

The Pulse

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance



American Heart Association
 www.heart.org

AAHPERD

IN THIS ISSUE

Annual AHA PE Workshop 2

The AHA Research Corner 2

Stories From the Heart 3

Survivor Stories 3

It's Worth It 4

Jump Across the Nation 5

Demo Teams 6

Celebrating Heart Health 7

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Power in Partnership

The success of the Joint Projects events at the National AAHPERD Convention in Cincinnati, OH is a testament to the strong partnership between AAHPERD and the AHA. In 23 years of partnership we have continuously worked together to enhance a program that impacts more than 1/3 of all elementary schools in our nation. Today, more than 5 million children participate in the JRFH program learning about heart disease, stroke, and the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. This partnership is making a healthy impact on so many young lives.

The 2001 AAHPERD Convention was one of the best ever for the Joint Projects. There were two half-day workshops focusing on JRFH/HFH coordinators and Demo Team Coaches. Sandy "Spin" Slade gave an amazing hands-on workshop focused on new skills to try in a HFH unit and a joint session with Physical Best focused on tying JRFH and PB together during February's heart health month.

Continued on page 6...

The Pulse Newsletter

Volume 2, Number 1
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At the Heart of the Matter

Annual AHA Physical Education Workshop Boosts JRFH/ HFH Recruitment

By: Lois Carnes, Ohio JRFH State
Coordinator, JPC member

The Northeast Ohio Affiliate of the American Heart Association is in its third year of hosting an annual physical education workshop. Each fall, physical education teachers from northeast Ohio are invited to attend a workshop featuring current timely topics. The workshop has been held on a Friday and offers teachers valuable information that administrators want their teachers to know. This past year, the focus of the workshop was integration of physical education with classroom proficiency requirements in math, reading, writing, and science. Local university faculty were invited to serve as presenters as well as teachers and administrators. In addition to presentations on the topic of integration of physical education curriculum, a jump rope team performed and the Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart programs were explained. Prizes, educational kits, and Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart materials were available for browsing by attendees. A lunch was included as part of the registration during which a roundtable discussion was held.

Other themes highlighted in previous years workshops were CPR training for coaches, fitness instructional ideas, basketball skills and stations (Hoops for Heart event

Continued on page 5...

The AHA Research Corner

What's new in Cardiovascular Disease Research



By Elaine Speer, AHA Communications Manager

As a result of the progressive advancements in today's cardiovascular research, ranging from dietary recommendations to groundbreaking gene therapy, we are gaining in the fight against the nation's number one killer.

A recent study reported in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association* found that as many as half of the children and siblings of individuals with diseased coronary arteries may have signs of atherosclerosis, even though they have no symptoms of heart or vessel disease.

"We've known that family history is a risk factor for heart disease, however that relationship has been associated with secondary risk factors such as high cholesterol, hypertension and diabetes," says K. Lance Gould, M.D., professor of medicine at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston. "What's important is that we can find early disease in these family members long before it causes symptoms and we can offer intense preventive and reversal treatment."

Gould says doctors can find heart and blood vessel disease early in these high-risk individuals using positron emission tomography (PET) imaging, a highly accurate, non-invasive test that can make images of the blood flow inside the heart muscle, an indication of how well the coronary arteries are working.

"It is important that we can identify atherosclerosis at such an early stage in this particular high-risk group," Gould said. "We can step-up treatment and prevention efforts long before they experience a coronary event thorough dietary measures, increasing exercise and cholesterol-lowering drugs." ♥

Stories from the Heart

By: Kris Brockhagen



The Visit From the Heart Surgeon

Last year our JRFH event was dedicated to all the physicians in our school community that were directly involved in cardiovascular health. I also included two special doctors from our area. One was a cardiologist, Dr. Damarius Wright, who helped 3 of my students with various heart conditions, and Dr. Nikaidoh, a heart surgeon, was also included in the festivities. Dr. Nikaidoh had recently put a pacemaker in one of my youngest students, a 4 year old girl, who suffered from heart block.

Katherine, along with her parents, had the opportunity to visit with Dr. Nikaidoh that day jumping and playing. Ironically, during the time of his visit, the 3rd grade students were jumping and one of the boys in that class had been operated on when he was just an infant. John Andrew's mother also attended the event and was very excited about seeing Dr. Nikaidoh again after all those years. Dr. Nikaidoh wrote me a sweet note after the event to tell me what a wonderful time he had at our JRFH event. ♥

Survivor Stories

In the Line of Duty

By: Janet Erickson, Montana JRFH State Coordinator



Mrs. Janet Erickson, a physical education instructor and JRFH coordinator at Helena Montana Middle School, invited three members of Mended Hearts, Inc., Chapter #96 of Helena, Montana to speak on their experiences of heart operations and life style changes to approximately 950 physical education students in thirteen classes. Mended Hearts, Inc. is a nationwide volunteer organization that consists of people who have heart disease, their families, medical professionals and other interested individuals.

Beverly Gibson, Rich Palmer and Jim O'Donnell of Mended Hearts discussed their battles with heart disease over a period of two days during physical education classes. The students had many questions and kept the presenters on their toes. Many of the student's parents, grandparents, other relatives and friends had been involved with heart problems and operational procedures. Students were very interested in talking with living examples of recovering heart patients and learning about heart healthy lifestyles.

The students' knowledge about heart health issues surprised the speakers. When questioned on the meaning of "cholesterol" one student sharply responded: "It is the buildup of plaque in the blood stream that could cause blockage of the arteries resulting in heart problems or disease." Other students wanted to know of the details of the open-heart surgery procedures. When the procedures were explained to them their eyes opened wider and they shuddered. For a few minutes, at least, the attention of 12, 13, and 14 year olds was concentrated on living a heart healthy lifestyle. Having survivors speak to the students helped to capture their attention and make them realize what a serious thing heart disease is. ♥



Time, Effort, and Dedication, It's Worth It!

By: Laurie Belfor, NWD JRFH Coordinator

It's Worth It!

Eighteen years ago a Jump Rope for Heart (JRFH) demo team visited my school and put on a thirty-minute assembly. That thirty minutes changed my life forever.

After seeing the show my students begged me to start a jump rope team. I was reluctant at first. I knew how much work it would be. They were told I would look into it but they would have to do their part and practice — they did. I then contacted the American Heart Association and let them know I was interested in starting up a team. The following year we were invited to the state JRFH skills' workshop. We had a great time and that day kept them jumping, literally! They made new friends and learned new skills to add to their routines. I met dedicated jump rope coordinators and gained a whole new appreciation for the sport of rope skipping. That was the start of my coaching.

Nearly one hundred assemblies and seventeen years later I'm still coaching a jump rope team, different school, new kids. Has it been worth it? All you have to do is look at their smiling faces. I know they are getting more than just exercise! When students feel they belong and are able to succeed, wonderful changes take place. Through this program, I have watched my students grow into confident young adults. I have witnessed their enthusiasm infect thousands of kids. I have been a part of their thrill as they master each skill and perform their routines. I have watched the blending of ages and genders as they formed new partnerships. I have seen older students become mentors to new and younger members. I have watched the team grow into a family. Jump Rope for Heart has made a definite impact on my students, and in all our lives.

Get Started

- ⚙️ **First**, call the American Heart Association (AHA) to find the demo team closest to your school. Invite the team to perform. Get educational materials from the AHA.
- ⚙️ **Second**, Don't be frightened off by your lack of knowledge. I often get asked if I can do all of the skills my students have mastered. The answer is no. But, since when is a coach able to do everything a player can? I encourage and motivate. I give opportunities and provide resources for my students. They do the rest.
- ⚙️ **Third**, show only segments of jump rope videos and let your classes practice along with it. Showing the entire video can be over whelming.
- ⚙️ **Fourth**, pick a name for your team or let the kids choose one. Our team is known as, 'The Popcorns'. I chose that because I wanted a name that would appeal to both boys and girls.
- ⚙️ **Fifth**, put on a JRFH fundraiser. It's for a good cause, and a good community service project.
- ⚙️ **Sixth**, watch the fun take place and let the magic begin! I have always enjoyed watching my kids perform and I know that most schools do too.

Am I glad I started a JRFH Demo Team, you bet! ♥

Preschoolers Jump Rope for Heart Like the Big Kids

By: Jay Tschillard, Hawaii State JRFH Coordinator

Five preschools on Oahu are proving that age is nothing but a number as they gear up to participate in the AHA of Hawaii's Jump Rope for Heart (JRFH) program.

This school year, teachers at Kapolei Head Start, Central Union Preschool, Rainbow School in Mililani, Navy Hale Keiki School and Rainbow School in Kaneohe have developed innovative jumping skills and styles suitable for ages two to four.

“What we do are different jumping activities,” explains Connie Tschillard, a teacher at Rainbow School in Kaneohe, and the main organizer of her school's first-ever Jump-a-thon. “Our students are too young to have traditional jump roping skills, so we use games like ‘Jumping Over the Creek’ and hopscotch in our Jump-a-thon.” In all, Tschillard organized a dozen jumping activities that were age and skill appropriate, such as: reenacting the nursery rhyme “Jack Be Nimble” with students jumping over a candlestick; wiggling jump ropes on the ground as students jump over them; having students hop like animals to music as they wear animal headbands; and a “Friendly Partner Jump” where students jumped around with a friend or a favorite stuffed animal.

The preschool's entire student body, approximately 90 children, participated in the Jump-a-thon and raised an impressive \$3,600 to benefit the AHA by soliciting sponsors for their rope jumping activity.

“The students were very excited to do this project,” say Tschillard. “We do a community service project every year, and we all agreed that Jump Rope for Heart would be a fun one to try. We talked a lot with our students about the heart, so they know about the heart and what it does and how to keep it healthy. I know they had fun doing the Jump-a-thon.” ♥

...Continued from page 2

ideas), sports education models, and cooperative/initiative games. Again, each workshop featured a local jump rope team, some of which provided jump rope skill instruction as well. Although the physical education themes were the focus, the Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart programs were well received by workshop participants. New schools were recruited for Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart as a result of each workshop.

The Northeast Ohio Affiliate Task Force, directed by Carol Metlicka as the American Heart Association representative, served as the organizational committee developing the annual physical education workshops. Eight teachers serve on the task force that meets quarterly. For more information you can contact the Ohio Affiliate at 800-282-0291. ♥

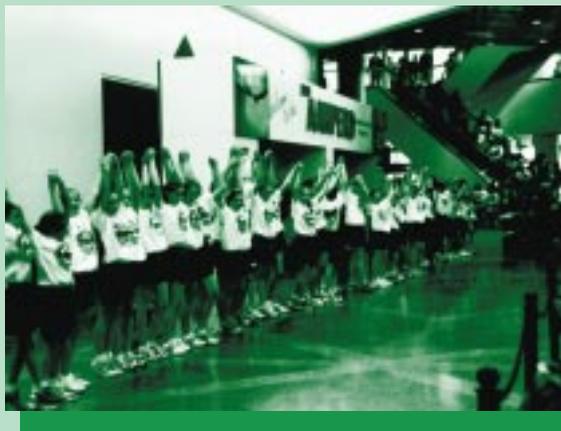
Center Valley Heartbeats

The Center Valley Elementary Heartbeats from Russellville, Arkansas have had another fun filled and successful year. The American Heart Association Demonstration Team is made up of fourth grade students. Their first performance was for the Arkansas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance Convention at Jonesboro in November. Since then, they have performed at many area schools and an Arkansas Tech Golden Suns basketball game. ♥



Team members include: (front from left) Justin Palmer, Audrey-Ana Gotcher, Kayla Avery, Chris Grimes, Amber Wilcox, Caitlin Crabtree, Lucas Frazee, Melanie Blankenship, Mykayla Morse, (back from left) Zachary Waters, Lindsey Ederington, Taylor Whitworth, Kelsi Todd, Coach Jeanie Strasner, Rachel Liechty, Stephenie Williams, Jill Kinslow, and Hope Virden.

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partnered together to perform at the Gala opening. Team members ranged in grade level from 3rd grade through college. The combined Midwest District team wowed the large crowd waiting to hear the opening presentation and see the exhibits for the first time.

Thank you to all who attended and assisted in making the 2001 AAHPERD National Convention and Exposition a huge success! ♥

-S. Schoenberg

Hiawatha Elementary Revives Its Jump Rope for Heart Event

By: Hal Garwood, IA JRFH Co-State Coordinator

It had been a number of years since Hiawatha Elementary School in Hiawatha, IA (Cedar Rapids Community School District) had participated in the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart program, but their first year back was one for the record books.

In February 2000, Hiawatha held its first event in over 10 years and raised over \$13,000 for the American Heart Association, finishing with the third highest total in the state of Iowa. Students, staff and the entire community enjoyed a unique community-building project.

Physical Education teacher, Cindy Hutcheson, wanted to revive the program at Hiawatha, but was faced with the problem of trying to involve 560 students in very limited facilities. Hutcheson, who is also a parent at the school, wanted to make Jump Rope for Heart Hiawatha's first all-school assembly. This presented a challenge, as there was no space at the school to accommodate the entire school population. Thanks to Mike Konchar, a parent at the school and owner of a nearby indoor soccer arena, The Sport Zone, the dream became a reality.

Konchar donated the use of his facility and all 560 students in grades K-5 and staff were bussed to the Sport Zone for an entire morning of jumping and fun. Students and staff jumped from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. with 93 teams of 6-8 kids all jumping simultaneously for 2-minute

intervals. The students enthusiasm was raised when the Iowa Skippers, a jump rope demonstration team from Cedar Rapids, put on two assemblies at the school one week prior to the event to showcase their talents and excitement for rope jumping.

The day was truly a community event with over 100 parent volunteers helping out as money counters, snack providers, music DJ's and rope turners. The Hiawatha PTA and the Cedar Rapids Community School system covered the transportation costs and the school health secretary set up a temporary office at the Sport Zone to take care of any students who needed medical attention. The Quaker Oats Company provided granola bars and cereal for healthy snacks to boost the students' energy during the event, and the Hiawatha Streets Department donated the use of over 50 traffic pylons used to mark the team jumping areas. Play It Again Sports and area schools donated extra ropes and most importantly students and staff donated their energy and muscles to fight heart disease and stroke.

The students and staff did such a terrific job and enjoyed the day so much that JRFH will become an annual event. Hopefully, the Hiawatha community can pull together again and jump their way back into the record books to help support the work of the American Heart Association. ♥

Loma Vista Intermediate School Celebrates Heart Health

By: Patte Suppé, California State JRFH Coordinator

Loma Vista Intermediate School conducts both “Jump Rope for Heart” and “Hoops for Heart” events during the month of February. Each year we build on our success by not only increasing the funds raised for the American Heart Association, but by increasing the involvement of our staff, students, parents, and community.

Our events are conducted, like many others, during February’s “Heart Month.” This fundraising event is a great opportunity to teach our children the value of helping others in the community. Because the 8th grade curriculum includes community service, and the 7th grade health and science curriculum includes an intensive lesson on smoking, this is the perfect opportunity to develop an interdisciplinary unit on the heart. This unit is run in the beginning of February and “Jump Rope for Heart” and “Hoops for Heart” are the culminating events.

In mid-January, all teachers receive their packets and subject related materials to begin planning their “Heart” lessons for “Heart Week.” The first week of February, we host a “Kick Off” assembly to get things started. During this assembly, the American Heart Association speaks to our students about their function and how we can all be an integral part in the fight against heart disease and stroke. We try to impress upon our students, the impact that heart disease and stroke has on all of our lives.

A school-wide assembly begins “Heart Week”, where we focus the majority of the curriculum on the heart. Every teacher is involved and has curriculum materials for their discipline,

including art, music and computers. The materials used for our different subject area packets have been gathered together from a variety of sources, with the AHA’s HeartPower kit as the primary source.

With state and national concern over retention and accountability the development of this unit had to keep the state framework in mind. Within our interdisciplinary units, students are challenged to learn about their hearts and how they can lead healthier lives. At the same time, students are improving skills in reading, grammar, mathematics, science, critical thinking, research, and computer skills.

At the conclusion of “Heart Week” our P.E. staff conducts a week-long JRFH and HFH event for all classes. Each student chooses his/her event and participates for the entire week. A variety of games and contests are conducted and community merchants provide daily prizes. At the end of the week, the fundraising packets are collected and money is counted. All those that have participated in the fundraising are invited to attend an hour-long assembly with NBA half time performer, Sandy “Spin” Slade.

Heart disease and stroke are the #1 cause of death in our nation. An interdisciplinary unit gives our students the opportunity to learn how to help themselves and their families. Additionally, they learn the important value of community service and helping others. “Heart Week” at Loma Vista has been a great benefit to all students. It is the involvement of all staff members and the support of the administration that has helped to make this event such a huge success. ♥