

# *Health and Physical Education Service-Learning Projects*



## *Physical Fitness and Activity*

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade students decided that their community needed a fun and safe environment to encourage physical exercise. So the students took over the entire planning of the annual fun run at their school and designed markers for the new running path in the area.
- Working with community health services, 8<sup>th</sup> grade physical education students developed age-appropriate exercises for senior citizens. The students then provided a place and program for “seniors” to exercise during the winter months.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade students learned the basics about nutrition and exercise, including the various winter sport activities that New England has to offer. The students wanted to learn how to snowshoe safely so they partnered with experts from the Kittery Trading Post. Students then shared what they had learned about snowshoeing with the community through written and oral presentations, in hopes that they would encourage others to engage in healthy activities.

## *Drugs and Alcohol*

- After learning about public policy, 7<sup>th</sup> grade students decided there was a need for better public policy preventing alcohol advertisers from deliberately targeting young people. The students researched alcohol advertisements and proposed new policies, which they presented at two city-wide public forums and in letters to their local elected officials.
- 12<sup>th</sup> grade students worked with the student council on an annual alcohol education and awareness program. The students put together posters with graphs and tabular charts depicting information about blood alcohol content and displayed them in the school during the two-day program.

## *Nutrition*

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade students worked with their Public Schools Wellness Policy Committee to help develop, implement, and monitor new nutrition policies. The students also put together a healthy kid-friendly cookbook and held a healthy food fair to share what they learned about nutrition with the whole community.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students learned about the importance of starting healthy eating and exercising habits at a young age and decided to work with the Jump Rope for Heart Campaign to teach their peers about healthy habits. The students recruited sponsorships and participants for a Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser, which raised over \$2,100 for the American Heart Association.

## ***School Climate and Bullying***

- After an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student wrote a personal essay about his experience with bullying he decided to do an independent study project addressing the issue of bullying in schools. Working with the school administration, the school newspaper and his teacher, the student published his essay in the school newspaper to encourage discussion about the issue and created a computer game to simulate the effect of bullying on all individuals involved.

## ***Sexuality and Gender Issues***

- High school students learned Planned Parenthood needed help educating young people in their community about safer sex practices. So the students participated in a Planned Parenthood Peer Educator program and then set out to educate their peers. The students designed and presented workshops at a Pregnancy Prevention Day at their school as well as other area schools, and local and regional conferences. In all, the students educated over 300 people about safer sex practices.

## ***Disease and Illness***

- 10<sup>th</sup> grade students learned about Lyme Disease, which is a major problem in their area. The students then decided to educate their community about the dangers of Lyme Disease through a variety of projects including: a radio interview, public service announcement, puppet play, benefit dinner and a webpage.
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in a Medical Occupations Class were asked by the March of Dimes to educate the community on the importance of folic acid in their diets. The students agreed to work on the project. After doing extensive research on folic acid they created slideshows, posters and pamphlets of information on folic acid, which they shared with their peers. They also gave copies of their materials to school nurses and the March of Dimes.

## ***Injury Prevention and Safety***

- 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students learned about the number of accidents and injuries that occur because people are not wearing helmets or seatbelts. Students partnered with LifeFlight of Maine and the local Fire & Rescue among others to address this dangerous problem. The students held a public safety field day, a local health fair, made videos and PowerPoint presentations and even meet with the governor to discuss new safety legislation.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students learned that their school needed better sun safety education. The students researched UV rays, skin cancer and sun safety and then proposed a new school policy about sun safety. They also made and distributed posters and informational brochures to educate others in their community about sun safety.
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade students learned that emergency responders in their town needed a more effective and efficient way to identify possible concerns and hazards (overhead electrical wires, staircases, children's bedrooms, etc.) at an emergency scene. The students conducted surveys of potential concerns and hazards in their local community and created a computer prototype that can quickly identify hazards; this prototype was presented to the Town Council.