



Family and  
Consumer Sciences

# Strengthening Oklahoma Families

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The *Evaluation of Coordinated School Health in Oklahoma* was called for by the Oklahoma State Department of Health in order to better understand the status of coordinated school health (CSH) in the state. A sample of eight elementary schools was utilized for the case-control study design. Four schools approximating CSH (model schools) were matched, based on demographic characteristics, to four schools self-acknowledging they are not implementing CSH (control schools). All were in or within close proximity of major metropolitan areas. Schools were provided a monetary incentive for their involvement. The study was conducted during the 2007-2008 school year.

Deana Hildebrand, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension nutrition specialist, said county Extension educators can become involved by being trained to facilitate the use of the School Health Index.

"Research shows that schools that use an outside facilitator have a greater success in making recommendations and following through with school health initiatives," she said.

The multi-method evaluation looked at both student outcomes and/practices of schools. Student outcomes included nutrition knowledge, attitudes and behaviors, level of physical fitness and academic achievement. The process evaluation investigated differences between model and control schools in levels of implementation, practices and perceived effectiveness of practices.

Several statistically significant changes occurred in students' nutritional knowledge and behaviors. Students in model schools demonstrated better understanding of foods with higher fat content, self-efficacy to choose healthier foods and self-reported consumption of fruits and vegetables compared to students in control schools. The changes are relevant in that consumption of high-fat,

fast foods, low consumption of fruits and vegetables and low levels of physical activity are contributors to the health issues of Oklahoma youth. The process evaluation revealed model schools were functioning at a higher level than control sites in implementing CSH. Model schools utilized health promotion programs and community resources to ensure success of health programs while control schools lack or underutilize resources to accomplish this. In addition, faculty and staff at model schools believed health promotion programs provided a positive effect on the environment in the school.

"In contrast, faculty and staff at control schools under-utilized or did not have access to outside resources," Hildebrand said. "They felt a strong need to focus on academics, which limited time to integrate health and safety programs."

Most compelling was the comparison of percent increase in Academic Performance Index (API) scores over a five-year period from 2002 to 2007. In each set of schools the model school had a greater percent increase in API scores compared to the demographically similar control school.

When asked, "What would you like state-level decision makers to know when considering the future of CSH in Oklahoma?" administrators in both model and control schools voiced need for funding. Model school administrators expressed the need for flexibility allowing local districts to design CSH programs that meet the needs of the local community, while control school administrators articulated health promotion programs should be offered to all schools in a consistent manner.

Based on these findings, it seems that time spent integrating coordinated school health into the school day was not detrimental to students' school performance. Barriers to implementation of CSH included the perceived need to strictly adhere to academic programming and lack of funding. Successes were attributed to the support of community resources in implementing CSH components.

In light of the positive student health and academic outcomes associated with schools implementing CSH, it is essential for state political leaders and decision-makers to strongly consider availability of financial support to assist all Oklahoma schools in improving the health and safety status of their environment.

## Diet and Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Sadly most Americans eat far more red meat and far fewer dark green and yellow vegetables than their bodies require for optimal function so they go blind, have strokes, failing hearts, and fractured hips, go senile, and/or end up on dialysis.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the #1 cause of blindness for people who are age 55 years or older in the

United States. By 2020 it is estimated that perhaps 3 million Americans will have late stage AMD in which there is a significant loss of their central vision.

In effect they have a blind spot in the middle of their visual field making reading, driving, and face recognition difficult if not impossible.

About 90% have what doctors call the "dry" form of the disease for which there are no effective drugs or surgical treatments. The much less common "wet" form of AMD can be slowed with surgery including laser treatments but there is no lasting cure.

The macula is the central part of the retina with densely packed cone cells that allow for detailed color vision in the center of your visual field. It is protected from ultraviolet and even blue light waves that can damage these cone cells by a pigmented layer. Certain plant chemicals such as lutein and zeaxanthin are found in this pigmented layer. They help screen out UV rays and excessive blue wavelength light that can damage the cone cells directly or perhaps by forming free radicals. As most Americans age, much of this pigmented layer wears out and the cone cells become increasingly susceptible to the damaging effect of sunlight as well as chemicals found in the blood. Vitamins C & E, and perhaps other antioxidant phytochemicals, appear to slow down the disease process. By contrast smoking, diabetes, dyslipidemia, and high blood pressure all increase the risk of AMD.

Data from the Nurses' Health Study found the 20% with the highest fat intakes were 54% more likely to develop AMD over time than the 20% with lowest fat intake.

However, growing evidence indicates some dietary fat sources are protective. Indeed, data from this earlier study found omega-3 fatty acids from fish cut the risk of AMD. More recently two studies from Australia confirmed the potential protective role of eating more fish rich in omega-3s. One study that followed 2,454 subjects for 10 years found that one

serving of fish per week cut the risk of early AMD by 31%.

They also observed that eating 1-2 servings of nuts per week was associated with a 35% reduced risk of early AMD. The authors conclude "...Our findings support the hypothesis that increased omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids and regular consumption of fish and/or nuts in the diet may

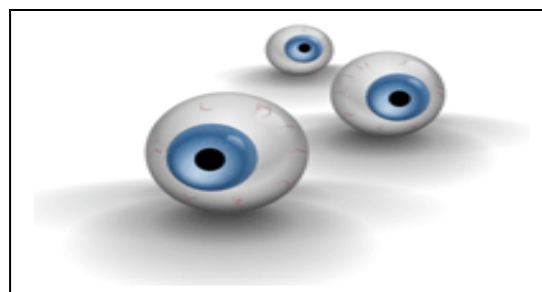
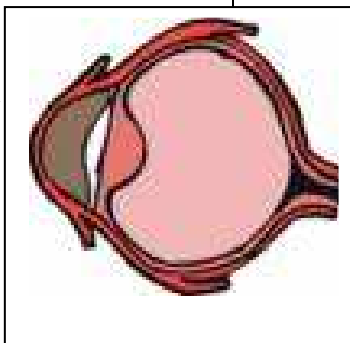
act against the development of early AMD. These acids may protect the eyes by preventing the buildup of plaque in the arteries or by reducing inflammation, blood vessel formation and oxygen-free radical cell damage in the retina."

In another study that examined the impact of different types of fat on the risk of developing AMD, Dr. Chong followed 6,734 people aged 58 to 69 for about 10 years. She found the 25% consuming the most trans fat had a 76% increased risk of developing AMD compared to the 25% consuming the least trans fat during that time. These researchers also observed that regular consumption of olive oil was associated with a 52% reduced risk of developing AMD even though monounsaturated fat itself was not associated with AMD risk. This suggests that perhaps antioxidant phytochemicals such as polyphenols found in extra virgin olive oil might help reduce damage to the macula. They also observed a reduced risk of AMD with more omega-3's. The authors conclude: "A diet low in trans-unsaturated fat and rich in omega-3 fatty acids and olive oil may reduce the risk of AMD."

### Bottom Line:

A little of the right fat is good. This includes fat from extra virgin olive oil, nuts and omega-3 rich fish (salmon, trout, tuna, mackerel). It just takes one to two servings of each per week according to recent studies. By including these fats in your diet in small amounts while largely avoiding fats from meat and dairy products and refined oils, you are assured of an adequate intake of essential fatty acids without getting so much total fat that promotes weight, diabetes, CVD, some cancers as well as AMD.

*By James J. Kenney  
PhD, RD, FACN*



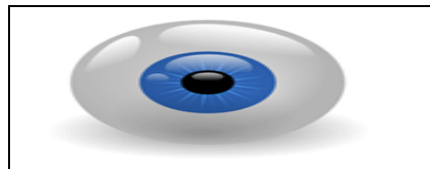
### Eating to Save Your Sight

- **Choose a heart-healthy diet that is high in fiber and low in fat, sugar and refined carbohydrates** to lower your risk for diseases which increase risk of AMD: diabetes, dyslipidemia, and high blood pressure. You should get plenty of physical activity to control your weight. Limit your eyes exposure to sunlight.
- **Avoid eating foods that are rich in trans fatty acids.** These include many cookies, crackers, desserts, chips and fried foods. Read the Nutrition Facts Panel. Most restaurants still use trans fat-rich oils for frying and on grills so be careful when dining

out. **Make fat choices healthy – with fish or nuts a few times per week.**

- **Eating a diet that has plenty of antioxidant rich fruits and vegetables is also a good idea.**

Green leafy vegetables and some yellow fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of lutein and zeaxanthin – plant chemicals that help protect the macular from sun damage.



### Fruit Juice May Reduce Alzheimer's Risk



It seems fruit and vegetable juices may be just what the doctor ordered when it comes to quelling the risk of Alzheimer's disease. In a large epidemiological study, researchers found that people who drank three or more servings of fruit and vegetable juices per week had a 76% lower risk of developing Alzheimer's than those who drank juice less often than once per week.

The Kame Project led by Dr. Qi Dia of Vanderbilt University, identified 1,836 dementia-free subjects in the Seattle population and collected information on their dietary consumption of fruit and vegetable juices. They then assessed cognitive function every two years for up to 10 years. Results showed a 76% less likelihood of developing signs of Alzheimer's disease.

The researchers chose to study the Japanese populations because of the low incidence rate of Alzheimer's disease. However, the incidence of Alzheimer's in Japanese people living in the United States is higher, approaching the incidence rates in Americans. This pointed to environmental factors like diet and lifestyle as important contributors to disease risk.

So what makes fruit juice so great? Polyphenols! (pol-ee-fee-nawls) Polyphenols are non-vitamin antioxidants particularly abundant in teas, juices and wines and exist primarily in the skins and peels of fruits and vegetables. Other studies confirmed, "that some polyphenols from juices showed a stronger neuroprotective effect than antioxidant vitamins," Dai said.

The study is not complete. Continual research is being done to see if it really is the elevated levels of polyphenols are related to the reduced risk of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease and if there is a specific type of juice (that reduces risk).

However promising the study results appear, Dai cautioned, it's important that the general public not jump the gun regarding the value of juice as a preventive measure for Alzheimer's disease. "A few years ago, hormone replacement therapy, NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) and antioxidant vitamins showed promise (in preventing or slowing Alzheimer's disease), but recent clinical trials indicate that they do not," Dai said. "More study, I think is needed."

(Article courtesy of ConsumerAffairs.com)

## Weatherization

### What is Weatherization?

The Department of Energy’s Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is the nation’s core program for delivering energy efficiency services to low income households. The program’s goal is to reduce energy costs to low income persons by improving the energy efficiency of their homes while ensuring their health and safety.

### Who Provides the Weatherization Services?

Professional trained weatherization crews perform on-site energy audits using state-of-art equipment to identify outside drafts and inspect heating and cooling systems for efficiency.

**Weatherization crews install insulation, seal off air leaks, make modifications to (or replace) existing heating systems, and make minor repairs to ensure safety.**

### Do I Qualify for Services?

WAP has income eligibility requirements. You are automatically eligible if you and/or family members receive Supplemental Security Income, SSI, or Title IV.

**You may be eligible for assistance if your income meets the federally established income guideline. Annual income less than \$21,660, for an individual, \$29,140 for a family of two. You may qualify if you rent, own, live in a single-family home, multi-family housing or in a mobile home.**

### How do I apply?

To apply for services or to get additional information on the Weatherization Assistance Program, contact the Community Action Agency that services your county.

Pawnee Community Action.....918-762-3041  
 Kay, Noble Counties



## Hidden Dangers in Your Car

Most of us don’t think twice about unrestrained cargo. Experts say that many injuries and deaths aren’t the result of the collision, but of unrestrained cargo, pets, or passengers. People use their cars like a second home with things stowed on the dash, in the front seats, on the floorboards, and unsecured in the cargo area. Considering increased speed limits in a crash, objects could turn into deadly projectiles. A can flying out of a grocery sack could become a lethal weapon; even a cell phone can fracture a skull!

In a study of 74,000 two-car collisions, researchers determined that risk of death for belted front-seat occupants rose 400 percent when someone in the back was NOT wearing a seat belt. “A front-seat passenger becomes a crude air bag for the person in the back,” says Charles Hurley of the National Safety Council.

- All Passengers Buckle Up. While 49 states have seat belt laws, only 15 require rear seat passengers to buckle up. It may not be the law of the land but it should be the law in your vehicles! But being buckled in is not enough.
- Keep the Dash Clear. Utilize all secured storage spaces already in your car: the glove box or center console compartments.
- Secure Cargo. Use the seat-back compartment and door pockets. Don’t pile things on the floor higher than the back seat. Use your car’s safety features. But remember, the cargo net in cars are generally meant to hold items during normal driving, not in crashes. Use heavy rope, cords, or cargo straps to secure items or get a cargo barrier that’s been crash tested and will bolt into the frame of your auto.
- Teach your Teen to Be Safe. According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), teenage drivers account for only 7% of the driving population but are involved in 14% of fatal crashes. Traffic crashes are the #1 cause of death and injury for people ages 15-19. Problems which contribute to the high crash rate of young drivers include: driving inexperience, lack of adequate driving skills, risk taking, poor driving judgment and decision making, alcohol consumption and excessive driving during high risk hours (11PM-5AM).

The average household takes over 2300 car rides a year. Be smart and consider the potential dangers and travel safe.

*Source: Readers Digest*

**Driving Back to College?**



Save some green and help the environment at the same time: Slow Down! Gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. You can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.20 per gallon for gas. Less gas consumption also helps put out less fuel emissions and decreases the need for fossil fuels. (Cost savings are based on an assumed fuel price of \$2.91/gallon.) Observing the speed limit is also safer.

Source: <http://www.fueleconomy.gov>

**Make A Play for It**

Go to the park or playground with your family and take a Frisbee or a ball. Once in the park, you may see other activities that encourage you and your family to have fun and move more. Make a commitment to go to the park or playground once this week with your family.

**Hot Weather**

When it is hot, it is important to remember to:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Take it slow. Allow your body to adapt to the hot temperatures.
- Wear Sunscreen.
- Spend as much time as possible in an air conditioned room - at home or at a nutrition site, senior center, library, mall or any public building.
- Use fans in well-ventilated areas.
- Never ignore danger signals like nausea, dizziness and fatigue. Call 911 immediately.
- Take cool baths or showers.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Avoid heavy meals.
- Keep blinds and shades closed during warm hours.



**Enjoy Summer Produce**

**Roasted Vegetable Pasta**

*Roasting the vegetables is very easy, low in fat and produces a rich flavor for this summer pasta dish.*

- 1 pound bowtie pasta (or other small shape)
- 2 ripe plum tomatoes, sliced
- 1 small onion, sliced thin
- 1 bell pepper, cut in strips
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil or vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup diced eggplant
- ½ cup water
- 1 package fresh spinach leaves
- 1 tablespoon fresh or dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Black pepper to taste



*Directions:*

1. Prepare the pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. Preheat broiler; place tomatoes, onions and pepper strips on a pan in a single layer; broil tomatoes, onion and pepper until brown.
3. Sauté garlic and mushrooms in olive oil in large nonstick pan. Add the eggplant plus a little water; cover the pan and let them cook briefly.
4. Add the spinach and a little more water; cover the pan and let spinach wilt.
5. Add the rest of the ingredients – the cooked pasta, the roasted vegetables and the seasonings. Stir together well and allow to heat together.
6. Serve hot – we recommend a little grated parmesan cheese and black pepper over the top. We served this with a large salad.

*Serves 6. Each 2-cup servings: 354 calories, 6 g fat, <1 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 31 mg sodium, 63 g carbohydrate, 12 g protein, 5 g fiber.*

### Cherry Almond Salad

1 package fresh spinach  
 2 cups fresh cherries, pitted, halved  
 ¼ cut toasted almonds  
 Black pepper to taste  
 Balsamic Vinegar to taste  
 Toss all together and serve!

*Serves 4. Each 2 cup serving: 86 calories, 3 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 18 mg sodium, 13 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 2 g protein*

#### Make a bowl!

Here are ideas for your refrigerator to help make fruits and veggies more enticing! Make bowls of ready to eat fruits or veggies with a fun theme:

- **Salad bowl** – Put together lettuce and vegetables in a bowl; refrigerate and cover until ready to serve. It lasts up to 2-3 days without dressing.
- **Tree fruit bowl** – plums, peaches, cherries, Nectarines
- **Melon** – cubed melon is always a favorite
- **Berries** – Offer a variety for even more color
- **Carrots** – Baby carrots in a bowl get eaten fast!

### Low-Cost Color for Your Kitchen...

Add some colorful accents to your kitchen with these fun, easy projects. Think fun, colorful accents in today's hot colors like blazing orange, Curacao blue or meadow green.

Start fresh by stashing mismatched knickknacks and creating a neutral backdrop. Then bring in a fashionable new color in the form of art and accessories. Whether you buy coral canisters or create your own coral curtains, adding a striking new color is sure to liven up the kitchen.

**Spiff Up Storage** – Colorful countertop items don't have to take up space. Storage boxes do double duty as decoration when painted a vivid color like tangy tangerine. Simply buy a few wooden boxes at a local craft supply store and spray paint them with your chosen hue. Label each box with metal scrapbooking letters, then fill the containers with items you'd like access to but don't use daily, such as cookie cutters and candy molds. Give a shelf a burst of color by stacking the boxes next to some cookbooks. Bring in other accents in the same color, such as a collection of dishes in delicious persimmon.

**Wake Up Walls** – Whether or not you're handy with a paintbrush, it's a cinch to add artistic color touches to your walls. Pick a bold color like pomegranate or

fuchsia and choose a stencil that complements your décor. Wall stencils come in sophisticated designs including Florentine scrolls, French fleur-de-lis and ornate damask. Skip the formality and place the graphics here-and-there on the walls. Tape the stencil up with masking tape and dab on acrylic paint with a foam stenciling sponge. For an even easier transformation, use repositionable wall decals. These movable stickers take the fear out of working with color—if you don't like the look, just remove and re-stick!

**Dish Up Drama** – To add a dash of color to your kitchen, take the plates out of the pantry and hang them on the walls as works of art. Decorating with dishes takes on a modern feel when you choose earthenware. Look for dinner plates in a single shade, like tranquil turquoise. Use plate hangers to create a round grouping on a wall or to add a stripe of color to a vertical space between the oven and the pantry. To add flavor to your breakfast nook, set the plates on plate stands and line them up along the windowsill.

**Perk Up Plants** – Plants are a natural for the kitchen and are an inexpensive way to bring botanical colors indoors. Terra-cotta pots cost just a few dollars and they can be easily transformed with outdoor paint designed for terra cotta (available at craft stores). Paint the pots garden colors like sunflower or lemongrass and finish them off with stylish stripes created by wrapping the pots with ribbon. Resist rickrack and pom-poms and go for a contemporary look with retro madras plaid, edgy grommet ribbon or sleek trellis yarn. Pick a trim that goes with your décor and make sure it is colorfast. Group your new sunny pots by the sink to brighten up the dish rack. Or place one pot on top of the fridge, one by the pantry and one on your dinette table to spread burst of yellow and green throughout the kitchen.

**Dress Up Windows** – that naked kitchen window is just waiting to be jazzed up. For this makeover, skip the mini-blinds and go for a set of classic café panels. To make your own, give an old-fashioned craft a twist by turning tea towels into artsy curtains. Start by dyeing four flour-sack tea towels in a trendy color like magnolia green. Then buy three shades of paint in the same color family and three large foam stamps to create your design. Stamp all over the fabric, alternating the colors and the stamps as you go. Position a decorative tension rod halfway down the window and hang the four panels side by side across the rod with curtain ring clips. If your color-pop is conch shell peach, you might choose seashell stamps, or if peacock blue is your color, pick paisleys to pattern your panels.

## Teaching the Next Generation to Clean

One aspect of being a good parent is to teach our children life skills so that they can go forward as adults to lead happy, healthy and productive lives. These life skills include everyday tasks, like cooking, cleaning and doing laundry.

### Tips for Passing on Cleaning Skills

**Make sure the chore is age-appropriate.** Preschoolers can put away unbreakable dishes and playthings. Older children can clear the table, help load the dishwasher and make their beds. Teens and preteens can clean their own rooms, assist with the laundry and help with dusting, cleaning and kitchen chores.

**Make safety a priority.** Always provide proper adult supervision. Don't allow children to use disinfectants, disinfectant cleaners, chlorine bleach or any product that has a warning on the label, such as "keep out of reach of children."

**Let them choose the medium.** For example, there are many ways to remove dust from the furniture. Only adults should apply spray products, but it's okay to let your child experiment and pick a microfiber cloth or mitt, microfiber duster, electrostatic dusting cloth or dust wipe to accomplish the task.

**Develop a cleaning schedule.** This can be difficult with today's busy households, but children do better when they know what's expected of them and when it's expected to happen.

**Tap into your children's concern for the environment.** Set a good example with sustainable practices. For example, purchase cleaning products in bulk sizes along with a smaller container of the product and refill the latter as needed. Follow label instructions as to the recommended amounts of product so you aren't wasting money by using more than its necessary. Dispose of empty containers in an environmentally responsible way.

Source:

[http://www.cleaning101.com/cleaningmatters/newsletter/archive/2009-jul-aug/next\\_generation.cfm](http://www.cleaning101.com/cleaningmatters/newsletter/archive/2009-jul-aug/next_generation.cfm)



## Loud Noises Cause Pets Anxiety

While some animals don't seem to be bothered by noise, storms or the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations can cause other pets who have a noise phobia to become very frightened and act in strange, unpredictable ways. Certain cats and dogs have full-blown anxiety attacks.

Symptoms of anxiety include shaking, trembling, barking, howling, drooling, attempting to hide, refusing to eat, and trying to leap a fence or escape from an enclosure, yard, or home. Many animals end up lost, hurt, or seriously injured. Unlike humans, animals have an acute sense of hearing, and unexpected, loud noises can trigger an attack.



Even pets that haven't reacted in the past, or haven't reacted in years, can suddenly become fearful or anxious. Old pets may be even more sensitive to loud noises. Animal shelters see a huge increase in strays around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Dogs and cats may panic and bolt through doors, windows, or other enclosures, trying to run from the noise.

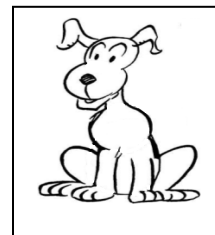
It is critical that pets have some form of current identification on them at all times, especially if your pet has a noise phobia.

It seems contradictory, but do not stroke, pet, or reassure your cat or dog when they are nervous or frightened. This can actually reinforce their anxious behavior and make it worse. Instead, distract your nervous pets by playing with them or keeping them active doing something they enjoy.

It's safest to keep them indoors in a small, sheltered area where they cannot hurt themselves. Turn on the TV or radio to help muffle the loud noises or have calming music playing. Be sure to include their favorite toys, beds, food, and water and try spending more time with them, again distracting them with playtime.

Do not leave pets outside unattended. Even dogs that are tied up can get hurt trying to escape by chewing, choking, or strangling themselves on their leashes. If you take your pet outside, make sure they have a sturdy leash or are secured in a carrier.

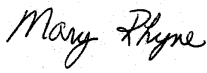
In addition to behavior modification, you may want to use sedatives or tranquilizers to help calm your pets' nerves and keep them from injuring themselves. Check with your veterinarian to see if this option is right for your pet.



Source: <http://knowit.newsok.com/pets>

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