



Teaching in the languages of our community: English, español, Português

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Rhode Island passed a law in 2005 that every school district is required to have a district health and wellness subcommittee. This subcommittee is charged with making recommendations on physical education curriculum and instruction, as well as on health education, nutrition, and physical activity.

The International Charter School has developed its own Health and Wellness Subcommittee. The mission for this committee is to promote health and wellness for students, parents, teachers, and community members. One of the goals for the committee is to develop a written action plan for health and wellness. This plan includes four focus areas: Nutrition, Physical Education, Health Education, and Physical Activity.

Outlined below are some programs and initiatives that ICS's has incorporated into the health and wellness plan.

1. Shape up Rhode Island (<http://www.shapeupri.org>): This is a state-wide program where staff are encouraged to participate in a exercise and weight loss competition. Categories include pedometer steps, exercise minutes and weight loss. (February – May).
2. TAR Wars. (<http://www.tarwars.org/online/tarwars/home.html>) TAR Wars is a tobacco-free education program created by the American Academy of Family Physicians and coordinated locally by the Rhode Island Medical Society. It is presented by physicians who visit fifth-grade classrooms through out the state to talk with students about the importance of being tobacco-free. Presentations are scheduled January through March of 2010. The curriculum features physician volunteers leading classroom discussions about the short-term, image-based consequences of tobacco use, the cost of using tobacco products, and how to think critically about tobacco advertising. (February)
3. Draw-a-Breath Program (<http://www.lifespan.org/hch/services/asthma/programs/drawabreath/default.htm>). This program is a non-profit education program for children, their parents, and family members. They provide families with the

- knowledge, skills, and tools to manage asthma effectively. The program was held in three languages in the Fall. (October 2009)
4. Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island's community speaker bureau. Memorial did a presentation to ICS staff on the physiological effect of stress and how to manage it. (February)
  5. Hasbro Children's Hospital Educational Series: Educational instructors speaking to ICS students about first aid concepts and having a healthy heart. (Jan/Feb)
  6. Annual Vision screening and referral. Annual program required by the Rhode Island department of Health. Screenings are conducted for children in grades 1-5 at ICS. Children in Kindergarten are required to have this screening by their pediatrician.
  7. Annual Hearing Screening and referral: Rhode Island School for the Deaf conducted required state mandated hearing screenings for children K-3. (December)
  8. Annual Dental Screening and referral: St. Joseph Health Services school based dental program will be screening children K- 5. This is a Rhode Island State Health regulation. This program should be taking place in the last trimester of the 2009 - 2010 school year.

Sincerely,

Health and Wellness Committee