



## WALKING YOUR WAY TO A HEALTHIER LIFE

### A Worksite Walking Challenge

Two of the essential elements in creating an environment conducive to physical activity are **providing access** to physical activity opportunities during and after work hours and **educating** employees about the importance of physical activity. A simple way to implement these WorkHealthy America recommendations is to encourage employees to participate in wellness activities and programs. Consider offering incentives like gift cards or cash bonuses to motivate employees to engage in these opportunities.

A walking challenge is a great way to encourage employees and staff to live healthy! By using a fun and supportive approach, a challenge helps people make positive decisions and find new ways to make healthy choices and be more physically active. Teams of employees record their miles on a mileage log, turn in their logs, and win prizes. It's that simple! This challenge, developed by Be Active NC, can be used as part of a wellness campaign to promote physical activity among employees of all shifts, departments, ages and fitness levels. It can also be used as a guideline to create your own event!

#### Included in this packet:

Walking Challenge flyer

Captain log

Coordinator log

Individual log

Weekly newsletter

Weekly tips and workouts





Sponsored by:



# WALKING

# CHALLENGE

Month x - Month x, 2013

The Sylvan Elementary Staff Walking Challenge is a great way to challenge yourself and your co-workers to live healthy in 2012.

By using a fun and supportive approach, the Challenge will help you make positive choices and find new ways to make healthy food choices and be more physically active.

## The Sylvan Walking Challenge is simple!

- Create a team of 3-5 people and select a team captain
- Choose a team name and notify your coordinator
- Record your miles on the mileage log
- Report your miles to your team captain every week
- Team Captain will report mileage to Coordinator
- There will be a prize drawing every week.
- The teams with the highest average miles per person win the grand prize.

## Walk and be active to earn great prizes!



## Join the Challenge

Creat a Team! Track your miles! Get healthy!

Who should join?  
EVERYONE!

### How can I earn more miles?

**All walking counts!** Walk during your lunch break, take your dog for a walk, park farther away, join a walking group. Start a walking club with other staff members!

### How do I get started?

For more information, or to sign up , contact :

### Sample Wellness Events - Every Thursday!

-  
Date, Time - Walk and stretching with \_\_\_\_

Date, Time- Lunch - Cooking demo with \_\_\_\_

Date, Time - Walk and strength training with \_\_\_\_

Date, Lunch - Healthy snacks with \_\_\_\_

Date, Time - Walk and core training with \_\_\_\_

Date, Lunch - Healthy snacks with \_\_\_\_

Date, Lunch- Cooking demo with \_\_\_\_

Date, Time - Walk and workout with \_\_\_\_



**Walking Challenge**  
**Month X – Month X, 2013**  
**Team Captain Log**

**Team Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Team Name:</b>	<b>Name 1</b>	<b>Name2</b>	<b>Name 3</b>	<b>Name 4</b>	<b>Name 5</b>	<b>Team Total</b>
<b>Week 1</b>						
<b>Week 2</b>						
<b>Week 3</b>						
<b>Week 4</b>						
<b>Week 5</b>						
<b>Week 6</b>						

- Send your team's miles to \_\_\_\_\_ every Monday afternoon.
- Keep your team on track by sending each member the weekly newsletter that will be sent to you by Joan.
- Encourage your team members to be physically active whenever possible and log more miles!



**Walking Challenge**  
**Month x to Month x, 2013**  
**Coordinator Log**

Week:	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team4	Team 5	Total
Week 1						
Week 2						
Week 3						
Week 4						
Week 5						
Week 6						

- Forward weekly email from \_\_\_\_\_ to all team captains.
- Send your team totals to \_\_\_\_ every Tuesday morning, beginning Month x.
- Continue encouraging your staff to be more physically active and walk more miles!



## Walking Challenge

### Month x to Month x, 2013 Mileage Log

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Week:	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekly Total
Week 1								
Week 2								
Week 3								
Week 4								
Week 5								
Week 6								

- Send your miles from the previous week to your team captain every Monday.
- Read the weekly newsletters for tips and ideas of how to increase your mileage and make healthy choices.
- Be physically active whenever possible - walk at work, with your friends, with your family and with your coworkers!



# WEEK ONE

## More Active! More Often!

Thank you for joining the Sylvan Walking Challenge. To participate, simply begin logging the number of miles that you walk each day. Every Monday, please send your activity minutes for the previous week to your team captain. It's as easy as that.

As you become more active you will begin seeing the many benefits of living healthy. Each week, we will highlight several of these benefits to help us all remember why we're doing this challenge, besides for just the excellent prizes.

These are just a few of the many ways that you are helping your mind, body and spirit by being active:

- Lower risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, cancer (especially breast and colon)
- Prevention of weight gain and/or weight loss
- Improved cardio-respiratory, muscular fitness and balance
- Reduced depression
- Better cognitive function
- Better sleep patterns
- Increased Energy

To gain these health improvements, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recommends 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise 5 days a week. DHHS also recommends muscle strengthening activities that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week. If you're not there yet, no worries! Every additional minute of exercise provides benefits.

### What counts as mileage?

All walking or running counts, as well as cardiovascular machines that count miles. You can walk the dog, take a hike, chase your kids around the playground, park farther away or have a walking meeting. If you don't know how far you walked, the average person's walking pace is 20 minutes per mile.

## Workout of the Week

### Card Deck Workout

Assign each suit to a different exercise. After a five to ten minute warm up, go through the entire deck, performing the number of repetitions on each card.

*\*The exercises below are suggestions. Feel free to use any movement you would like, as long as you maintain a balanced workout*

**Card Values:** 1- 10 = Face Value; Jacks = 11; Queens = 12; Kings = 13; Aces = 16

#### Hearts - Lower Body

\* Squat or Jump Squat

#### Diamonds - Upper Body

\* Push-up (Feet or Knees)

#### Spades - Core

\* V-sits or Crunches

#### Clubs - Cardio

\* Mountain Climbers

## Have an Active Week!

For more information, visit the following websites:

[www.beactiveenc.org](http://www.beactiveenc.org)

[www.piedmonthealth.org](http://www.piedmonthealth.org)

[www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com)





## An Ounce of Prevention!

Congratulations on finishing your first full week of the Sylvan Elementary Walking Challenge! Each week we will discuss one of the many benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle. Please feel free to ask questions or request additional information if you'd like to learn more or share with others.

Physical activity reduces risk factors for many chronic conditions, including cancer. Studies in the United States have consistently shown that adults who participate in the recommended amount of moderate to high-intensity physical activity will reduce their risk of breast cancer, colon cancer, endometrial cancer and lung cancer.

It's never too early or too late to get started. Research shows that high levels of activity during adolescence are especially protective against breast cancer; and older adults who start an exercise program see a reduced risk as well.



According to the American Cancer Society, except for quitting smoking, one of the most important things you can do to help reduce your cancer risk is to be physically active. In fact, at least one third of cancer deaths could be prevented with a healthy diet and physical activity.

### Set SMART goals!

Whether your goal is to walk 3 times a week, do your first triathlon or stick to your strength training plan, the SMART method of goal setting is a powerful way to stay motivated and stick to a plan.

**SMART** stands for:

**Specific:** A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished. What EXACTLY do you want to achieve?

**Measurable:** Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward your goal. This usually comes in the form of a number.

**Attainable:** Be honest with yourself about your abilities and your limitations, as well as the activities you enjoy doing.

**Realistic:** Choose a goal that challenges you to be your best, but is achievable.

**Timely:** Give yourself a timeframe for each goal. When do you plan to reach your goal and when will you set new goals?

# WEEK TWO

## LEADER BOARD

Fabulous First	30 miles
Northern Nellies	27 miles
Jay Walkers	25 miles
Walk it Off	12 miles

## Workout of the Week 1-Minute Intervals

This is a great way to get cardiovascular exercise and strength-training in one workout. This can be done indoors or outdoors using any cardiovascular exercise, such as running, walking, elliptical machine or jump rope, in between the strength building moves.

Start this workout with a 5 minute warm-up and then perform each exercise for one minute. When you complete the list, rest for two minutes. Repeat 2-3 times. If you are unsure how to perform an exercise, visit the ACE Exercise Library.

<http://www.acefitness.org/exerciselibrary/>

1. squats
2. jumping jacks
3. push-ups (knees, feet, or hands on a bench)
4. step-ups
5. walking lunges
6. mountain climbers
7. bench dips
8. V-sits



## Gaining Strength!

You have now completed two full weeks of the Sylvan Staff Challenge! Congratulations - you are all doing very well. Keep up the great work!

This week we'll discuss the benefits of strength training. Physical activity of any kind provides numerous benefits. But strength training is particularly important and offers unique advantages, such as stronger bones and a higher metabolism. Here are a few ways that strength training puts you ahead of the game:

1. Weight-bearing exercise stimulates bone growth, increasing bone density and reducing risk of osteoporosis.

2. Every pound of muscle gained burns 50-75 calories per day. As you gain muscle, your body gains a bigger "engine" to burn calories, making it easier to control your weight.

3. Building muscle helps prevent injuries. Strength training contributes to better balance, greater core strength and a more balanced body - which can reduce your risk of lower back pain and other joint injuries and keep you independent as you age.

There are a variety of ways to build muscle, including body weight exercises, free weights, resistance bands and weight machines.

Check out the American Council on Exercise (ACE) Fit Facts on Strength Training.

### Design your Weekly Physical Activity Plan

Hopefully you had a chance last week to set a few SMART goals. Now it's time to bring everything together and create a physical activity plan that meets your needs. As with goal setting, creating a plan that is as specific as possible is important. Those most successful at reaching their goals, plan their physical activity on at least a weekly basis.

Create a plan that includes each day of the week, the amount of time you will be active and the exact activity you will engage in. As you plan, keep your goals in mind and the timeline you've set for reaching them.



# WEEK THREE

## LEADER BOARD

Waisting Away	101.5 miles
Jay Walkers	94 miles
Northern Nellies	82 miles
Fabulous First	67 miles
Walk it Off	34 miles

## Workout of the Week Obstacle Course

Set up eight stations in your yard or outdoors at a local park. The stations should be 10 or more yards apart. Feel free to change the exercises based on the equipment you have. Perform 10-20 of each exercise, jog or sprint to the next station. After performing all eight, take a short break and repeat!

**If you are unsure how to perform an exercise, visit the ACE Exercise Library.**

1. Step or Jump over a small obstacle
2. Swingset Roll-outs
3. Bench Dips
4. Step Ups
5. Push Ups
6. V Sits
7. Dirty Dog (20 on each side)
8. Elbow Plank (as long as possible)





## Diabetes Prevention

Congratulations on reaching the fourth week of the Be Active Schools Staff Challenge! This week we would like to discuss the relationship between diabetes and physical activity. More than 25 million Americans suffer from this largely preventable disease.

The Diabetes Prevention Program, a federally funded study of 3,234 people, showed that those at risk for developing diabetes can prevent or delay the onset of the disease by losing a small amount of weight (5 to 7 percent) through physical activity (150 minutes/week) and healthier eating. Participants in the lifestyle intervention group reduced their risk of developing diabetes by 58 percent.



Studies have also shown that physical activity helps individuals who have already been diagnosed with diabetes. In addition to burning glucose, physical activity improves the body's ability to use insulin. This improvement in insulin sensitivity may allow some people with Type 2 diabetes to reduce or even discontinue blood-glucose lowering medicines. Visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) to learn more.

### Boost Your Metabolism

The rate at which your body burns calories when you are comfortably resting is called your resting metabolic rate or RMR. Metabolism refers to the energy it takes to keep your heart beating, blood pumping, kidneys eliminating waste and brain functioning.

There are four main factors that affect your RMR:

- **Age** - the average adult burns 100 calories less per day for each decade older they get
- **Gender** - Men generally burn more calories at rest than women
- **Proportion of lean body mass** - The more muscle you have, the higher your metabolic rate
- **Genetics**

The only factor that we can really control is the amount of lean mass we have. Every pound of lean mass burns 50-75 calories per day. So, for every pound of muscle you gain, you can lose up to 7.8 pounds of fat per year (if you keep calorie intake constant).

# WEEK FOUR

## LEADER BOARD

Waisting Away	216.5
Jay Walkers	152
Northern Nellies	146
Fabulous First	108.5
Walk it Off	66

## Workout of the Week

### Back to Basics

Perform 15 rounds of the following three exercises as quickly as possible. To increase the intensity, add a 100 yard jog or sprint every 2 rounds.

1. 15 Squats
2. 10 Push-ups  
(feet, knees or against a table or wall)
3. 5 Sit ups



## Be Active to Reduce Stress!

Stress reduction is one of the benefits of physical activity that you're likely already noticing. The body's reaction to stress was once helpful to us. Today, it can wreak havoc on our health.

Our cavemen ancestors had to react instantly when confronted by a wild animal, choosing to flee, or fight off the predator. This knee-jerk response to threatening situations - recognized as the "fight or flight" response - flushes the body with stress hormones. This reaction was quite useful when a saber-tooth tiger was hot on your tracks!

Today we rarely face life or death situations, but the body still produces these powerful hormones when under stress. Frequent stress can have negative effects on our health, including digestive upsets, high blood pressure and increased risk of stroke and depression.



The most powerful and effective way to combat the inevitable stress of modern life is physical activity. Studies show that regular exercise moderates the negative effect of stress on the brain, hormones and immune system. It also improves mood, helps us sleep better and enhances cognitive function.

**Physical activity is an effective way to relieve stress, but it can be difficult to fit in when things get hectic.**

Here are some tips for keeping up your workout routine when times get tough:

- Consider breaking workouts up into smaller segments throughout the day.
- Work out in the morning before your schedule is subject to change.
- Schedule walking meetings at work or walk during your lunch break.
- Combine family time with exercise.
- Take the stairs, park farther away, do a few sets of push-ups while dinner is in the oven.

# WEEK FIVE

## LEADER BOARD

Waisting Away	335
Northern Nellies	221
Jay Walkers	217.5
Fabulous First	163.5
Walk it off	113

## Workout of the Week Pyramid Workout

Perform 10 repetitions of each exercise the first round, then do 15 the next, going up by 5 reps until you reach 20. Then head back down the pyramid until you hit 10 again. 10, 15, 20, 15, 10. If you are more advanced, begin with 15 and go up to 25 or 30 and back down.

If you are unsure of how to perform an exercise, please go to the ACE Fitness Library.

1. Push-ups
2. Weighted Swing - Can also be done with a weight or medicine ball.
3. Renegade Rows - You can modify this exercise by using regular weights or no weight at all, as well as lowering to your knees or doing traditional bent-over rows.
4. Box Step-up or Jumps
5. Stability Ball Exchange - or core move of your choice.



## Move More, Sit Less

Congratulations Sylvan Elementary Challenge Participants! This is the sixth week of the Challenge. You are well on your way to making regular physical activity a way of life.

An interesting field has recently emerged in the physical activity world, the study of sitting. A major study published last year found an association between the amount of time spent sitting and mortality, even with an hour a day of structured activity. So – don't drop your daily gym visit, but get up and move as much as possible during the workday and your leisure time activities, such as watching TV and reading.

Here are some tips from Dr. Len Kravitz, to help you burn calories and keep your metabolism up throughout the day:

- Take a short walk around the office every time you take a coffee break.
- Do 5 squats every time you take a drink of water.
- Pace while you talk on your cell phone.
- Make an effort to walk quickly at the grocery store, into the office or during other errands.
- Get up briefly every 30 minutes and get the blood flowing.

## Your Brain on Exercise

We have known that there is a link between physical activity and academic performance in children, as well between physical activity and improved cognitive function in older adults. But there is now research that shows the amazing benefits of physical activity for our brain - at any age.

150 minutes or more per week of physical activity will:

- Cause nerve cells to multiply and nerve connections to strengthen
- Increase neural connections in the hippocampus
- Increase number of capillaries surrounding the neurons
- Fuel the brain with oxygen and glucose
- Strengthen the cerebellum and corpus callosum

In a nutshell, exercise improves your long term memory, creates new pathways for learning and increased motivation, focus, retention and retrieval of information.

# WEEK SIX

## LEADER BOARD

Waisting Away	447
Jay Walkers	317.5
Northern Nellies	292
Fabulous First	222
Walk it off	152

## Workout of the Week Boundary Workout

This is a great way to add intensity to your cardio workout and increase the amount of calories you burn after the activity.

This workout can be done with any cardiovascular exercise: walking, running, cycling, elliptical, etc.

- 1. Warm up for 5 minutes**
- 2. Perform the cardio exercise of your choice for 4 minutes at the most challenging pace you can maintain for the time period.**
- 3. Rest for 2 minutes**
- 4. Repeat 5 or 6 times**
- 5. Cool down for 5 minutes**

**\*Remember your goal is 150 minutes a week of physical activity, including two muscle-building activities.**