



Welcome to the Be Healthy QC Newsletter!

Have you seen Skip, or his sister Scout, in our community? Maybe you've seen them on TV? They have been busy little berries! Since our last newsletter, they have been featured on billboards around the Quad Cities, and even starred in their very own commercial!

At the beginning of the month, Skip even made a special trip to Earl Hanson Elementary in Rock Island where he met some excited children, shared delicious fruits and vegetables with them, and even posed for some Polaroids!



Be Healthy QC featured a media event in which our Coalition Chair, Denise Bulat from Bi-State Regional Commission, along with the mayor of Rock Island, the Principal of Earl Hanson Elementary, and the director of their food service department, talked about the steps local schools are taking to ensure their students are Eating Right and Moving More. This includes enhancing school wellness and nutrition policies and planning the creation of Safe Routes to School. Several media outlets picked up our story, and the kids had a blast.

Press Release

In case you missed it, here is the press release we issued for the event.

The Quad City Health Initiative (QCHI) and the Rock Island-Milan School District are celebrating the progress of Be Healthy QC's School Wellness Initiatives and Earl Hanson Elementary School's completion of their Safe Routes to School Plan. Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC) Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) program, Be Healthy QC (BHQC), operating through the Quad City Health Initiative, is working to develop enhanced comprehensive school wellness policies and create Safe Routes to School travel plans as part of overall efforts to promote healthy eating and physical activity.

Schools understand that student wellness is directly correlated to student academic success and school leaders are determined to offer all students the opportunity to learn about, choose, and try healthy foods as part of their everyday school experience. Schools in the Quad Cities are thus enhancing their healthy food policies and seeking to increase the access to healthy foods. The PICH grant funding supports a new regional School Wellness Coordinator position (based at the Rock Island County Regional Office of Education) and outreach to all 11 districts in Rock Island County within three years. Clayton Naylor, the School Wellness Coordinator, provides support for schools in their development of well-structured wellness committees and provides best practice guidance on nutrition as well as education about the benefits of healthy eating. "Good nutrition is fundamental and foundational to the achievement level of students. Wellness is my passion because education is my passion," notes Clayton Naylor, Rock Island County Regional Office of Education School Wellness Coordinator.

Together with engaged wellness committees, school staff are working to add healthy school meal choices, align district offerings with National School Lunch Program guidelines, and champion wellness awareness in low socioeconomic status (SES) school districts. In the first year of the grant, three districts already took the next steps in promoting a healthier environment that has positively impacted more than 4,200 students and staff. Rock Island-Milan School District #41 is the latest district to begin embracing and implementing healthier school environments through promotion of nutrition and physical activity and will be able to impact over 7,000 students.

Earl Hanson Elementary was one of three schools in the Quad Cities to complete a Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS) during the first year of the PICH grant in a process facilitated by the planning staff at Bi-State Regional Commission (the other two schools were Eugene Field Elementary, Rock Island and Buffalo Elementary, Davenport). The goals of the Safe Routes to School Plans are to identify potential physical improvements, operational measures, and programs for the specific school and the surrounding neighborhoods. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national program that creates safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to walk and bicycle to and from their schools. Over the last 15 years, there has been a steady national decline in students walking or biking to school and the rate of overweight youth has been steadily increasing. There is an increasing need to improve the health and safety of our children and SRTS can improve communities by making walking and bicycling safe and fun options to get to school. "The Safe Routes to School Plans have truly been a collective and collaborative effort throughout our community. Having partnerships that support one another and encourage physical activity is how we will be successful," says Denise Bulat, Executive Director, Bi-State Regional Commission and Be Healthy QC Coalition Chair.

Be Healthy QC has also developed an educational marketing campaign in order to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. Be Healthy QC conducted an audience survey among students throughout local school districts to enlist opinions as to which character should be the "spokesperson" for the educational campaign. The results of the survey led BHQC to develop the animated strawberry characters "Skip and Scout" to serve as the official "spokes-fruits" for the Be Healthy QC campaign. These characters are featured on educational materials that will be distributed in local schools beginning this week and also on the Be Healthy QC webpage www.behealthyqc.org.

The Quad City Health Initiative is a cross-sector community partnership working to create a healthy community. A 25-member community Board oversees the organization, which was established in 1999. The Initiative seeks to be our community's recognized leader for creating collaborative action on health and abides by the core values of commitment, collaboration and creativity. Major financial support of the Quad City Health Initiative is currently provided by the generous direct and in-kind investments of Genesis Health System and UnityPoint Health-Trinity. Additional financial support is provided by Deere & Company, Mississippi Valley Health, KJWW Engineering Consultants, Davenport Eye Group, Modern Woodmen of America, Community Health Care, ILLOWA Construction and Labor Management Council, United Way of the Quad Cities Area, Hy-Vee, Inc., QCR Holdings, Inc., Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, Scott County Family Y, Scott County Health Department, and Rock Island County Health Department. For more information, please call 563-421-2815 or visit our website at www.qchealthinitiative.org.

The Rock Island-Milan School District #41 is a K-12 public education organization that serves children and their families in Rock Island and Milan boundary areas. The school district works collaboratively in the community in order to live its mission of preparing high achieving college and career ready global citizens.

Want to be recognized for the work your organization or business is doing? Take our Worksite Wellness Healthy Workplace Assessment here!

Be Healthy QC recently unveiled a new healthy workplace recognition program. Businesses that meet at least 10 of the 20 items on the assessment found at the link below will receive a letter and certificate of recognition for their worksite wellness efforts, as well as a window cling to display at the entrance of their business. If you would like your business to be recognized for your progress in creating a healthy workplace, please download and complete the assessment linked below and return it to: quadcityhealthinitiative@gmail.com.

Take Our Assessment Here

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Quad City Health Initiative
563-421-2826
plumbe@genesishealth.com
<http://www.qchealthinitiative.org>

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Quad City Health Initiative | Davenport Medical Center (West Campus) | Central Park Medical Pavilion 2, Suite 3100 | 1401 West Central Park Avenue | Davenport | IA | 52803