

Soda Free Summer Makes Big Splash in Six Bay Area Counties



After learning to “rethink their drink,” youth were eager to dump soda bottles and cans into a toxic waste bin at this year’s **Soda Free Summer** kick-off held at Tennyson Gardens in Hayward. Nutrition Services educated community members on the negative effects of drinking soda and other sugary beverages.

Going soda free seems to resonate with Alameda County residents. Last year Alameda County Nutrition Services launched the first ever **Soda Free Summer** social marketing campaign that encouraged residents to reduce or eliminate the consumption of sugary drinks. Forty two percent of participants responded to that challenge and reduced or eliminated soda in their diet.

This year’s campaign was bigger and better than ever with the addition of five Bay Area counties including Marin, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara. To help promote the community-based campaign throughout Alameda County, Nutrition Services worked with a variety of organizations including, day camps, dental offices, YMCAs, faith-based organizations, Oakland Parks and Recreation, Girls Inc., Youth Uprising, and the American Diabetes Association.

Both years, the campaigns were made possible by a generous grant from Kaiser Permanente.

Community leaders and residents gathered on Saturday, June 14 at Tennyson Gardens in Hayward to kick-off Alameda County’s second **Soda Free Summer** campaign. Adults signed up to participate in the campaign pledging to reduce or eliminate their soda intake for the summer. “I had to do something. My son was waking up in the middle of the night drinking soda, not to mention having soda for breakfast and lunch,” said Maria Limas, a concerned Hayward mom. “**Soda Free Summer** is a great help in making my family healthier.”

See Soda Free Summer on page 2

Nutrition Services Has Exciting Year Planned For Oakland School Students

School is back in session and Nutrition Services is gearing up to partner with 32 Oakland schools for another exciting year of nutrition education and health promotion.

We are proud to kick-off a year-long “Fruits and Vegetables” program with interventions and planned activities like art projects, writing lessons, and math activities that support students’ writing and arithmetic skills while reinforcing the importance of eating fruits and vegetables. In addition, Nutrition Services will partner with Oakland Unified School District again to provide Harvest of the Month – a popular program that allows students to taste test seasonal produce in the classroom, learn fun facts and participate in health-related activities.

“Our dietitians and nutrition assistants are looking forward to expanding their traditional roles in the schools by starting various pilot projects and encouraging principals and teachers to fully implement the district-wide School Wellness Policy,” said Diane Woloshin, R.D., M.S., director, Nutrition Services. “By doing that, we can help make school grounds healthier environments for the students.” ■



Soda Free Summer (continued from page 1)

Many participated in the soda buy back program in which a can or a bottle of soda was traded in for a T-shirt, a wrist band, and a chance to win prizes, like bicycle helmets, blankets, and skateboards. Fun activities, including lawn bowling using soda bottles filled with sugar as pins, nutrition bingo, hula hoop contests, and nutrition relay games engaged children and adults alike. Several displays educated the participants on the hidden amounts of sugar in beverages. Water was creatively served with slices of cucumber, lemon, or lime which enticed even those who usually dislike water.

“My mom wants us to be healthier, so it’s good,” said Nicholas Limas, Maria’s son. “The cucumber and lemon water is good. I like it. Me and some of my friends are going to have a **Soda Free Summer**.”

To culminate the event, participants took their “buy back” cans and bottles of soda and dumped them into a “toxic waste” barrel, officially declaring that they would be soda-free.

Within the faith-based community, Nutrition Services shared the soda free gospel with many churches as special **Soda Free Sundays** were promoted from the pulpit and following services. Some of the participating churches included East Oakland Deliverance Center, St. Benedicts Catholic Church, St. Columba Catholic Church, Downs Memorial United Methodist Church, Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church, Voices of Hope, Miraculous, Allen Temple Baptist, Beebe Memorial Cathedral, Shiloh Christian Fellowship, and Glad Tidings Church of God In Christ.

In addition, trained community leaders and parish nurses took the **Soda Free Summer** message to the congregations and vacation bible school teachers were excited about the variety of materials available for them to use.

Terry Holloway, a soda free advocate from Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church claimed, “Since Nutrition Services spoke to our congregation, people keep telling me they no longer drink soda.”

Overall, the community response to the campaign has been overwhelmingly positive. The next step — **Soda Free...for life!**

For more information on the **Soda Free Summer** campaign, visit www.healthylivingforlife.org or call Nutrition Services at 510-595-6454. ■

SEPTEMBER

22 Family Day – “A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children”

Sponsored by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, this event ask you to link up with your district’s lead and promote to parents the benefit of family meals.

For more information, visit: www.CASAFamilyDay.org. You can download “The Importance of Family Dinners IV” — a 28 page booklet that outlines the benefits of eating family meals.

OCTOBER

1 Alameda County Resource Guide Info Fair

San Leandro Marina Community Center
15301 Wicks Blvd, San Leandro
8:30 a.m. – noon

An event for nutrition and health workers to learn about community resources. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with panel presentations at 9:00 p.m. Tabling is scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon.

For more information contact Norma Brown at Norma.Brown@acgov.org.

29 The 10th Annual Health and Resource Fair for Seniors

Silliman Activity Center, 6800 Mowry Ave., Newark, CA
10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Margrith Reichmuth, 510-578-4844



Alton and Kia-Symone Surrell enjoy the “Hotter Than July” block party held at Youth Uprising in East Oakland. Both Dad and daughter were soda free for the summer.

Hotter Than July Goes Soda Free

Nutrition Services recently partnered with Youth Uprising (YU), a non-profit organization in East Oakland dedicated to developing youth leadership, to spread the word about **Soda Free Summer** at its third annual “Hotter Than July” block party. YU embraced the campaign so much, the block party was declared a soda free event.

When block party participants saw the sugar shockers display at the Nutrition Services booth, they were amazed to see how much sugar is in a 20-ounce soda. They were also asked to sample water flavored with fresh fruit including cucumbers, strawberries, lemons and limes. The fruit flavored water proved to be a healthy alternative to the sugary beverages on what was one of the hottest days of the year! More than 100 youth and adults committed to being soda free.

The Surrells were among those who pledged to rethink their drink and have a **Soda Free Summer**. Alton Surrell, aka Squeak, says Kia-Symone, his 10-year old daughter, encouraged the entire family to stop drinking sodas when she learned about the **Soda Free Summer** campaign in school last year. He says the whole family feels much better now that they are drinking more water.

Squeak is also one of the YU staff members who enthusiastically support the **Soda Free Summer** campaign. As the staff at the center model healthy lifestyles, the youth are inspired to change their behaviors.

Special thanks to Olis Simmons, Youth Uprising’s executive director. Nutrition Services is so excited to have YU as a community partner and looks forward to working with them on future projects. ■

Healthy Living Tips
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Extending Vegetables

Many firm vegetables (carrots, broccoli, asparagus, etc.) can be extended by wrapping a damp (not soaking) paper towel around the vegetables and placing it into a zipper-lock bag in the refrigerator.

Swinging Seniors

On May 14, a group of seniors were swinging, putting, and chipping at a golf course in Oakland, and enjoying every minute of it. Once again, Audree Jones-Taylor, director of the City of Oakland Parks and Recreation (OPR) arranged a fun-filled day for close to 100 seniors at the Chabot Golf Course.

The Chabot Golf Course coaching staff graciously provided instruction for the seniors, the oldest of which was 95. Many of the seniors had never held a golf club before. During this exciting day, transportation and a complimentary lunch were provided as well.

In April, Audree arranged for senior women to row with the Oakland Women’s Rowing Club at the Lake Merritt Boating Center. Both the Chabot Golf Course and the Boating Center are just two of the many destinations open to the community, that allow people to stay active.

Audree is committed to making sure that everyone, including seniors, is familiar with all of the fun activities that the City of Oakland offers. Whether you decide to go to the boathouse or to the golf course, Audree says: “go out and play the OPR way.”

For more information about OPR activities call 510-238-PARK or visit the website at www.oaklandnet.com/Parks to download a brochure. ■

Mother Garland Takes “Sugar Savvy” Presentation to Los Angeles Church Convention

After receiving training at Nutrition Services’ Sugar Savvy workshop in early May, Lillian Garland of the East Oakland Senior Center, went to Southern California to spread the **Soda Free Summer** message.

On May 22, Garland’s church, Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ, held its district convention in Los Angeles. Mother Garland, as she is respectfully known, presented the Sugar Savvy demonstration for about 70 participants. Mother Garland states: “If anybody needs this information, it’s the church members. A lot of the members are overweight and some of the children too. If we read the Bible it says that the Lord wants us to take care of our bodies. That means we have to eat right.”

Mother Garland says the participants were amazed at the amount of sugar they and their children regularly consume. Following the presentation, she was pleased to hear church members state how they were going to stop drinking sodas.

Mother Garland, a great example for promoting healthy behavior, has been an aerobic instructor at the East Oakland Senior Center since 2000, and drinks only one diet soda per week and plenty of water. She also works as the co-chair of the center’s Healthy Living Council, all at the youthful age of “70 plus.”

Last year, she presented the Secrets of Sodium demonstration to her church members, and says they are anxiously awaiting her next presentation.

Go Lillian! You are a trainer extraordinaire!! ■

La Clinica de la Raza Supports Soda Free Summer Campaign

La Clinica de la Raza, a community health center based in Oakland, CA, has provided affordable healthcare to Bay Area families for more than 37 years. With 26 locations, the center works to improve lives by offering quality services and education programs to multicultural and multilingual patients. That’s why after attending a Nutrition Services workshop and learning that the exciting **Soda Free Summer** campaign materials had been translated to different languages, La Clinica’s nutritionist, Joan Thompson, R.D., C.D.E., knew the campaign had to be launched at La Clinica.

“The workshop I attended was extremely well done,” says Thompson.

In fact, she was so impressed and enthusiastic about the program that upon returning to her office she created a **Soda Free Summer** exhibit using the workshop materials. “The materials from the workshop make for a really compelling and captivating display. I placed it outside the elevator so all the patients could see the sugar cubes and soda bottles.”

See La Clinica on page 5

That’s So Salsa!

- 6 medium-sized tomatoes, chopped
- ½ white onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons canned, diced mild chiles OR
- 1 small jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- Juice of 1 lime

Preparation:

- In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients.
- Serve with baked tortilla chips or as a dip for veggies.
- Refrigerate leftovers in a covered container. Use within two days.

New Healthy Living Today Highlight – Nutrition Services Goes Green

Each **Healthy Living Today** edition will now feature a “Green Tip” section that will offer helpful information food packaging, produce transport, the quality of food – and how these factors affect our planet. Watch for these helpful tips in upcoming issues and share them with your constituents.

“Green” Tip #1

Why is it better to buy produce locally?

- Produce is REALLY fresh: Produce purchased at a Farmer’s Market, for example, is usually harvested the day before it is sold.
- Local produce tastes better than when it’s shipped across country!
- Opportunity to try local varieties not available in large supermarkets.
- Helps support your local economy! Your money goes to a California farmer who buys in California and pays taxes in California.



Outdoor Advertising Helps Promote Soda Free Summer

BART stations and trains, billboards and AC Transit buses, were part of an outdoor advertising campaign promoting **Soda Free Summer** throughout Alameda County.



The campaign, made possible by local Measure A funds, utilized more than 25 billboards, including the very bright and contemporary LED and backlite boards, and 85 buses with interior cards and bus tails to spread the word about the **Soda Free Summer** campaign. Additionally, BART riders using the 19th Street, Fruitvale, Coliseum, 12th Street-City Center, and MacArthur stations were encouraged to be soda-free through advertising at each of those BART stations.



“The outdoor advertising helped promote **Soda Free Summer** by exposing hundreds of thousands of Alameda County residents to the campaign message,” said Diane Woloshin, R.D., M.S., director, Nutrition Services.

“In addition to the advertising, we have had tremendous support from community-based organizations, churches, youth organizations, Oakland’s Parks and Recreation Department who are helping to educate adults and youth about the importance of being soda free.”



According to Woloshin, the outdoor advertising campaign will continue into the fall as Nutrition Services unveils **Soda Free...for life!** billboards that encourage county residents to limit the consumption of sugary beverages all year long. Woloshin added: “We are all very excited about **Soda Free...for life!** and the long-term impact this effort will have on the health of our neighborhoods. The next goal is to see the entire state become soda free!”

For a complete listing of billboard locations, please visit www.healthylivingforlife.org. ■

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Alameda County Public Health Department

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La Clinica

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The display, which is close to three feet tall, generates lots of curiosity in the office. “It starts a conversation all by itself,” explains Thompson. “I see moms talking to their kids about it all the time.”

La Clinica did not promote **Soda Free Summer** to just their patients. Thompson also presented the campaign to other employees, challenging every department to be soda free. “I assigned one of our interns the job of creating 17 more displays for each department. Now employees at five different sites are seeing these presentations.”

Thompson quickly saw La Clinica departments respond to the promotion. The payroll department, for example, added **Soda Free Summer** brochures and log sheets to 600 employee pay stubs. In July, there was also a **Soda Free Summer** booth at La Clinica’s annual health fair.

Thompson’s excitement about the campaign is probably a result of the work she does. As a chronic disease specialist, she regularly counsels families with overweight children, teaching them to make healthier lifestyle choices. “I have always asked patients to evaluate how much soda they drink,” she said. “Although that was part of our standard assessment, we always need more programs that emphasize these messages. The **Soda Free Summer** campaign coincides nicely with what we’re doing at La Clinica.”

Thompson encourages other community partners to create interactive displays and promote the Nutrition Services campaigns among the populations they serve. For more information about La Clinica de la Raza, contact Joan Thompson at jthompson@laclinica.org or visit their website at www.laclinica.org. ■

Nutrition Services' Student Survey Reveals Youth Making Small But Significant Changes in Healthy Eating Behaviors

Nutrition Services staff work with hundreds of classrooms in more than 30 schools throughout the Oakland Unified School District to help students eat healthier and exercise. However, the big question is, are these efforts making a difference?

"We want to make sure we're making a difference in the lives of young people," said Jenny Wang, M.P.H., M.P.P., senior program specialist, and coordinator of Nutrition Services' school team. "It's important that we step back and evaluate what we're doing so we can make sure that our school programs remain effective."


To that end, Nutrition Services recently partnered with UC Berkeley's Center for Weight and Health to analyze survey data from students who were asked questions regarding their health habits and knowledge of nutrition and physical activity.

"We surveyed fourth grade students at the beginning and end of the 2008 school year," said Wang. "During the time between the two surveys, our staff worked with teachers to provide a series of programs encouraging healthy eating and increased physical activity among their students," she added. "The surveys asked the youth questions about what they ate, how much they were involved in physical activity and what they knew about nutrition."

According to Wang, the results were impressive. There was a statistically significant decrease in the amount of pastries, junk foods, soda and sweetened beverages the fourth graders consumed. "We are very pleased with the results because they correspond with two classroom nutrition education programs we provided — *Be Sugar Savvy and Smart Snacking*," added Wang.

Another positive finding was an increase in the students' knowledge of nutrition and physical activity. This shows they are developing the tools to make better choices in what they eat and how much they exercise.

"The changes in students eating habits and their increase in knowledge about nutrition are encouraging," said Wang. "We have more work to do, however, in a couple of key areas. We found no increase in fruit and vegetable consumption or in time spent being physically active. But it's a new school year, and we are ready to make a difference," she added. ■



Healthy Living Tips
...for life!

Saving Overripe Bananas

Rather than throwing away overripe bananas, try saving them until you have enough for your next muffin or banana bread recipe. Place the peeled overripe banana in a zipper-lock plastic bag and freeze. Add more bananas to the bag as they over ripen. When you are ready to bake with them, thaw the bananas on the counter until soft.

America on The Move

Help make September "STEPtember" by taking a few simple steps to a healthier way of life!

STEPtember is America On the Move's® national celebration that highlights the benefits of active living and healthy eating all month long. With obesity rates on the rise, making small, simple changes can help prevent the average weight gain of one to two pounds per year for adults.

America On the Move® urges you to take two small steps:

1. Move More – take 2,000 additional steps each day
2. Eat Healthy – reduce your daily calorie intake by just 100 calories each day

Register by September 30 at <http://stepember.americaonthemove.org>

to make lifestyle changes. By joining the STEPtember Challenge, you can receive daily nutrition and physical activity tips, track your progress online, and be eligible to win a \$2,500 grand prize. Mark your calendars so that you, your friends and family can get involved in the STEPtember Challenge and begin taking small steps to a healthier way of life.

A great way to increase your steps this fall is by participating in the 2008 East Bay Heart Walk, sponsored by the American Heart Association. The event will be held Thursday, September 25 at Snow Park in Downtown Oakland (20th Street and Harrison). To register, visit www.eastbayheartwalk.org. ■