

# ALASKA PTA



## Environment, Health, and Safety Newsletter

PTA was founded on the principle of advocating on behalf of all children in all areas of their life...home, school, and community. Since its beginning concerned citizens have been working to make positive changes in the health and safety of our children.

### The Mission of the PTA

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children;
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** comprises those aspects of human health, including qualities of life that are determined by physical, chemical, biological, social and psychosocial factors in the environment. It also includes the theory and practice of assessing, correcting, controlling and prevention those factors in the environment that can potentially affect adversely the health of present and future generations.



## HEALTH IS MORE THAN THE ABSENCE OF ILLNESS, OR DISEASE

### CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE

NUTRITION	WELLNESS	INJURIES
WHAT IS A HEALTHY DIET	MUCH MORE THAN THE LACK OF ILLNESS	ASSAULT POISONING PREVENTION

Numbering over 2.3 billion worldwide (ages 0-19) representing boundless potent child survival and development; hinge on basic needs to support life, among these, a safe healthy and clean environment is fundamental. Worldwide acute respiratory infections annually kill two million children under the age of five. Clean water and sanitation are essential to health.

Water is the transportation system on our bodies, moving nutrients and other needed materials to and within each cell. We need to make sure that a clean supply is readily available. Surface water can be contaminated by floods, sewage or not available at all. The average person needs 1 gallon per day. What would you do if you ran out of clean water? Most of us take indoor plumbing and fresh safe water for granted. However, many Alaskans do not have neither running water nor indoor plumbing.



## TEACH, LEARN, ENLIGHTEN

## THE CONCERN FOR WELLNESS



Obesity is a significant and growing threat to our public's health, not only in the adult population, but also among our children. Some of the impacts of obesity on health are type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol; breathing problems, sleep disturbances and psychosocial disorders.

Consider these staggering facts:

- Based on current estimates our next generation of children will be the first in U>S. history whose life expectancy is shorter than their parents due to the health impacts of obesity
- 70-8- % of overweight children will continue to be overweight or obese their entire lives
- The direct costs to taxpayers for obesity alone reached \$75 billion in 2003

The work didn't stop there...further research showed Alaska PTA that Nutrition requirements needed to play a key part in the obesity issues that were showing up in Alaska children. In 2003 the resolution **Nutrition Requirement** was passed at both the Alaska PTA and National PTA conventions. Following the passage of both of these important Resolutions, PTA's National Council of States, which includes representatives from all levels of the organization and from all the states, saw these as critical issues. A special task force was created to address the child and family health crisis in our nation now...Obesity.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans give science-based advice on food and physical activity choices for health. The 2005 edition remains current until the 2010 edition is released.

Listed below are fruits and vegetables with the reported highest levels of pesticide content. Please be sure to wash them thoroughly. The Environmental Work Group ranks these products in order with the worst of the bunch:

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Peaches            | 11. Lettuce           |
| 2. Apples             | 12. Potatoes          |
| 3. Sweet Bell Peppers | 13. Carrots           |
| 4. Celery             | 14. Green Beans       |
| 5. Nectarines         | 15. Hot Peppers       |
| 6. Strawberries       | 16. Cucumbers         |
| 7. Cherries           | 17. Raspberries       |
| 8. Pears              | 18. Plums             |
| 9. Grapes (Imported)  | 19. Grapes (Domestic) |
| 10. Spinach           |                       |

## WHAT IS A HEALTHY DIET?

The USDA dietary Guidelines describe a healthy diet as one that:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and
- Is low in saturated fats, *trans fats* cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars

The recommendations in the Dietary Guidelines are for the general public over 2 years of age. ([www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov))



### Nutrition Tidbits

Fruits and vegetables give you many of the nutrients that you need: vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, water, and healthy phytochemicals. Some are sources of Vitamin A, while others are rich in Vitamin C, folate, or potassium. Almost all fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and none have cholesterol. All of these healthful characteristics may protect you from getting chronic diseases, such as heart diseases, stroke, and some types of cancer. According to the usda; [www.mypyramid.gov/kids](http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids).

### What is a Serving?

Medium piece of fruit

¼ Cup dried fruit or vegetables

1 Cup of raw leafy vegetables

½ Cup of cut up or canned fruit

½ Cup cooked beans

Eating fruits and vegetables each day can help reduce your risk of obesity and high blood pressure! Eating fruits and vegetables is an important way to maintain your health.

## ALASKA SAFE KIDS



Protecting Kids from the number one kill-Unintentional Injuries is the purpose of Alaska Safe Kids in the Division of Public Health. Do you know the 10 leading causes of fatal injuries in the Alaska population? The Division of Public Health reports during 2002-2006 37 infants under the age of one year suffocated to death In addition 7 infants died from assault. These were not deaths due to Sudden Infant Syndrome, birth defects, or illness; each was a preventable death.

Kids between the ages of 1-4 years suffered a total of 17 deaths from motor vehicle traffic (MVT) accident, pedestrian accidents, and drowning.

The numbers for 5-9 year olds is 16; with drowning accounting for 10, and MVT with 6. The next age group is 10-14 with 21 MVT, 11 drowning, 12 assault, 11 suicide, 6 poisoning, 7 ATV, 5 bicycle, 5 pedestrian deaths; total of 73 children in Alaska.

As kids age through the life span until age 65 the number one cause of fatal injuries is Suicide; 175 for 15-24 year olds; 122 age 25-34; 138 for 35-44 year olds; 124 for 45-54, year olds; 55-64 year old number only 57 deaths by suicide.

These are the numbers for 15-24 year olds with 467 preventable deaths:

1. Suicide
2. MVT
3. Assault
4. Poisoning
5. Drowning
6. Snow Machine
7. ATV
8. Falls/Hypothermia
9. Pedestrian
10. Bicycle





## Parents can help prevent injury deaths by

- Always cross the street at crosswalks, not between cars
- Stop at the street and look left, right and left again before crossing, or making a left turn
- Wear reflective clothing or backpacks
- Never shake a baby
- Lock fire arms, provide firearm safety training
- Wear bike, motor cycle, ATV, snow machine, ski snowboard and skateboard helmets
- Use properly secure seat restraints.

### A Silent Killer

CARBON MONOXIDE, CO is an odorless, colorless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuel burning appliances or engines. So if you use wood, charcoal, coal stove oil waste oil, kerosene, natural gas, propane gasoline, diesel in your home, you need to install CO alarms. Follow these recommendations:

- Adjacent to the room containing your boiler, water heater, furnace or other carbon based heating appliance
  - Include the floor above and the floor below
- Near the door to the garage, outside the kitchen and near all sleeping areas



## What you can do!

Cook food until it is done.

Teach your child basic safety rules.

Be aware of water usage-dripping faucets; turn off lights when you leave a room.

Do not unplug, remove batteries from smoke detectors and CO monitors.