What is FRESH in Fauquier County Schools?

Beat the Gain – STEP.  Step To Evade Pounds!

Join us as we “Beat the Gain” by stepping through December.

Each FRESH program team member will be tracking their steps for the month of December. Our collective goal – 2,500,000 steps!! That’s right. If each of us STEP’s a minimum of 10k steps per day – then combined, we should hit or exceed our goal.

Step as much as you can. Let us know your progress. Send us an email at freshfauquier@gmail.com. We’ll post results in January.

In 2016 a grant from the Path Foundation funded FRESH (Fauquier Reaches for Excellence in School Health) which has since developed many healthy opportunities for Fauquier County students and residents. Now in our third year, we’re excited to launch our inaugural issue of our FRESH Perspectives Newsletter which is specifically designed to keep you up-to-date with FRESH healthy initiatives in Fauquier County Public Schools and the community. Each month you’ll see our Fitness Integration Team Specialists (FITTS) working with teachers and students in the 3rd-5th grade classes to solidify learning with movement; the continuation of free after school clubs that focus on fitness, nutrition, and gardening; and more fresh and healthy foods in school cafeterias along with recipes you can try at home. Lastly, you’ll see and get the opportunity to participate in our community events which are possible with the continued support of our partners. Good things are happening in Fauquier County, and we are looking forward to an active and healthy school year.

Please share FRESH Perspectives with friends, family, coworkers, and colleagues. Please visit www.Fauquierfresh.org or send comments and questions to freshfauquier@gmail.com.

Pam Pulver
FRESH Supervisor
community voices

From 2nd graders @ Brumfield ES:

“When I think of FRESH, I think of the sign in the cafeteria that reminds me of healthy foods like apples, bananas, fruit, and vegetables. FRESH helps to keep my body calm and happy. I get to do things that I have never done before!”

From Pearson Cafeteria Manager:

“We love the salad spinner, new knives and mandolin and we wouldn’t have them if it weren’t for FRESH!”

From Diane Turner, Warrenton:

“I really want you to know the children were excited and very grateful for everything we did today. It makes it all worthwhile. I had kids coming back for another serving of zucchini, which normally I only see when we have French fries.”

From Sally, Registered Dietitian, Mom and blogger:

“As a former finicky eater myself, I understand where my kids are coming from when they’re suspicious of a seemingly innocuous sprinkling of parsley. So I try to be patient”

To read more tips and tricks to make meal times successful, check out Sally’s article at www.realmomnutrition.com/picky-eaters.

Fostering a Taste for Health

Parents, do you have picky eaters? Is dinner a stress-filled struggle to get one healthy bite of food into your child? Is dinner a repeat of Dino-nuggets and hot dogs? Now, please don’t misunderstand. Both of these foods have their place, and I have eaten and served my fair share, however, problems arise when picky eaters refuse to eat anything but a handful of foods. When a child’s diet lacks variety of food options, he or she is at risk for malnutrition and illness, both of which adversely affects learning and retention.

FRESH CHEF Natalie and the Fauquier Department of Nutrition are here to help with tasty recipes and repetition. Studies show that tasting new or disliked foods anywhere from 10-20 times will train the brain to accept the food as likeable if not outright delicious. Simple, healthy recipes go a long way in assisting the process.

Each month FRESH Chef Natalie plans and organizes tastings at three Fauquier County schools. These tastings provide a valuable service to students and cafeteria staff. The foods and recipes tested are featured on the Fauquier County school menu the following month on Try-it-Thursday. Participating in tastings gives students a preview of the What’s FRESH food of the month. They then vote whether they love it, dislike it, or think it’s just okay. Votes are tallied which tell the cafeteria how much to make on Try-it-Thursdays to avoid waste and keep costs in check.

Students vote by placing orange tickets in the box that most closely matches their opinion.

Share your perspective and lend your voice by visiting www.FauquierFresh.org or send comments and questions to freshfaquier@gmail.com.

Follow FRESH on social media for the most recent happenings on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram.
Reducing Food Insecurity Through Strong Community Partnerships

When community partnerships are formed and everyone has the same end-goal – to help reduce food insecurity and increase food equity within the community – then the entire community benefits. The success of FRESH’s vision for healthy students, families, school staff, & communities relies on strong school & community partnerships. FRESH participated in two significant initiatives over the past year – community cooking classes and participation at local farmers’ markets to include tastings, cooking activities, and the Power of Produce (POP) Club.

FRESH community cooking classes were held in a series of four sessions (four weeks each from May to September) to provide culinary training as well as nutrition and consumer education focusing on fresh, seasonal produce to our neighbors in need. Classes met this past summer at Fauquier High School, a great space to cook, thanks to Principal Tripp Burton & Culinary Teacher Ms. Hale. Furthermore, the Fauquier Education Farm provided produce on a weekly basis for participants to both cook with & take home to utilize during the week. Jim Hankins (director of the Education Farm) took the time to allow us to film short videos on the farm during weekly harvests to provide information straight from the farmer about the produce being harvested.

These videos were utilized in the community cooking class as well as made available to students & parents via the FRESH Facebook page. Additionally, people have been very adventurous with experimenting with new flavors & different types of produce. FRESH even had a sampling of exotic fruit!

Participants had fun in FRESH Community Cooking Classes making steamed wontons using assorted fresh veggies from the Fauquier Education Farm & proteins from Happy Family Ranch, Inc. A little bit of really good protein went a long way, and everyone loved the curry sausage mixture.
Current guidelines suggest that children need 60 minutes of vigorous physical activity daily. It is estimated that only about 42% of children ages 6-11 and only 8% of adolescents are meeting those requirements. Diseases such as Type II Diabetes are on the rise in youth, which in the past was extremely rare. Recent studies have shown that physical activity is the key to the prevention and management of many illnesses including Type II Diabetes. “We’re literally killing ourselves...What’s more disturbing, and what virtually no one recognizes, is that inactivity is killing our brains too—physically shriveling them” (Ratey, 4).

What are Fauquier County Public Schools doing to combat the lack of physical activity and increase learning and retention? They have collaborated with FRESH to provide each elementary school with Fitness Integration Team Specialist or FITS. These individuals develop ways to teach content-based lessons while using physical activity. Research has shown that students who do brief bursts of exercise before taking tests, score higher. In addition, regular activity breaks during the school day can help sharpen students’ abilities to focus and stay on task.

As Dr. Ratey describes in SPARK, students who participated in his Zero Hour PE experiment experienced a 17% improvement in reading and comprehension, compared with a 10.7 percent improvement among students who opted to sleep in (Ratey, 11). Furthermore, when applied to entire school districts results showed increases in mandatory state test and ACT scores (Ratey, 13). It is the goal of FRESH to continue ensuring that fitness is incorporated into classrooms and to offer before/after school clubs for students in order to increase their

Students crab-walk to their treasure. Physical and mental exercise are equally important to good health.
FRESH Clubs for Healthy Students

As quoted by Ratey in SPARK, Carl Cotman, director of the Institute for Brain Aging and Dementia at the University of CA, Irvine says, “One of the prominent features of exercise is an improvement in the rate of learning, and I think that’s a really good take-home message.” We at FRESH completely agree!

Furthermore, in his own experience Ratey explains, “When the students go for a mile run in the gym, they are more prepared to learn in their other classes: their senses are heightened; their focus and mood are improved; they’re less fidgety and tense; and they feel more health and learning. Incorporating a game called “Exercise the Answer” a teacher can get the students up and exercising while still keeping up with their benchmarks.

What can you as a parent do to combat inactivity in your children? Show your children the path! Children, especially younger children, tend to mimic things they see their parents or teachers doing. Showing them that physical activity can be fun and enjoyable may help to rewrite their story. Perhaps your family will join the FRESH team as we Step to Avoid Pounds this December (be sure and let us know if you do) or perhaps you’ll find a different activity to engage in with your children.

Decreasing screen time encourages outside or more active play such as balloon volleyball, a quick game of soccer, a nature walk, a relay race, or a game of tag. Child involvement in activities like martial arts, dance, or a team sport can teach them so many important lessons but also get their heart rate up and oxygen to their brain! Setting small goals, having fun as a family, and using physical activity as a reward while establishing a regular fitness routine can increase your chances of making a lifelong impact on your child.

For the 2018-2019 school year the following tastings have occurred:

- **August** - Parmesan Zucchini Crunch @ PB Smith, Brumfield, and Warrenton.
- **September** – Fuji, gala, and red delicious apples @ Pierce, Pearson, and Taylor.
- **October** – Roasted broccoli and broccoli microgreens @ Mary Walter, Greenville, and Coleman.
- **November** – Herbs: basil, dill, cilantro and parsley @ Cedar Lee, Grace Miller, and PB Smith.

All tastings this year have been a huge success. We hear over and over from students, “May I have more, please?” “Wow, that’s good.” “Delicious!!” Okay, so maybe these kids just really like their vegetables, but these exclamations of support are also due to the fact that Chef Natalie is an expert in the kitchen. Her recipes are simple, easy to make, and always tasty. Her roasted broccoli method can be found on page 7.

It takes a team to make good things happen in Fauquier school cafeterias. Chef Natalie partners with Master Gardener volunteers from the VA Cooperative Extension and others. If you are interested in joining us for some tasting fun and your child or grandchild attends one of these schools or you’d like to be placed on a volunteer list for future tastings, please send an email to freshfauquier@gmail.com.

If you’d like to read more tips and tricks to help make meal times successful, check out this article at www.realmomnutrition.com/picky-eaters.
Roasted Broccoli Method

From the kitchen of Chef Natalie

Ingredients
Broccoli (whole head or florets), rinsed & dried on a clean towel
Grapeseed or olive oil mist
Salt

Special Equipment
Baking pan
Parchment paper to line pan (optional)

Method
1. Preheat oven to 425°F.

2. If your broccoli is not already cut into florets, cut the head into bite sized florets. If your first cut of the head into florets yields a golf ball sized piece, cut that piece into 4 pieces. This will yield a good size for roasting. Your florets may need some trimming as well – similar sized pieces ensure that pieces are cooked evenly.

3. Spray the baking pan or parchment paper with oil mist. Spread the broccoli on to the pan, spray with oil mist (to help broccoli brown), & sprinkle with salt. If you are making a large batch, try not to pack the pan too tightly. There should be space between the pieces to allow for air circulation so that the broccoli becomes crisp instead of steaming (which happens when moisture doesn’t evaporate between the pieces if they are crowded while cooking).

4. Roast in the oven for 5-8 minutes or until the desired level of crispiness is reached.

Chef Natalie’s Notes:
Whole head vs. florets? Pre-cut florets are an excellent option if you need to keep prep time for a healthy dinner short. However, please look carefully at the bag you choose to be sure that there is no sign of rot (black mold or mush brown spots) on the pieces inside. If time permits, purchase a whole head of broccoli & cut it yourself. This will ensure that the broccoli is as fresh as possible. If your broccoli head comes with a stem, you can peel the stem (if the outside is tough) & cut it into pieces slightly smaller than the florets to roast as well.

Get the kids cooking: This method is an excellent one for kids to help prep. Once large pieces are cut from the broccoli head, younger helpers can pull them into smaller pieces & older helpers, if supervised, can use a butter knife or kid friendly knife.

Spice it up! Here are a few kid tested seasoning suggestions to change up the flavor profile to match what you are having for dinner:

- Italian seasoning & grated or shredded Parmesan cheese
- Crushed red pepper & chopped fresh oregano
- Grated ginger & raw sesame seeds
- Chopped garlic, chili powder, & lemon zest, lime zest, or ground sumac
- Curry powder or Garam Masala & chopped fresh cilantro

Roasted broccoli is a versatile way to add variety to a main course or as a great snack that kids can help prepare.
FRESH Clubs

motivated and invigorated. The same goes for adults, in the classroom of life.”

Thanks to the Path Foundation, FRESH has been able to fund and support 6 before, after, or sometimes during the day, school clubs in 16-19 of Fauquier County Schools for the last 2 years. Coordinated by school Wellness Leaders, FRESH clubs specifically support fitness, nutrition, or gardening in a variety of ways. Our supportive and creative Club Facilitators have a passion for imparting knowledge and skills in these areas to their students. They understand the importance of movement and making healthy choices and lead their students by example. Clubs may be coming to an end for this season, but be assured they will be starting back up again after the holidays – some as early as January. Be sure to keep in touch with your school’s Wellness Leader to know what’s happening and sign your children up for these great opportunities to increase fitness, make healthy food, and learn about gardening. Visit https://fauquierfresh.org/clubs for a list of current clubs at each Fauquier County school.

Food Insecurity

the Warrenton Farmers’ Market, who invited FRESH be a part of POP (Power of Produce) Club and hold monthly tastings & cooking activities to reinforce healthy eating habits. Fauquier FISH also partnered with FRESH to distribute POP Bucks to all elementary school students to be used at the Wednesday & Saturday Warrenton Farmers’ Markets as well as the Sunday Archwood Green Barns Market in The Plains.

FRESH would like to express our sincere gratitude to the schools & organizations that have partnered with us on initiatives in the past year. We are looking forward to working with these partners and new partners on these and future projects.

THE FRESH PROGRAM

Fauquier Reaches for Excellence in School Health (FRESH) is a county-wide program to create a culture of health and wellness for students, staff and the community. The program is funded by a grant from the PATH Foundation. The FRESH program focuses on creating positive and healthy changes in our classrooms, cafeterias, after-school settings, and within the community – ultimately helping our students enjoy healthier lives.

Learn more about FRESH by visiting https://fauquierfresh.org.

The FRESH program is made possible with our partnership with the Path Foundation.

FRESH NEWSLETTER

The program’s newsletter will be published approximately 3 times per year by the Fauquier Reaches for Excellence in School Health program (FRESH) in partnership with Fauquier County and the School District.

The newsletter is also available in digital format (PDF) online at https://fauquierfresh.org.

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Please direct all inquiries and remarks to freshfauquier@gmail.com. Mention any advertising questions in the subject line. Letters may be sent to 430 E. Shirely Ave. A-1, Warrenton, VA 20186, Attn: Editor.

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