

### Physical Activity and Nutrition News



#### Greetings:

At a recent meeting, we were reviewing the data from last year's <u>Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)</u>. We learned that fruit and vegetable consumption, one of the key indicators to whether Vermonters are eating healthy foods, is lower than we would like it to be. It is recommended that children and adults eat at least two servings of fruit each day and at least three servings of vegetables. In 2015, 32% of Vermonters ate 2 or more servings of fruit per day, down from 35% in 2013. Vegetable consumption is even lower, although we saw a 2 point increase between 2013 and 2015: 20% of Vermonters ate 3 or more vegetables a day in 2015 compared to 18% in 2013. We are concerned about these numbers because we know consuming fruits and vegetables can protect against chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and many cancers, as well as help with weight control.

We need your help. In this newsletter you will see strategies to increase fruit and vegetable consumption aimed at each sector we work with: schools, communities and worksites. Use these as inspiration to help encourage your coworkers, students and neighbors to eat better. Together, we can strengthen these numbers and positively impact the health of our fellow Vermonters.

# Increasing Fruit and Vegetable Consumption at Work

Healthy eating improves overall wellness and decreases obesity and other chronic disease risk. Because most Vermont adults spend a large part of their week at work, worksites play an important role in promoting healthy eating and increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Worksites of all sizes can find a strategy



that fits their needs and the resources they have available to promote eating fruits and vegetables. Here are four possible strategies...

# School Gardens Help Students Get More Fruits and Vegetables

Everyone knows the old saying, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." Now research is indicating that healthy students are better learners, too. A significantly higher proportion of high school students who ate 5 or more fruits and vegetables a day (81%) got A's and B's in school than students who ate less than 5 fruits and vegetables a day (79%). More...



# Food is Medicine: Pilot Project Fills the Prescription

We all tend to listen a little closer when a health care provider suggests we make lifestyle changes to improve health, such as increasing physical activity or making



healthier food choices. However, when money is tight, healthier eating, especially eating more fruits and vegetables, can be challenging when these items appear to be more expensive than less healthy options. Vermont is currently piloting a program to address this challenge.

More...



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Vermont Department of Health: Physical Activity and Nutrition | susan.kamp@vermont.gov | http://www.healthvermont.gov







