November 30, 2010

Student Community Outreach - A Focus on Wellness

Hearing Screens

As part of National Audiology Awareness Month, Doctor of Audiology students and faculty offered free hearing screens to LSUHSC employees. Approximately 50 individuals took advantage of the hearing screens and education on custom hearing protection.

LSUHSC Annual Health & Wellness Event

On Thursday, November 4, 2010, the Physical Therapy class of 2012, Wellness Center, Campus Assistance Program and other departments in the School of Allied Health, held a campus wide Health and Wellness event.

The 4th Annual Event, “Taking Steps to a Better Tomorrow,” provided eight-eight members of the LSUHSC community with an opportunity to gather personal health information including, vitals, posture, strength, and flexibility. Participants were also provided with a variety of health information ranging from stress management, nutrition and fall prevention. The participants also received physical fitness tips, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator and taking advantage of the on-campus LSUHSC Wellness Center.

Ecole Classique Health & Wellness Event

Childhood obesity is a growing concern in the United States. According to the 2010 Trust for America’s Health Report, Louisiana is ranked 5th highest in the country for obesity.

The Physical Therapy class of 2012 developed a health and wellness event for Ecole Classique, an elementary school in Jefferson parish. The Ecole Classique Health & Wellness Event explored student health behaviors, and educated students, parents, and teachers on practices of healthy living.

The goal of this event was to increase awareness among LSUHSC students, faculty and staff of the full-service Audiology clinic that is available on campus. The Audiology department specializes in balance and tinnitus disorders and cochlear implants.

Continued on page 2
A total of 82 children, 1st through 6th grade, participated in the event. The students were educated on healthy lifestyles and participated in fitness events, such as tug-of-war. Parents were also given a healthy recipe booklet to reinforce healthy eating habits at home.

**Pack it Light and Wear it Right**

Occupational therapy students participated in National School Backpack Awareness Day. To reduce the number of backpack-related back pain displayed by individuals ages 9-20, the American Occupational Therapy Association initiated a “Pack it Light and Wear it Right” campaign. This campaign stresses that a backpack should not be more than 15% of an individual's body weight. One should pack the larger items closest to the body and the pack should fit snugly on the back and above the buttocks.

LSUHSC Occupational Therapy students promoted this campaign to over 300 students at St. Peter’s Catholic School in Covington. To demonstrate how to pick the right backpack, how to pack it right and wear it correctly, the OT students engaged the children in various activities, including a backpack weigh-in.

Occupational therapy students continued the awareness campaign at the LSUHSC Wellness Center, Marigny Elementary School in Mandeville, Sacred Heart School in New Orleans, and Allemands Elementary in St. Charles parish.

For more information on backpack awareness, please visit http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/Awareness/School-Backpack-Awareness/Backpack08.aspx

**Facts on Obesity**

- 64.9% of Louisiana adults are overweight or obese
- During the 2008-2009 school year, height and weight taken on approximately 13,000 children (2-19 yrs old) seen in School Based Health Centers in Louisiana indicated 47.54% were overweight or obese (28.98% obese)
- Since 1990, the prevalence of obesity increased by 135%
- Obesity & overweight are associated with increased risk for costly chronic diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, osteoarthritis and some cancers
- Obese adults have a 36% higher average annual medical expenditure than adults at normal weight
- The cost of child obesity-associated illness increased from 35-127 million in the past 2 decades

Information can be accessed from http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/?ID=270 Louisiana Council on Obesity Prevention and Management Website

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Promoting Leadership & Collaboration within an Interdisciplinary Network

Please address any suggestions or comments to tgunal@lsuhsc.edu

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November 30, 2010

Ecole Classique Continued from page 1

The members of the Speech Language and Hearing student association are Life Club volunteers. The Life Club is a community-based social group for young adults with Asperger syndrome or autism. Asperger Syndrome is a social communication disorder. The Speech and Audiology students assist members of the Life Club by being peers and teaching social skills needed for community outings, such as how to handle money and calculating tips.

Students serve as role models and work with individuals in their natural environment and in the community while applying best principles of language therapy to further functional social and communication skills.

The Speech and Audiology students attended a Life Club Halloween party and facilitated appropriate social interaction and communication with the social group.