

News release



Everett Public Schools

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For more information:

Mary Waggoner, 425-385-4040

Healthy bodies + healthy minds = increased success in school

Evergreen Middle School's PTA is ramping up the power of that equation in a unique partnership with the school and the region's health awareness and medical organizations, businesses and agencies.

On Saturday, Feb. 19, 2011, the first ever Evergreen Middle School Health Fair for Teens, Tweens and Parents is destined to draw families and teens from around the region for a free and activity-packed day focused on exercise, healthy eating, good habits and health awareness.

"Healthy habits begin at home," event organizer Susan Wilson reminds everyone. "It takes a healthy family to support healthy youth, and one of the keys to teen health includes addressing the needs of parents and families." Wilson is a local health care provider, nursing instructor and Evergreen Middle School PTA member who sought and was awarded a William MacDonald Fund grant to make the event possible.

She and fellow volunteer organizers have been planning since last spring to make sure the February event includes information and activities people want to know about. Evergreen parents and staff have helped design the day. Students have been asked what they'd like to know about and do that day, and they will be involved in a health poster project and contest in the weeks leading up to the event.

Bringing people together to see and learn "hands-on" about healthy choices is important to all involved, Wilson notes "This event is a strategic effort to improve health practices of teens and their families. Specifically, our goals include medical and social risk reduction, higher rates of physical activity, improved eating practices, better sleep practices, enhanced family communication and improved awareness of how to seek appropriate resources for physical and mental health concerns. This event will be an opportunity for groups to hear positive messages about their own personal control over their health – messages which are lacking in popular media."

Basic health screenings – blood pressure, body mass index and perhaps others – will be free options that day for everyone. Vaccinations will be available for \$15 or less (cash or check only) and there is a fee adjustment available for families in financial need. Wilson notes, "It slides down to zero for high need families, so there should be no barrier to any child or youth who needs a vaccine."

Every fifth-grader in the district will be given a vaccination registration form to take home to parents or guardians. Returning that form to fifth-grade teachers will help ensure there is enough vaccine for all who want them and enough health staff to administer the shots.

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At the “career corner” students can learn about future career options in health care. Zumba, ballroom dance, martial arts and other “get up and go” activities are also slated as are demonstrations and food tastings.

“Evergreen Middle School is pleased to be a host site for such an important event for our families,” said Principal Joyce Stewart. “We are also excited to welcome families from around the region and to share with them our enthusiasm for health and lifelong learning.”

More information about becoming a presenter or participant is available from Wilson at meridian-nurse@comcast.net or 425-239-4253.

Everett Public Schools is seeing more focus on wellness in schools – with parent involvement and community partnerships. [View Ridge PTA](#), for example, has a wellness committee, and the parents organize events encouraging exercise and healthy eating habits. H.M. Jackson High and Heatherwood Middle schools are partnering with Nick of Time Foundation to offer [free heart screenings for students on Feb. 2, 2011](#) in an effort promote healthy lifestyles and raise awareness about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA).

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