



JANUARY 2013

NEWSLETTER

EDUCATION

How can I curb stress eating?

“It’s not just about what you’re eating – it’s about what’s eating you.”

We eat for all sorts of reasons, not just because we’re hungry. We eat because we’re bored, sad, tired or – all too frequently - stressed. When we eat for reasons other than getting the right nutrition, we affect our weight and put our health at risk. New research suggests that taking time to think about what we eat – and why we are eating – can be an effective way to attain and maintain a healthy weight.

“When we are stressed, the biochemistry of our blood changes,” says Elissa Epel. Research psychologist at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) who is conducting a study on the effects of stress on eating behavior and obesity.

In response to stress, we produce a hormone called cortisol, which “alerts the brain to look out for those sweet, high-fat foods,” according to Dr. Eel, “When cortisol has stimulated our appetite, it’s one of the strongest drives we have, like the drive to seek a drug.”

In a world where we’re often stressed and often surrounded by sugar-laden, high-fat foods, that cortisol-fueled reaction can be a recipe for weight gain.

**Wellness Committee Meeting:
Tuesday, Feb 12
Get Involved - Join the Meeting**



A Solution: Mindful Eating

To some people, mindful eating might sound like an odd way to approach weight loss.

Scientific reason it works

Mindful eating can calm the chemical reactions that drive us to eat. Walking is a good adjunct to mindful eating, and not just because it burns calories. A participant in the UCSF study finds that walking helps bring down her stress level, enhancing the effects of her efforts to pay attention to what and why she eats. Her experience illustrates the way that physical activity can affect how we think and feel, and how it can reduce stress and minimize emotion-based cravings.

The UCSF study has shown that mindful eating – slowing down to consider why, what and when we’re eating – can help us regain control over how much we eat. More over, other simple strategies for combating stress, like taking a walk or getting other physical activity, can short-circuit our reflex to turn to food for comfort.

*Source: Weight of the Nation,
Discussion Guide, Section 4, p76*



Olive Elementary School Garden Video Still

Tools for Our Schools

[Weight of the Nation](#) How Can I Curb Stress Eating?
PART II: Choices, disc 1 (queue 42:03 – 40:30 min)

[Olive School Garden Video](#) Novato students are finding peace in the Olive Elementary School Garden *and* learning to reach for vegetables!

Stress in Our Lives

Our times are full of change, stress and challenges. Many families in Sandy Hook, Connecticut are still in the process of recovery from December's Elementary School tragedy.

In light of this it is important to focus our attention on creating a place of peace and community within our schools.

Stress is everywhere and learning how to manage it is important

What better way than to engage in positive experiences than through health affirming activities that support a healthy planet too? A sense of well-being is an important part of wellness. Here are two ways to develop a place of peace in our school community.

- The School Garden – Read about Olive Elementary 's garden on Jamie Oliver's [website](#)
- Cooking Adventures with Chef Hollie Greene

Wellness in Schools

The goal is to reach ALL schools with events and trainings on healthy food choices, well-living skills and to increase wellness participation in our community and committee.

Here are a few ways your school can get involved and plant the seed of Wellness.

- Wellness Kick-off Program with Miguel Villarreal and Weight of the Nation screening
- Chef Hollie Greene's "Cooking Adventures"
- Sugar Savvy "Train the Trainer"Event (Feb Newsletter)



Meet Chef Hollie Greene

Miguel Villarreal has hired Chef Hollie Greene who will bring her cooking adventures to NUSD families.

Chef Hollie introduces kids and families to new tastes and a positive relationship with food, helping them to live long, joyful lives and build fond food memories!

Here is one of Hollie's recommendations. *"In 2013, decide for yourself and your family, 'I will have a balanced, peaceful, and joyful relationship with food!"* [read more](#)

Employees Parents Students

Wellness Committee Meeting: Tuesday, Feb 12

Get Involved - Join the Meeting



Loma Verde Fall Wellness Event 2012

VOLUNTEER

Contact: Miguel Villarreal
Director of Food and Nutritional Services
Wellness@nUSD.org

Executive Champions

The Director of Food and Nutritional Services, Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer, Principal's, and other school officers will be personal role models for health and wellness, allocate resources to support wellness policy and environmental changes within Novato Unified School District.

MORE INFORMATION:

Miguel Villarreal
wellness@nUSD.org

Our Wellness Policy Committee

Loma Verde - Beth Kraft *teacher*
Loma Verde - Laura Swanson *FANS*
Rancho - Nancy Kawata *principal*
All schools - Stan Pelmeur *physical ed*
Lu Sutton - Mark Fujiwara *parent*
Novato High - Ellen Harmanns *student*
Novato High - Lori O'Connor *asst. principal*
Miguel Villarreal - *FANS*
Chef Hollie Greene - *consultant*
Bonnie Neer - *consultant*

The Wellness Ambassador

Involvement Level

- Wellness Policy Committee
- Wellness Site Ambassador
- Executive Champions

Wellness Policy Committee

The wellness committee is a team of students, parents and School District employees who meet monthly to identify issues, school tools and strategies that encourage healthy behaviors and make wellness policy that create health – friendly school and work environments. The wellness committee must be a cross-section of the school population.

Wellness Site Ambassador

Our District Schools need representatives who promote and train others in wellness education. Provided with the information and the tools to serve the community, the Site Ambassador will represent wellness at school events and train others. The Wellness Site Ambassador Is the eyes and ears of the school community.

