



Living+Healthy

January/February 2011

Makeovers add better produce to stores

In an effort to improve the food environment in low-income neighborhoods, the Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store program has partnered with 10 convenience stores to make fresh produce more affordable, accessible and attractive to neighborhood residents.

This past fall, SHIP staff and a grocery store consultant helped stores procure affordable produce and increased the visibility of healthy foods through product displays and store layout improvements. Owners also received training on maximizing the shelf-life of fresh produce. Many stores now have a healthy “grab-and-go” section near cash registers to tempt customers to buy apples or bananas. Other stores have attractive meal displays stocked with healthy ingredients and will soon carry recipe cards.

Once stores got their “healthy makeovers,” SHIP staff, store owners and community partners hosted celebration events inviting residents to check out the improvements. In north Minneapolis, One Stop Gas Station and Lowry Food Market teamed up with the YMCA’s youth enrichment program to create their displays and market their new healthy food offerings. Similarly, Roosevelt High School students helped Flag Foods—a popular lunch destination for students—launch its store kick-off by giving students free apples.

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Returning play to recess

This winter and spring, “Recess Week” kick-offs will be celebrated across Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) to commence a new focus on students’ active play and game participation during recess. Recent recess observations at Minneapolis schools revealed that students spend a significant amount of time waiting in line or standing around talking rather than actively playing.

To remedy this, MPS’ SHIP staff initiated the Active Recess program at 13 elementary schools to maximize recess activities by providing game equipment, teaching children group games, and training staff on how to keep kids moving. To date, the program has affected 5,000 students across the district.

With schools strapped to provide adequate time for physical activity during the school day, every minute counts. Maximizing active play time has resulted in dramatic improvements at participating schools. Previously at Bethune Community School, children climbed over each other to play on two tire swings or waited in long lines to use one glide bar. Now, recess is filled with games of kickball, beanbag toss, touch football and plenty of space on play equipment. School administrators even doubled recess time from 10 to 20 minutes.



Active Recess also helps reduce behavioral incidents and injuries. According to Ryan Gibbs, assistant principal at Ramsey International Fine Arts School, group games have had the biggest impact. “It has been night and day. We were easily sending one or more kids to the nurse daily because they were crashing into each other because too many kids were on the equipment. With Active Recess, we haven’t sent anyone to the nurse so far.”

For more on Active Recess or other SHIP-related efforts at Minneapolis schools, please contact Lisa Alholm at 612-668-0861 or Lisa.Alholm@mpls.k12.mn.us; visit sss.mpls.k12.mn.us/HKFS.html.

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Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support staff are collecting sales data to determine if store owners are making a profit or at least breaking even on their produce. To boost sales and consumption of healthy foods, owners and staff will conduct another round of community outreach and store marketing in the spring.

The Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store program stemmed from assessments that revealed over 70 percent of stores in north Minneapolis did not comply with the produce component of the Minneapolis Staple Foods ordinance requiring stores to carry a minimum of five perishable produce items. For more information on this program, please contact Aliyah Ali at 612-673-3861 or aliyah.ali@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.



North Minneapolis resident, Nathan Wells, shows off the banana he won at VitaLife Pharmacy's kick-off event launching their new produce offerings.

Clinics doing more to help patients achieve healthy weight

The trusting relationship between medical providers and their patients can promote healthy living habits, yet only 31 percent of overweight and 72 percent of obese Hennepin County adults report ever receiving weight-loss advice from a healthcare professional (SHAPE 2006). SHIP staff from the cities of Minneapolis and Bloomington, and Hennepin County have teamed up to improve how clinics help patients stave off diabetes and other diseases caused by tobacco and obesity.

Under this new effort, clinic staff at 13 clinics now:

1. Assess risks factors such as being overweight and smoking with their patients;
2. Counsel and connect patients to resources to help them eat better, move more or stop using tobacco; and
3. Improve providers' follow-up on their patients' progress.

Clinics involved in this project have the flexibility to tailor this protocol to accommodate their specific needs. For instance, at the Neighborhood Involvement Program (NIP), which serves under-insured patients, providers now collect and discuss body mass index (BMI) with all adult patients. NIP staff also provide healthy living handouts and videos for patients and received training from an expert physician and dietician to enhance their counseling skills.

NIP and other clinics are referring patients to on-site or community-based resources such as weight management, cooking, or yoga classes. A web-based clearinghouse of healthy weight and tobacco resources will debut this March. This database, called MinnesotaHelp.info (<http://minnesotahelp.info>), will allow clinics to easily find resources that meet patients' interests and needs. For a list of participating clinics and a clinic toolkit, visit: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/ship-health-care-sites.asp>. For more information, contact Megan Ellingson at 612-673-3817 or megan.ellingson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Upcoming Events

The Role of Learning Environments in Building Effective Change

February 23rd
9:00-11:30 a.m.

A workshop on enhancing collaboration, available to Minneapolis SHIP partners and community leadership team members. For more information, contact Lara Tiede at 612-673-3815.

Good News Updates

- Last summer's efforts to get EBT (food support) at the Minneapolis Farmers Market and Northeast Farmers Market resulted in 501 customers using their food support for fresh, healthy food and a combined \$14,000 in extra income for local farmers.
- The Resident Council of Franklin Terrace, a Minneapolis Public Housing (MPHA) Authority building with 150 residents voted in January to go smoke-free. This is the third MPHA building to commit to smoke-free housing.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support at 612-673-2301 or email health.familysupport@ci.minneapolis.mn.us. Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may use a relay service to call 311 agents at 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

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