



HEALTH & WELL-BEING ISSUE

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION SPRING 2013



Get Healthy
CENLA
MAKE IT A
HABIT

Making Strides

Healthy Lifestyle Program:
Teaching good habits for life.

*Kira Davidson (kneeling),
CMAP Healthy Lifestyle
coordinator, and Amy Litton
(left), exercise specialist,
pose with client Lenetta Hall.*



THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROGRAM TEACHING GOOD HABITS FOR LIFE

Kira Davidson and Amy Litton have helped more than 450 people since the CMAP Healthy Lifestyle Program began in late 2011. Their clients are men and women – and some children – who were referred by their doctors. Most are struggling to get to a healthy weight and some need help with diabetes or high blood pressure. The common theme among them all is that they want to be healthier and are willing to change their lifestyles to support healthier habits.

The Healthy Lifestyle Program provides demonstration and education on proper nutrition and physical activity for good health and is designed

to fight obesity in Central Louisiana. Funded by The Rapides Foundation's Diet and Physical Activity Initiative and administered by CMAP, the goal is to provide Central Louisiana residents with resources to lead healthy lifestyles.

The Healthy Lifestyle Program is free, but requires a commitment and a sincere readiness to make lifelong changes over a six-month period. Clients must be referred by their doctors.

"The critical factor is the readiness of the person to do this – to have the discipline to follow the design of the program that is laid out by their coaches," said Joe Rosier, president and CEO of The Rapides Foundation. "We are encouraged by the results so far. It shows us that Central Louisiana residents want to get healthy and are willing to change their lifestyles in order to achieve their goals."

Davidson and Litton have received close to 700 referrals from Central Louisiana doctors. When a client is referred, their first visit is with Davidson, a registered dietitian who creates their plan based on their personal goals and ability. After that, they meet regularly with Litton, an exercise specialist who makes sure the six-month plan is running smoothly, gradually adding more vigorous physical activity to the client's routine.

There have been some challenges, such as the clients who say they truly

'We are encouraging them to learn better habits to carry on after their program ends.'

want to lead healthier lifestyles, but don't think they can because they don't have time, money or willpower. But the Healthy Lifestyle team is equipped to handle these obstacles.

"We work with each client to work through their problems," Davidson said. "We want to educate them. We tell them up front that we will be with them for six months. We are encouraging them to learn better habits to carry on after their program ends."

Davidson and Litton are quick to point out that Healthy Lifestyle is not a biggest loser-type program in which someone goes on a hard-core diet in a short period of time. Instead, the goal here is to educate – not only shed weight. They especially want to make sure young people learn about healthy eating and activity so that when they leave the program, they'll be able to make wise choices at home and school.

They use "portion control" plates to demonstrate the proper amount of food clients should be putting on their plates. They teach clients how to read food labels, and explain simple ways to cut salt, fat and sugar from their daily diets. They'll help clients switch from eating one large, unhealthy meal a day to eating smaller healthy meals throughout.

A main focus is on good nutrition, but the Healthy Lifestyle team also helps clients get physically active. In many



Kira Davidson, CMAP Healthy Lifestyle Coordinator and Registered Dietitian.

cases, clients will integrate walking into their daily routines. "It's very small goals that we set," Litton said.

The program team lights up when they talk about the successes, like the 50-year-old female who lost 15 pounds and significantly lowered her blood pressure and cholesterol in just two months. Litton called her the model client: "She is so gung-ho, she's motivated, she writes everything down."

Another success is a diabetic male who lost 17 pounds and lowered his blood sugar by simply altering his diet. Not all referrals are overweight or obese. One client is a heart disease patient learning how to read nutrition labels to ensure his food choices are the right ones.

Lenetta Hall, 34, of Alexandria dropped about 40 pounds in six months by changing her eating habits and kicking up her exercise a notch. She credits Davidson and Litton for holding her accountable for her actions. "They put me in a place I needed to be."

Like most clients, Hall talks about the "small things" she did to change her life. As with all of the clients, she was encouraged to make realistic changes to enhance motivation.

"It started off with little things, like eating veggies instead of fries. Then cutting little things started trickling into big things," she said. Instead of eating burgers, for example, she now eats black bean patties. She also exercises more than she used to. "After a while you crave going to the gym. You crave working out."

Dr. Michael Buck, a former trustee of The Rapides Foundation and current CMAP board member, refers patients to the Healthy Lifestyle Program, with



Dr. Michael Buck, CMAP board member, refers patients to the Healthy Lifestyle Program

'Everybody assumes they know how to lose weight, but they don't really know how to do it.'

many reporting good results. He said the program motivates patients and reinforces what medical professionals are telling them. "Everybody assumes they know how to lose weight, but they don't really know how to do it," he said. "In the doctor's office we do the best we can. ... But in many cases patients forget by the time they leave the office." For that reason, it helps "to have somebody sit down with them one-on-one" over an extended period of time.

An individual with a body mass index of 30 or higher is considered obese, which increases their risk for various diseases

including cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension and diabetes, Buck said. Therefore, it's important to lose weight and make healthy habits.

Buck tells patients he likes the evidence-based Mediterranean Diet, which emphasizes fruits and vegetables, as well as healthy fats. He advises people to eat more vegetables of the multi-colored variety, snack on nuts instead of cookies and cakes and cut out Cokes and other sugary drinks. As for exercise, Buck advises patients to "keep it simple" and do something that becomes part of their daily routine.



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROGRAM
TEACHING GOOD HABITS FOR LIFE



Arthur Collins:
Making better food choices.

Arthur Collins, 66, of Jonesville was admittedly overweight when he started the Healthy Lifestyle Program in 2012. As he describes it, he had “that bulge around me” that wouldn’t go away. Since entering the program, he learned how to eat smaller portions, make better food choices and add exercise to his life.

“I think about it daily,” he said. “I really learned that exercise is very important, and I learned to stay away from certain foods.”

Collins lost about 10 pounds, despite dealing with knee problems that prevented him from exercising as much as he wanted. He couldn’t walk, but he was able to ride his bicycle several miles a day.

For his food choices, Collins gave up Dr. Peppers and started drinking fruit juice instead. He eats smaller portions, cutting calories in the process. He also learned that he doesn’t have to give up his favorite foods altogether. He still has ice cream, just not as much or often. He now has a “taste” of cornbread instead of a large piece of it. “It makes me conscious of how much I eat.”

Collins appreciated the help from Amy Litton and Kira Davidson. “They were great. I love those two young ladies.”

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROGRAM TEACHING GOOD HABITS FOR LIFE

Debbie Robinson: **'You have to be prepared.'**

Debbie Robinson, 64, of Boyce was referred to the Healthy Lifestyle Program in June 2012 when her blood pressure shot up during a visit to her doctor. Her nurse practitioner started her on medicine to control her blood pressure and cholesterol. "Luckily for me right then they asked me about the Healthy Lifestyle Program and asked if I was interested. I said yes, I am."

When she began, she weighed 174 pounds. She is 22 pounds lighter and feels better, all by making a few simple lifestyle changes like walking and making healthier food choices.

To manage her diet, Robinson learned to think about the next day's foods in advance, and to add two snacks a day to control her appetite. "You have to be prepared and to think about it ahead of time," she said. Robinson started adding a lot more fruits and vegetables to her diet, and she's proud to say that she doesn't eat things like hamburgers and fries anymore.

"I think the program is excellent, plus it makes you feel better to lose weight."

To increase her physical activity, Robinson began walking. Exercise Specialist Amy Litton prepared a chart that Robinson followed, increasing her walking little by little each time. "I started walking a couple of minutes in the morning and started increasing that. That's all I did," she said. "It was taking small steps to make a big difference."



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROGRAM
TEACHING GOOD HABITS FOR LIFE



Sharika Washington:
'It's time for a change.'

Sharika Washington, 34, of Alexandria was at her annual appointment with the gynecologist when she heard the words she never wanted to hear: "He said, 'you are obese according to the chart.' I had never been told that before. It opened my eyes and I told myself 'it's time to change.'" Fortunately, her doctor referred her to the CMAP Healthy Lifestyle Program. A month later, she was in the program.

When she began, she weighed 165 pounds. With a few lifestyle changes, including making healthier food choices and changing her exercise program, she lost 26 pounds, dropping three sizes. More importantly, she feels healthier and vows to never be called "obese" again.

"I love the benefit of it. I feel great. I have more energy," she said. "This program was the best choice I made for myself in 2012, and it is forever for me. I don't want another doctor to tell me I'm obese."

Washington was a vegetarian, but that didn't mean she was eating healthy. Since participating in the Healthy Lifestyle Program, she learned to make better food choices, and that includes no longer eating French fries. She now snacks on yogurt, and she eats wheat bread instead of white. She chooses low-fat cheese and brown rice, and she enjoys salads with "lots of vegetables."

Washington initially stepped up her daily exercise routine, doing exercises that targeted her full body. Since she works out at home, she wanted something different to do that would keep her interest. After doing some research online and getting the blessing from Exercise Specialist Amy Litton, she started doing "walk at home" videos. As a result, she walks two miles every day, five days a week.

"Kira and Amy were tremendous. They encouraged me, they supported me, they provided me with another approach," she said. "All it takes is dedication. It's time to make a change."

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROGRAM
TEACHING GOOD HABITS FOR LIFE

Lydia Wilson:
Reading food labels, exercising
part of her daily life.

Lydia Wilson, 62, says she's been "plump all my life." So when her doctor referred her to the Healthy Lifestyle Program, she was happy to give it a try. Six months later, Wilson dropped 28 pounds, from just over 200, simply by making better food choices and adding physical activity to her life.

"Kira (Davidson) and Amy (Litton) were very good. They were patient, calm and easy to work with. They were encouraging. They wanted me to do well."

Wilson learned how to make better choices when it came to selecting food. She gave up Cokes for water; she eats wheat bread instead of white. She jokes that she learned how to love food that originally tasted like "cardboard and cobwebs" to her. Now, those foods are a part of her life.

She also learned to read food labels, something she never did before. With the help of Davidson, Wilson learned to select foods low in carbohydrates and sodium. When she started the program, she had high blood pressure. Six months later, her blood pressure is under control again.

When deciding on an exercise plan, Wilson chose bicycle riding over other suggestions. "I'm not an exercise person, so I wanted to do what I knew I could do, so the bike is what I chose." She now pedals 2 miles a day, weather permitting.

Since completing the program, Wilson has been enjoying the attention from people who have noticed her weight loss. "And I love being able to go down a couple of sizes in clothes. That feels good."



Get Healthy
CENLA
MAKE IT A HABIT

rapidesfoundation.org

DASH FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Local churches offering DASH for a Healthy Lifestyle

Congregants from 41 Central Louisiana churches committed to taking part in DASH for a Healthy Lifestyle, a new grant program designed to enhance awareness of what it means to live a healthy lifestyle.

DASH, which stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, is a proven, evidence-based nutrition and exercise program studied at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge.

Evidence shows a combination of lifestyle changes – increasing physical activity, fruit, vegetables, and low-fat dairy foods, reducing calories and

sodium, and losing weight — will have a major impact on lowering blood pressure and reducing the risk of hypertension and heart disease.

Staff members from The Rapides Foundation are training volunteers from each church to lead the DASH program in groups of up to 20 parishioners. The 18-month program is set to begin in the summer.

“We are really excited about working with the churches,” said Annette Beuchler, director of programs and communications for The Rapides Foundation. The Foundation invited all church congregations to apply for this grant opportunity, and was pleasantly surprised with the number of applications.

There are three phases to the DASH program: Phase One includes eight group sessions meeting once a week. This is a time to become familiar with program goals and get to know other group members. It’s also a time to take charge of eating habits — try new foods, while increasing fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy. The participant will also learn ways in which to be more physically active. Phase Two meets every other week for six sessions. These sessions focus on problem solving — taking what is difficult and then developing a solution that works. Phase Three includes 12 monthly sessions and is a time to put all resources to work and strengthen those healthy habits.



The banner features a blue background with silhouettes of people running and a city skyline. The text reads: "DASH FOR A Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension HEALTHY LIFESTYLE". A small graphic of an apple is integrated into the word "FOR". At the bottom left, it says "Funded by THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION" with a logo. At the bottom right, it says "Get Healthy CENLA MAKE IT A HABIT" and "rapidesfoundation.org".

SMALL STEPS FOR A HEALTHIER YOU

5 + 30 It All Adds Up To A Healthier You



Eat **5** or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day.



FOOD!



Get **30** minutes or more of moderate physical activity 5 days a week.



MOVE IT!

What happens in the kitchen will make the biggest impact on your waistline. Make small steps to improve the way you eat and don't change everything overnight.

- Tip #1:** Drink plenty of water and limit sodas and sweetened beverages.
- Tip #2:** Choose a smaller plate at lunch or dinner. Without even meaning to, your portions will be smaller.
- Tip #3:** Eat a balanced breakfast every day and avoid skipping meals.
- Tip #4:** Keep healthy snacks on hand at work. This will help you fight off those afternoon cravings!
- Tip #5:** Try healthy substitutions in your favorite recipes: plain yogurt for sour cream, applesauce for oil.
- Tip #6:** Limit processed foods and increase intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.

When life gets busy, usually the first thing to slip is our exercise regimen. Combine that with an unhealthy diet and you've got a recipe for disaster! Use these tips and commit to moving more.

- Tip #1:** When running errands to the grocery store or mall, don't fight everyone for the closest space. Park far away from the entrance and even take an extra lap around the store.
- Tip #2:** While at work, use every opportunity to be active: take the stairs, use the bathroom on another floor, or walk to speak to a co-worker instead of email.
- Tip #3:** Make time to exercise before work or on your lunch break so it's done when you get off. Keep workout clothes in your car.
- Tip #4:** Keep exercise videos on hand for when it's too hot/cold to go outside or you don't have time to make it to the gym.
- Tip #5:** When watching TV, grab some cans and try some side raises and bicep curls. It's better than nothing!

DIET AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GRANTS SPREADING THE HEALTH



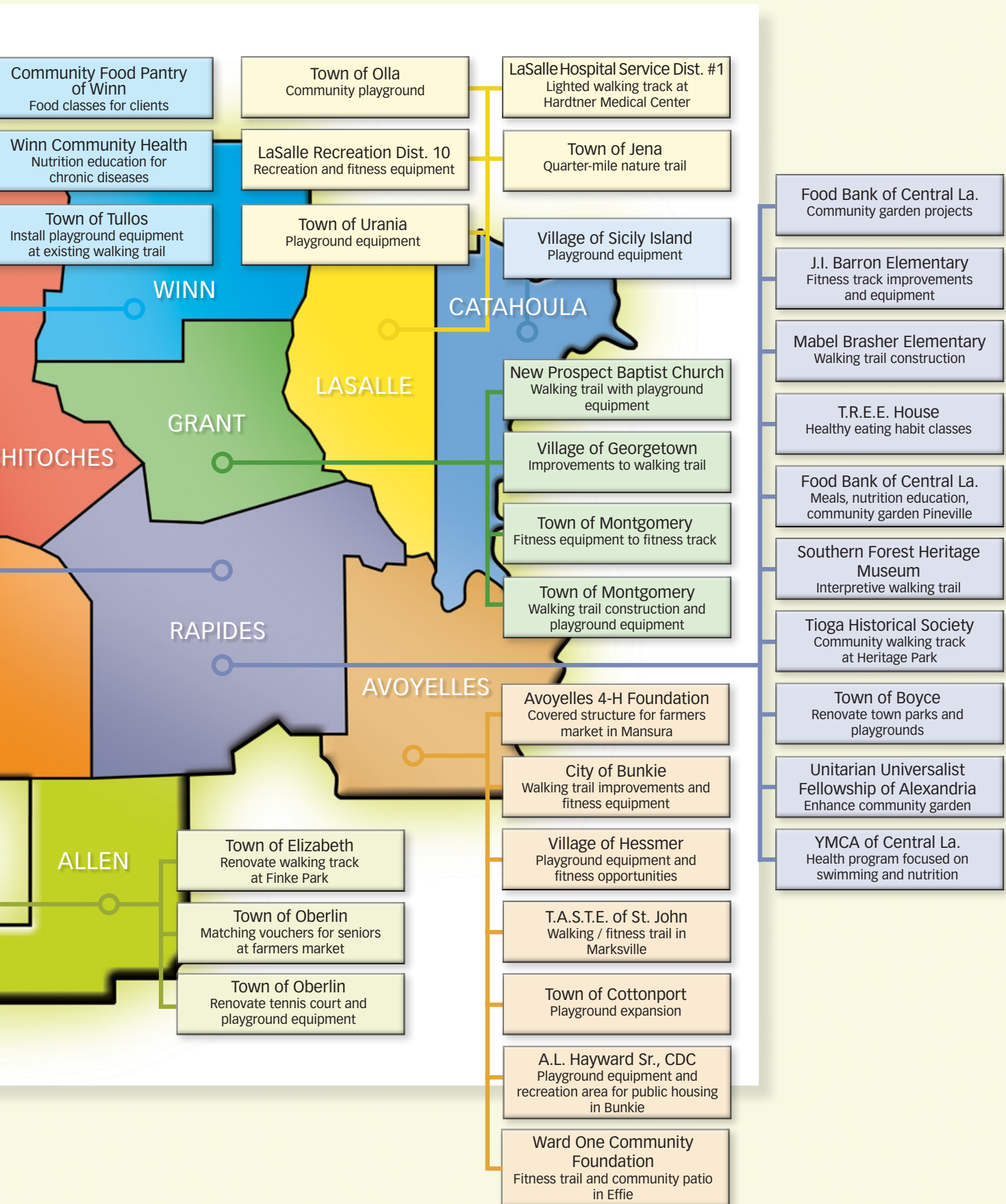
In 2011, The Rapides Foundation asked Central Louisiana organizations to submit proposals for projects that would encourage and improve physical activity and healthy eating in their communities. The response was so overwhelming that the Foundation continued to offer these grants through the first part of 2013, with the final grants to be approved May 2013. More than 50 grants have been awarded, resulting in walking trails, playgrounds, farmers markets and other healthy projects throughout Central Louisiana.



- Central Louisiana Community Foundation
Fort Randolph community garden
- Greater Alexandria Economic Development Authority
Improvements to Hynson Bayou Walking Trail
- LSU Ag Center
Community Gardens at Lecompte, Forest Hill and Glenmora
- LSU Alexandria
Improvements to walking trail
- Manna House
Capital improvements for food preparation
- Phoenix Magnet Elementary
Enhancements to walking trail and fitness equipment
- Rapides Senior Citizens Centers
Exercise and fitness for seniors
- St. Mary's Training School
Organic garden for residents
- Town of Ball
Walking trail improvement and fitness equipment
- Buckeye Recreation Complex
Basketball court and playground equipment
- City of Alexandria
Lincoln Park walking trail and improvements

- City of Natchitoches
Walking trail with fitness stations
- Central High School Natchitoches
Walking track
- Cane River National Heritage
3 community gardens in Natchitoches and Natchez
- Village of Natchez
Walking trail and exercise equipment at Natchez Pecan Park
- Cloutierville Elementary
Walking trail
- United Baptist Church
Walking trail, basketball court and fitness equipment in Campti
- Vernon School Board
Add playground equipment to Magnolia Park in Leesville
- Rosepine Historical Society
Walking track and playground equipment
- Oakdale Middle School
Walking trail construction
- The Health Enrichment Network
Oakdale Family Fitness Fun
- City of Oakdale
Fitness equipment at two public parks

 THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION



JOIN THE GET HEALTHY CENLA CHALLENGE!



Get Healthy Cenla • May Challenge

Our fitness challenge this month will include the push-up! This is a great move for upper body strength and for your core. Remember, you can perform a modified push-up against the wall or using the back of a sofa, so everyone can participate in this daily challenge!

Substitute It SUNDAY	More On MONDAY	Try It TUESDAY	Wellness WEDNESDAY	Tone It Up THURSDAY	Fun FRIDAY	Skip It SATURDAY
1. Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. *5 push-ups	1. Set 1 nutrition goal and 1 physical activity goal for the month. Keep it realistic! *1 push-up	1. Try a new exercise/activity you've never done before or haven't done in a while. *7 push-ups	1. Cardio Blast: 30 seconds each: jump rope, jumping jacks, butt kicks, jog/march. *Repeat 5x *9 push-ups	1. Log all foods eaten and the portion size. Are you eating too much? *3 push-ups	1. Skip adding salt to foods. *4 push-ups	
2. Get 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 days a week. *6 push-ups	2. Get up 30 minutes early to take a walk in your neighborhood. *8 push-ups	2. Try a sweet potato with dinner. They are packed with vitamins and minerals! *14 push-ups	2. Sweet 15-15 squats, 15 lunges, 16 heel raises. *16 push-ups	2. Instead of eating out, plan a healthy meal for your family at home. *10 push-ups	2. Skip sodas or sweetened teas. *11 push-ups	
3. Swap your normal breakfast for something healthier, such as an egg, toast, and fruit. *5 push-ups	3. More water: Add an extra glass or bottle. *13 push-ups	3. Halfway through the month! Are you sticking to your goals? *15 push-ups	3. Ab Crunch: 90 crunches, 90 leg lifts, 90-second plank. Repeat 5x. *23 push-ups	3. Encourage everyone at work to bring their lunch today. *17 push-ups	3. Skip all processed foods (canned or boxed). *18 push-ups	
4. Join the challenge on Facebook and Twitter. See exercise and nutrition challenges on our YouTube page. *12 push-ups	4. Try baked or grilled fish for dinner. The omega-3 fatty acids are great for your heart! *21 push-ups	4. Drink a glass of water with every meal, and in between! *22 push-ups	4. Take a stretch break every hour. *24 push-ups	4. Skip "junk" food (chips, cookies, cakes, etc.). *25 push-ups		
5. Substitute your normal dessert with something healthier, such as angel food cake with fruit. *12 push-ups	5. More vegetables: Add an extra serving at lunch or dinner. *20 push-ups	5. Aim for 5 servings of fruits and vegetables and 30 minutes of exercise. *29 push-ups	5. Milk sure each meal is balanced and portions are correct size. *31 push-ups			
6. Swap your normal dinner with something healthier, such as angel food cake with fruit. *12 push-ups	6. Try a new vegetable or prepare your favorite a new healthy way. *28 push-ups					
7. Substitute sodas and tea with water. Add lemon for flavor. *12 push-ups	7. More fruits: Add an extra serving at lunch or dinner. *27 push-ups					
8. Substitute one 30-minute TV show with a few laps around the block. *26 push-ups						

rapidesfoundation.org

Get Healthy CENLA MAKE IT A HABIT

THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

A daily challenge designed to encourage people to improve their nutrition and physical activity. See the latest challenge on our website, on Facebook or Twitter.

Get Healthy CENLA MAKE IT A HABIT
rapidesfoundation.org

HEALTH & WELL-BEING
@ISSUE
is published by The Rapides Foundation

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ALEXANDRIA, LA
PERMIT NO.20

The Rapides Foundation continues a legacy of community healthcare initiated in 1903.

President/CEO:
Joseph R. Rosier, Jr., CFA

Editors:
Annette Beuchler, MBA, FACHE
Kathy Gunn

Writer:
Kathy Gunn

For additional copies or to be added to the mailing list, contact:
The Rapides Foundation
1101 Fourth Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, LA 71301

Tel: 318-443-3394
Fax: 318-443-8312
1-800-994-3394

www.rapidesfoundation.org
grantinfo@rapidesfoundation.org

