

spring
2010

infectiously
contaminating
kids of all ages,
to learn,
have fun &
make great
life choices . . .
Let the epidemic
begin with you!

healthworks!

news

infectiously contaminating fun

HealthWorks! celebrates first birthday

Whappy Facts:

February 2009 - May 2010

- 38,429 total
- 22,808 students
- 9,510 general admission
- 1,136 campers
- 1,212 birthday party guests
- 99% positive rating from teachers who would recommend HW to others



Hats off to HealthWorks!

More than 300 visitors came to celebrate Healthworks! first birthday with hula hoop-la, magical floating orbs, a "Tune Time" singing contest and much more.



Wanted: Fun-loving 'Voluncheers'



Yvette Slocum, voluncheer at HealthWorks!, spends some time with Lighten Up!-Running is Fun participants before class begins.

Busy mom and community volunteer Yvette Slocum has many irons in the fire on any given day. As president of the Lee County Medical Alliance, Slocum was involved with helping to launch and support the Lighten Up – Running Is Fun and Lighten Up – Fitness Is Fun programs that are sponsored by the Alliance and offered through HealthWorks!.

Slocum was so “infectiously contaminated” by the all the fun she had helping out with these

programs that she is now one of HealthWorks! most dedicated “voluncheers.”

“When they gave me the name ‘voluncheer,’ I thought, ‘I absolutely am!’ I just love that title,” said Slocum. “There is so much joy from the moment that you walk in the door that it just makes learning fun. The enthusiasm is infectious, and I just wanted to be a part of it, even more than the time I spent there helping with the Lighten Up programs.”

So now she also assists with camps and provides guidance and an extra set of hands when large school groups visit HealthWorks!.

“One of the camps I liked best was the ‘Fit and Fab’ camp for girls,” she recalled. “We would come in and talk with the young girls about how to look good on a budget and how to dress for their body type. They learned about making healthy lifestyle choices, how to exercise and how to look good. They were just darling.”

“Yvette is a High-Flying Kid Motivator at heart,” said Donna

Loden, who coordinates the education programs at HealthWorks!. “She’s enthusiastic, nurturing, and interacts wonderfully well with all children. Kids had better be ready to roll when Yvette is ‘in the house’ because she is wide open all the time!”

Voluncheer opportunities abound at HealthWorks! for high-energy, fun-loving individuals who enjoy working with children, according to Linda Stokes, who oversees operations at the children’s health center. Duties include interacting with HealthWorks! visitors, assisting with birthday parties and special programs, and clerical support.

To join in the fun, contact the North Mississippi Medical Center Volunteer Services Department at (662) 377-3131 and tell them you’d like to submit an application to join the HealthWorks! Voluncheer Squad.

Voluncheer – (vā-lən-'chir) :

a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to assist with infectiously contaminating kids of all ages to learn, have fun and make great life choices.



HealthWorks! creates lasting impressions

Virtually everyone who visits HealthWorks! agrees that the interactive experience is entertaining and memorable. But the most encouraging news of all comes from a recent study which indicates that kids who visit HealthWorks! are learning and retaining health information that has the potential to positively impact their lives.

Last spring, a team of researchers at the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University conducted an evaluation for HealthWorks!. The evaluation included pre- and post-visit surveys of elementary students who participated in the Scrubbadubbagegethink-ercising® program, as well as satisfaction surveys of students, teachers,

parents and chaperones who visited there.

“As for the satisfaction surveys, we learned that people are having a great time at HealthWorks!. They love it there and think it is a great resource,” said Ginger W. Cross, Ph.D., who helped coordinate the research project for the SSRC.

Best of all, in satisfaction surveys conducted among a sample of elementary students who visited HealthWorks!, 94 percent of kindergartners through fourth-graders and 84 percent of fifth- and sixth-graders agreed they would make healthier

choices because they visited HealthWorks!.

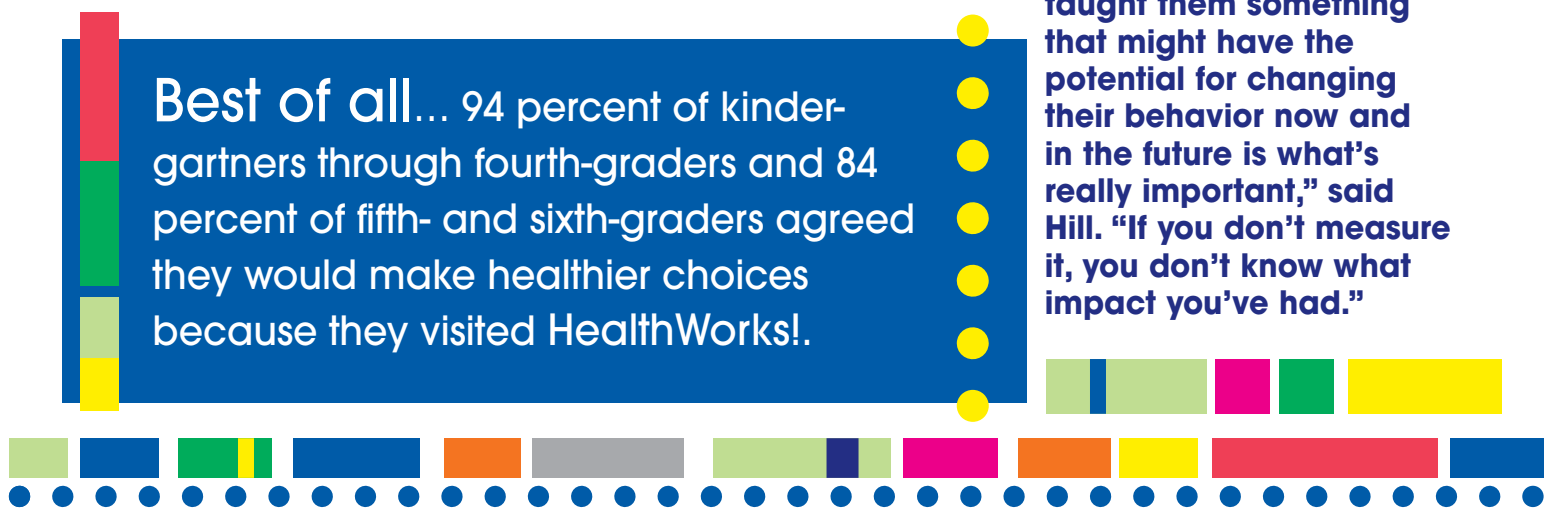
Ongoing evaluation will be critical to the success of HealthWorks!, said Edward Hill, M.D., FAAFP. Hill currently serves on the faculty for the NMMC Family Medicine Residency Program, and has played a key advisory role in the planning and launch of HealthWorks!

“The issue is this: You can have fun, interactive activity with children to teach them almost anything. But being able to prove that you have taught them something that might have the potential for changing their behavior now and in the future is what’s really important,” said Hill. **“If you don’t measure it, you don’t know what impact you’ve had.”**



The Scrubba program utilizes molar stools donated by Dr. Dan Kellum (center) and his brother, Dr. Tom Kellum. Pictured from left with Kellum are High Flying Kid Motivators Donna Loden, Tracy Williams, Tracey Goggans and Helen Boerner.

Best of all... 94 percent of kindergartners through fourth-graders and 84 percent of fifth- and sixth-graders agreed they would make healthier choices because they visited HealthWorks!.



school visit

Bank provides generous gift for Tippah Students



Tippah County educators and representatives from The Peoples Bank in Ripley experienced HealthWorks! firsthand in November. Pictured from left are Tony Elliott, Eddie Connor, Timmy Bryant, Frank Campbell, Bobby P. Martin, Scott Smith, Bonita Cross, Becky Benson and Nedra Nabors.

Christmas 2009 came early for the North Tippah and South Tippah school districts. The superintendents and elementary school principals learned in early November that The Peoples Bank of Ripley was offering to pay for every second, third and fourth grade student to visit HealthWorks! in Tupelo.

Bobby Martin, president of The Peoples Bank of Ripley and chairman of the North Mississippi Health Services Board of Directors, was involved with the planning stages of HealthWorks!. He traveled with Health Care Foundation of North Mississippi board members and community leaders to visit HealthWorks! in South Bend, Ind. There, he saw firsthand the fun, interactive programs that were being taught to students and knew he wanted the children of Tippah County to have that same opportunity to learn about healthy behaviors when HealthWorks! opened in Tupelo.

Now that HealthWorks! is a

reality in north Mississippi, Martin wanted to ensure that Tippah County elementary students got the chance to visit.

“We want to help all of our schools in the county, because we want to be a catalyst that will improve the health of our youngsters,” said Martin. “Without good health, they can’t learn.”

Martin and his team recognized that tough economic times and the 45-mile distance to Tupelo served as barriers for the Tippah County schools to schedule field trips to HealthWorks!, said Becky Benson, senior vice president of marketing and personnel for The Peoples Bank.

“Our schools here in Tippah County, like everywhere else, are strapped for money,” said Benson. “It’s hard to take a group off and it not cost a good bit. We’ve lost a lot of jobs here in our community and it’s hard on many of our parents to provide extra things, like the expense of a field trip, for their children ... So we just decided among ourselves that

we were going to make a commitment to help our schools get there.”

In early November, Martin and Benson assembled a meeting of the superintendents and elementary school principals to offer their financial support to send the

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- Bobby Martin

county’s 1,000 second, third and fourth graders to HealthWorks!. They also offered to arrange a trip for the superintendents and principals to visit HealthWorks! to determine for themselves whether they thought their students would benefit from the experience.

school visit



“I absolutely loved it. To me, it wasn’t just for children. It was for big kids too ... I thoroughly enjoyed myself ...”

- Bonita Cross

The educators readily accepted the bank’s offer. On Nov. 19, the group loaded a bus driven by South Tippah Superintendent Frank Campbell and headed to HealthWorks!. They observed sixth graders from Henderson Intermediate School in Starkville participate in the Amazing Body game show.

“I was very impressed with the facilities and staff of HealthWorks!,” said Campbell. “It was really a wonderful trip for me to get to go see it. I had heard about it from others but had not had the opportunity to visit.”

Campbell noted that Martin and the bank have supported the schools in many ways over the years, and he is appreciative of this most recent gift.

“I think for them to do this outreach to our schools is a tremendous gesture. We are certainly thankful and grateful,” he said. “I think all the principals liked what they saw at HealthWorks! and will accept the bank’s offer... With a gift like that, you certainly want to provide the kids that opportunity.”

Bonita Cross, principal of Falkner Elementary, was one of the principals who traveled to HealthWorks! in November. She quickly scheduled her school’s field trip for the spring of 2010, and said all her fellow principals planned to follow suit.

“I absolutely loved it,” she said. “To me, it wasn’t just for children. It was for big kids too ... I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I watched the children who were there that day. They were so excited and they just loved every aspect of it. I thought, ‘These kids are just like the kids at my school, so I know our kids will love it, too.’”

Cross is excited about the prospect of her students visiting HealthWorks! this spring and believes the experience will provide invaluable lessons for her kids.

“What good is all the education we can provide for our kids if they are not healthy? Learning good health should be part of their education – learning how to keep their bodies healthy so they can be productive citizens,” Cross

said. “And what better way to teach them than through an interactive experience? You can stand up there (in the classroom) and tell them about (good health) all day long, but until they get (to HealthWorks!) and participate and see it for themselves, it will not hit home with them.”

Cross is particularly grateful for the bank’s generosity in sponsoring the field trips because many of her students would be unable to participate otherwise.

“Mr. Martin did this out of the goodness of his heart. He has always, always, always been there when we needed anything,” said Cross. “He’s never made me feel like I was begging. He wants to know when we were having certain fundraisers and what we were going to do with (the money raised). He’s always interested in what we were doing because he truly cares about all of our kids ... not just my kids, not just Ripley Elementary, not just Pine Grove, not just Blue Mountain. **He cares about all our kids, and that is something that is hard to find.**”

teamwork

Teamwork is key to success



To the unsuspecting HealthWorks! visitor, the cheering, underwear-waving, game-playing staff may seem a bit chaotic. But taking a closer look, that same visitor would find that in reality, the “chaos” is carefully planned and deeply rooted in teamwork.

That spirit of teamwork recently manifested as the staff planned camp sessions offered over the Thanksgiving, winter and spring school breaks, said Donna Loden, the imaginator of awesome experiences who oversees the education programs at HealthWorks!

During the school year, the High Flying Kid Motivators and Captains of the Universe typically are focused on their respective areas and responsibilities. The High Flying Kid Motivators, who include Kathy Tucker, Helen Boerner, Kelly Manley, Tracy Williams and Tracey Goggans, conduct the education programs in the classrooms. The Captains of the Universe, who include David Estes, Emily Guyton, Abby Wallace, Leslie Burks, Kayla Parker and Spencer Gray, assist students with the exhibits and activities found on the Funtastic Floor.

It's all about teamwork for HealthWorks! staff members (from left) Natalie Rooney, David Estes, Linda Stokes, Helen Boerner, Tracey Goggans, Donna Loden, Kathy Tucker, Tracy Williams and Leslie Burks.

“On a normal day, it’s hard for the two groups to collaborate because they are in different parts of the center, and each group is focused on delivering excellent customer service in their particular areas,” said Loden. “But with the camps, everyone comes together to plan, set up and conduct the camp sessions ... By their very nature, camps are just crazy, wacky fun, and together we have come up with some unique ideas.”

Guyton agrees that teamwork has been the key to the success of the camps. One example she noted was the team’s transformation of the “Who Stole the Pizza” camp last summer into the “Mystery of the Missing Feast” over Thanksgiving.

“It was really cute,” Guyton explained. “We set up a table for a Thanksgiving feast based on ‘Who Stole the Turkey.’ We learned how to use our powers of observation to gather evidence. With Clue Books in hand, we went around the building and interviewed different employees to try to figure out who stole the turkey. The

group then met to compare notes and to find the guilty party. It was a lot of fun!”

Just days before the Happy New Hoopla camp was set to begin, Guyton, Estes and Tucker started creating a cityscape out of cardboard boxes. The cityscape originated from a brainstorming session between Tucker and Estes as they were preparing for the camp. But when the other team members observed the creative set going up, they quickly determined that they, too, wanted to incorporate using the cityscape into their respective camps.

“Everyone uses it for different purposes, and everyone is adding to it to suit their needs,” said Tucker. **“It’s all about teamwork ... I think we all take a step back and look at it from the perspective of the children who are coming to the various camps - what’s going to make them have an outstanding experience. That is what really matters.”**



special programs

HealthWorks! launches new programs

From dissecting a pig's heart to understanding food labels to winning the double dare of a fascinating anatomy and physiology game, new programs around this year at HealthWorks!.

HealthWorks! Academy continues to add new programs to its field trip roster. Some of the newest offerings are:

Anatomy Academy

Targeted for 6th through 8th graders, this program enables students to roll up their sleeves and participate in the dissection of a pig's heart and examine the real lungs of a pig. Students use stethoscopes, pulse oximeters and X-rays to learn about the anatomy and physiology of their heart and lungs, as well as discover some fascinating facts about their own bodies.

Be a Food Groupie

Geared for 3rd through 5th graders, this program explains the purpose of food and eating,



Educator and "Food Groupie" Teresa Langley flexed her muscles as a "Protein Machine" for third and fourth graders as a "Protein Machine" for third and fourth graders she accompanied from Hamilton and Guin (Ala.) elementary schools.

and consequently why not all food is created equally. Students gain "smart-food-know-how" such as choosing whole grains and reading food labels through various interactivities and demonstrations.

Clean Up Your Act

Designed for 4th and 5th graders, this program takes a light approach to addressing the importance of good personal hygiene and some of the changes boys and girls can expect as they enter puberty.

Double Dare

Created for 3rd, 4th and 5th graders, this game-show type program engages the students in friendly competition as they spin the wheel, use wild props and don crazy costumes to discover incredible facts about the anatomy and physiology of the heart, lungs, kidneys, bones, stomach and muscles.

Eat it Up!

Suited for pre-K and kindergarten students, Eat it Up! is an interactive program that takes kids on a nutritious and delicious journey exploring food, a healthy diet, digestion and fun exercise.

Fantastic Five

Designed for 1st and 2nd graders, this SENSE-ational program takes students on a superhero tour through their body's senses. Whether it's through sight, sound, touch, smell or taste, students discover that their brain is esSCENTial when it comes to discovering the world around them.

For more information on these or any programs offered through HealthWorks!, please call (662) 377-KIDS or visit healthworkskids.org.



Whappy Birthday!

Meri Alan Wolfe celebrated her best birthday ever at HealthWorks! last summer. Meri Alan and friends ushered in her 6th birthday by playing on the Funtastic Floor, creating Wacky Hats and eating birthday cake.



If you are interested in hosting a HealthWorks! birthday party for your child, give us a call at (662) 377-KIDS (5437).

HealthWorks! is open to the public Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. & Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.



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