



Wheeling School Based Health Program Newsletter  
February 2020 ISSUE 3

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**February is National Heart Month – a great time to make sure your ticker is tickin’ properly.**



*Roses are Red,  
Violets are Blue,  
lets exercise daily,  
and eat right  
too!*

**Ways to Take Control of Your Heart Health**

You’re in the driver’s seat when it comes to your heart. Learn how to be heart healthy at any age.

**Don’t smoke.** Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. If you don’t smoke, don’t start. If you do smoke, learn how to quit!

**Manage conditions.** Work with your health care team to manage conditions such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. This includes taking any medicines you have been prescribed. Learning more about preventing and managing high blood pressure and high cholesterol is an important factor.

**Make heart-healthy eating changes.** Eat food low in trans-fat, saturated fat, added sugar and sodium. Try to fill at least half your plate with vegetables and fruits, and aim for low sodium options.

**Stay active.** Get moving for at least 150 minutes per week. You can even break up the 30 minutes into 10-minute blocks. Learning more about how to get enough physical activity is a great start to a healthier heart.



cdc.org



## Does Chicken Soup Help Treat a Common Cold?

Believe it or not, the answer is yes. Studies show that there is a connection between eating chicken soup and reducing inflammation. It is a nutritious brew that can improve health and promote hydration. Plenty of other liquids like water, Pedialyte or Gatorade should be also used.

[www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com)

## The FLU virus is Spreading in the U.S.

While folks are all fretting about the **coronavirus**, we need to not forget about the Influenza virus which is running rampant in the U.S. and killing 20 times as many people in this country. Influenza viruses travel through the air in droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or even breathes. You can get it by inhaling it in the air or by touching a surface upon which the virus has landed and then touching your eyes, nose and mouth. The CDC tracks these viruses and we are seeing A, B, C and H1N1 this year. Last year, we had cases of flu into the month of May. We teach the students not to touch their “T Zone” unless they wash their hands. That is, their eyes, nose and mouth area. Everyone is to sneeze into their sleeve and wash their hands frequently. Stay away from sick people or crowds if possible. These steps will all help to protect you and your family from getting the flu.

**Why do we get colds and flu in the Winter?** Our noses constantly secrete mucus. Viruses become trapped in the sticky mucus, which is perpetually moved by tiny hairs called cilia that line our nasal passages. We swallow the whole lot and our stomach acids neutralize the microbes. **But cold air cools the nasal passage and slows down mucus clearance. Viruses can now stick around for longer, trying to dig through the mucus to break into our body.** Once a virus has penetrated this defense mechanism, the immune system takes control of fighting off the intruder. Phagocytes, which are specialized immune cells, engulf and digest viruses. But cold air has also been linked to a decrease in this activity. Rhinoviruses actually prefer colder temperatures, making it difficult not to succumb to the common cold once the thermometer plummets.

[www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com)

**REST is important for healing and growing!** Did you know that the growth hormone is produced in the 4th stage of sleep? This is the hormone that helps sick children heal, brains hold onto knowledge learned in the day, and bodies to grow. If your child goes to bed late, even if they fall asleep the minute his/her head hits the pillow, their bodies will have less opportunity to spend as much time as needed in the 4th stage of sleep. Meaning that there is less time spent healing, growing, and retaining memories. The National Sleep Foundation has a great chart showing how much sleep your family should be getting in a 24 hour period (including naps). Being a child is not only physically exhausting, but emotionally exhausting. Their brains are working overtime to absorb and process social situations, information, observations, and their own assessments of each event. We adults need a break from the constant input of stimulation. However, children are still learning to listen to their own unique body cues and count on adults to help them find their rhythm. Schedule in a rest time each day for your child. Even if they no longer nap, they will benefit from an hour of quiet time reading, listening to mellow music, or quietly playing with toys. Quiet time can act almost as a time of meditation, helping children to recharge and their minds to rest. Get them off the “tablets and cell phones. They may not love the idea of “quiet time” but the benefits of this scheduled downtime in their day helps them to be at their best right until bed.

[www.naturalnurturer.com](http://www.naturalnurturer.com)



## **Toll of Internet and Social Media Use on Teens**

Smartphones, and social media may be taking a big toll on teens' mental health, a new survey of collected data on the subject shows.

Dr. Elia Abi-Jaoude, a staff psychiatrist at The Hospital for Sick Children and Toronto Western Hospital, and his colleagues uncovered patterns across multiple studies:

- In one U.S. study, the rate at which kids and teens arrive in hospitals due to suicidal thoughts or attempts "almost doubled between 2008 and 2015, with the highest increase among adolescent girls," the researchers noted.
- U.S. overdose rates for young people ages 10 to 18, which has previously been on the decline, "increased substantially from 2011 to 2018, primarily among girls," another study found.
- At the same time "the proportion of [U.S.] young people who between the ages of 13 and 17 years who have a smartphone has reached 89%, more than doubling over a 6-year period," the data review said. At the same time, "70% of teenagers use social media multiple times per day, up from a third of teens in 2012."

Of course, it's tough to tell whether this rise in social media and smartphone use is actually causing an increase in rates of mental health issue among teens.

However, other data seems to suggest it might be. One study conducted in the United States, the other in Germany -- which found that kids who spent more time on Facebook were more prone to negative states such as envy and insecurity about their status, compared to others in their online network. Much of this was centered around "FOMO" -- fear of missing out, those studies showed.

Another "systematic review of 20 studies found that use of social media was associated with body image concerns and disordered eating," the research team reported. In one study, "female participants reported more negative mood after just 10 minutes of browsing their Facebook account," Abi-Jaoude's group said.

Social media "addiction" is also an emerging problem, and "several cross-sectional studies have shown that high proportions of youth appear to be addicted to their smartphones," the Canadian researchers said. Seven other studies suggest that this kind of heavy reliance on smartphones is tied to a higher risk for suicidal thoughts or self-harm in school-age kids and teens, they added.

Numerous studies have also found that as hours per day increase on smartphones, laptops and other "screens," rates of happiness, life satisfaction and self-esteem fall. Excessive screen time also seems to be eroding teens' ability to get good sleep, which might also have negative mental health effects, according to the researchers.

Abi-Jaoude's team stressed that an all-out ban on kids' smartphone use probably won't help. And in some respect the internet might even be of some benefit to teens seeking information on mental health.

However, excessive internet use may pose hazards. Therefore, the researchers suggest doctors should advise teens to reduce their social media use rather than stop it completely, and should encourage parents to be part of such conversations. Parents should talk with teens about appropriate smartphone use and work with them to reduce risks and set boundaries. They should also set a good example for smartphone use. Schools should develop appropriate smartphone use policies.

So, with good boundaries, social media and the internet is a wonderful resource for teens and adults. Yet, excessive use is demonstrating to be harmful and should not replace human interaction in our lives.

Resource: Health Day News