This is an important annual event that seeks to connect our Community with valuable information and services available in the region. The day includes fun (con't)

(con't) activities for school groups and community members including SANFL handball competition, a bungy trampoline and the "Dreamtime Trail" that passes by all the Service Provider stalls. The event is fully catered for community members and students and this year *eat well be active* Murray Bridge was involved in providing healthy food options including barbecued Coorong Mullet, low fat burgers with fresh salad on high fibre rolls, fresh fruit skewers and spring water.

Kindy kids learn and grow



4 yr old Fabbian Rigney waters the corn seedlings – the start of the Murray Bridge South Kindy garden.

Murray Bridge South Kindergarten has been involved with several *ewba* activities throughout 2008 and is represented on our local under 5 action group. The Kindy has a dedicated focus to healthy eating and follows the 'Right Bite' recommendations as preparation for the children's transition to school.

South Kindy children are now involved in the planning and development of a vegetable garden, which has been linked to the SACSA learning area 'Understanding Our World'. The key idea is that children develop a sense of responsibility for their natural environment. Here their learning will involve contributing to the development of their natural environment with a focus on vegetables.

The garden project will involve the children at all levels from brainstorming possibilities for the garden, purchasing products such as seeds and seedlings, planting and maintaining the garden and of course picking, eating and cooking their produce.

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play everyday

Drink more
Water

Eat fruit
and vegetables

Active Postcards

As part of an evaluation initiative, local primary school students were recently invited to draw a 'postcard', to show what physical activity changes had been introduced to their school because of *eat well be active* Community Programs.

Six schools across Morphett Vale and Murray Bridge were invited to be involved. A total of 102 entries were received for the artwork stage of the evaluation project and 5 winners were selected.

Associate Professor Fiona Verity from Flinders University and Dr Michelle Jones *ewba* Evaluation Coordinator were the judges. The winning entries were chosen based on how well the question was answered and the use of colour and creativity.

The winning designs have been printed on the front of a postcard, which has been distributed to year 5, 6 & 7 students and their parents in those schools. On the reverse side of the postcard, students are asked to answer 4 key questions about 'being active' at school and in the home.

The students' and parents' responses to these questions will be analysed and themes identified and reported. The outcomes will be combined with those from an earlier healthy eating focus. Thanks to the students, schools and parents for their participation. The winning designs are:



Joel from Mypolonga PS



Yeong from Prescott PS



Jessica from Coorara PS



Christopher from Flaxmill PS



Tristan from Callington PS

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<http://www.health.sa.gov.au/PEHS/branches/health-promotion/hp-eat-well-be-active.htm>

Implemented by Southern Primary Health of Southern Adelaide Health Service and Murray Mallee Community Health Service of Country Health SA



Government of South Australia

SA Health

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be active

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at play everyday

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Water

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