**Child Welfare and Attendance**

Summer Newsletter 2017

**Outdoor Options for Healthy Weight Loss**

1. **Swimming**
* You could swim at the local recreation center, but getting outside lets you soak up some rays while burning calories at the same time.
* This is one of the most ideal outdoor exercise options if you have kids because you can have fun while getting in a workout at the same time.

**2. Biking**

* Do not forget the thrill of the wind in your hair and the freedom that a bike ride offers even as an adult.
* You can burn over 500 calories with an hour's bike ride.

**3. Walking**

* + Walking is great for beginners because you can go as fast or as slow as you want to.
	+ If you haven’t exercised in a while, starting your routine with walking builds endurance and helps you drop some excess weight.
	+ You can burn about 200 calories per hour just going for a walk!
		- 1. **See newsletter #1**

**4. Yoga**

* + Yoga doesn’t have to be something you do in the studio.
	+ If you live in a trendy area, chances are yoga groups meet right in the park.
	+ While you burn calories, you can make new friends and show off your Downward Dog to passing pedestrians.
	+ You can burn a few hundred calories doing yoga for an hour.

**5. Team Sports**

* + If you have a competitive streak, team sports are the outdoor exercise option for you.
	+ Most burn hundreds of calories per hour and you can benefit from both practicing by yourself and participating in games.
	+ Most cities have leagues that the public can join, which means you can find your sport nearby.
	+ Basketball, baseball, golf and tennis are fun ideas.

**6. Skating**

* Step out of the disco roller rink and into the sunny outdoors for a fun variation on a workout that doesn’t even feel like exercise.
* Strap on a pair of rollerblades and whiz through the park or around your block.
* After you burn nearly 400 calories, head home and congratulate yourself on a job well done.

**7. Playing**

* There’s something to be said for playing, and spending time with your kids (or someone else’s) lets you do just that, without strange looks or questioning glances.
* Run up and down the stairs at the playground, go back and forth across the monkey bars or spin the merry-go-round for a while.
* Toss a football back and forth, whip a Frisbee to and from your child or a friend, or play some volleyball on the weekend.
* Playing can burn hundreds of calories and it won’t feel like something you dread.

To quote 92 year old famous actor Dick Van Dyke, “The key to staying healthy is to keep moving.” Working out in the great outdoors lets you enjoy nature in a variety of places, which can keep exercise boredom at bay.



**Attendance and Student Achievement**

**RESEARCH SHOWS THAT ATTENDANCE IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.**

Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance. This relationship between attendance and achievement may appear early in a child's school career.

        A recent study looking at young children found that absenteeism in kindergarten was associated with negative first grade outcomes such as greater absenteeism in subsequent years and lower achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge.

Poor attendance has serious implications for later outcomes as well.

High school dropouts have been found to exhibit a history of negative behaviors, including high levels of absenteeism throughout their childhood, at higher rates than high school graduates. These differences in absentee rates were observed as early as kindergarten, and students who eventually dropped out of high school missed significantly more days of school in first grade than their peers who graduated from high school. In eighth grade, this pattern was even more apparent and, by ninth grade, attendance was shown to be a key indicator significantly correlated with high school graduation.

The effects of lost school days build up one absence at a time on individual students. Penalties for students who miss school may unintentionally worsen the situation. The disciplinary response to absenteeism too often includes loss of course credits, detention, and suspension. Any absence, whether excused or not, denies students the opportunity to learn in accordance with the school's instructional program, but students who miss school are sometimes further excluded from learning opportunities as a consequence of chronic absenteeism.

**August and September is an important month for school attendance.**

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**What Skills are Need for the Best Jobs**

In truth of fact, the people that will be able to compete for the best jobs in the future will be those who work with and alongside computers and AI, that are able to ask new questions, are creative and innovative and have a high degree of emotional intelligence and social skills (the things that actually make us human). I believe we need to focus more on those skills instead of spoon feeding our kids facts.

According to a survey by The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), these are some of the skills top employers say they are looking for in 2016 — and the ways in which our schools are failing to prepare students to fulfil them:

**1. Ability to obtain and process informatio**n.

As data becomes more and more important and integral in the workplace, companies will be looking for employees who can hit the ground running when it comes to obtaining and processing that data. This means that it’s much less important to know facts and figures that our current education system emphasizes, than it is to possess the skills to locate and process *any* kind of information required.

**2. Ability to analyze quantitative data.**

Believe it or not, this was in the top 10 skills employers are looking for in 2016, so it stands to reason that it will become more and more important in the future. Don’t assume that skills like this are only needed for “numbers crunching” type jobs any more. Everyone from creatives to HR to sales will be dealing with data more and more in the near future. Having a basic understanding of how statistics and mathematical reasoning work will be essential to understanding data sets and drawing conclusions.

As with facts, it’s less about the ability to solve the maths problem and get the right answer, and more about the ability to understand the relationships between numbers and the underlying principles of statistics and probability. Ask the right questions, and that calculator in your pocket can do the actual computing.

**3. Proficiency with computer software programs.**

It’s no longer acceptable to learn basic computer skills on the job. Luckily, today’s kids are digital natives and using technology practically from birth. But our education system is not providing students with adequate training in computer programs; students are left to teach themselves.

For example, no matter what your occupation today, it’s time to become familiar with the graphing functions in Excel and the visualisation tools in PowerPoint and the like. Why? Because a big part of business today is understanding, interpreting, and explaining data. Students need to be well versed in these basic tools.

**4. Ability to create and/or edit written reports.**

Written and verbal communications skills are vital to almost any position these days, and if you can add visualization skills (creating charts, graphs, etc.), you become that much more marketable. Future applicants who can demonstrate that they can clearly communicate information in a written format will rise above their competition.

But we don’t necessarily need to be teaching students the five paragraph essay.  Instead or in addition, schools should be teaching how to write persuasively, how to compose a professional email or letter, and how to effectively communicate information via the written word.

Paper may be going the way of the dinosaur, but text is here to stay.

**5. Ability to sell and influence others.**

Whether you’re looking for a position in sales or not, many, many more jobs require one person to be in charge of influencing others. Social media managers must influence followers positively, managers and leadership teams must influence employees, anyone who deals with customers must influence those customers (whether they are directly selling or not). These kinds of “soft” skills are becoming more important in separating those who will easily win jobs from those who won’t.

Yet schools very rarely focus on any kind of communications or other soft skills — mainly because they’re difficult to measure and grade in any kind of standardized fashion.  But this is to the great detriment of our students. These skills can be taught; it’s not only the naturally gifted speakers, writers and salespeople who can learn them, and our schools are doing our students a great disservice by not teaching them.

Of course, I believe that a certain about of basic knowledge is important to create functioning members of society.  But I believe our education systems focuses too much on the memorization and recitation of facts, and not enough on the critical thinking skills that allow us to put those facts to use.

**10 Reasons Why You Should Drink More Water**

**1. Increases Energy & Relieves Fatigue**

Since your brain is mostly water, drinking it helps you think, focus and concentrate better and be more alert. As an added bonus, your energy levels are also boosted!

**2. Promotes Weight Loss**

Removes by-products of fat, reduces eating intake (by filling up your tummy if consumed prior to meals), reduces hunger (hello natural appetite suppressant!), raises your metabolism and has zero calories!

**3. Flushes Out Toxins**

Gets rid of waste through sweat and urination which reduces the risk of kidney stones and UTI’s (urinary tract infections).

**4. Improves Skin Complexion**

Moisturizes your skin, keeps it fresh, soft, glowing and smooth. Gets rid of wrinkles. It’s the best anti-aging treatment around!

**5. Maintains Regularity**

Aids in digestion as water is essential to digest your food and prevents constipation.

**6. Boosts Immune System**

A water guzzler is less likely to get sick. And who wouldn’t rather feel healthy the majority of the time? Drinking plenty of water helps fight against flu, cancer and other ailments like heart attacks.

**7. Natural Headache Remedy**

Helps relieve and prevent headaches (migraines & back pains too!) which are commonly caused by dehydration.

**8. Prevents Cramps & Sprains**

Proper hydration helps keep joints lubricated and muscles more elastic so joint pain is less likely.

**9. Puts You In A Good Mood**

When the body is functioning at its best, you will feel great and be happy!

**10. Save Money!**

Water is FREE! Even if you choose bottled/filtered water, it’s STILL cheaper than that high sugar and fat-filled latte!

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**Community Resources**

**When Struggling with Alcohol or Drugs**

Merced County RAFT ( recovery assistance for Teens); 209-879-6860

Merced County Alateen: 209-524-3907

Merced Alcohol and Drug Abuse: 209-827-2185

Merced County Mental Health, Alcohol and Drugs: 209-381-6800 or 710-6100

Westside family Services Center; 209-710-6250

Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) 209-826-8502

Life Arrow-Clovis, CA 559-348-0126

New Hope Recovery: Modesto 209-527-2046

California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs Resource Center-1800- 879-2772