CHFS Focus
March 21, 2011

**March is National Nutrition Month**

March is National Nutrition Month and the American Dietetic Association theme for this year is "Eat Right with Color."

Balancing physical activity and calorie intake is the first step to managing weight. Eating 100 more calories a day than you burn results in roughly a one-pound weight gain in a month. It is important to reduce calorie intake and increase physical activity to lose weight.

Small lifestyle changes can be made to increase health and reduce the risk of developing diet-related chronic diseases. You can get the most out of your calories by choosing foods rich in vitamins, minerals and fiber. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables and making half of your grains whole grains are great ways to eat healthy. Adding a salad to lunch or dinner is a good way to add color and nutrition to your meal. Topping the salad with various vegetables and fruits such as peppers, celery, peas, apples and raisins will help fill you up and add zest to a salad.

Physical activity is important for overall health and fitness. Being physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week can help control body weight, promote well-being and reduce the risk for chronic disease. Being physically active for 60 minutes a day has even greater health benefits.

Visit http://www.mypyramid.gov to develop a personalized eating plan. The site shows you what amounts of each food group you need every day. Consulting a registered dietitian is also a beneficial way to receive expert nutritional advice.

Cutline: Sandra Halter

**APS Worker Appreciates Clients**

*By Anya Armes Weber*

In recognition of March being Social Work Month, the Focus asked social work staff to respond to several questions about their work. Thank you to all the social services staff who shared their perspectives on their work. This is our fourth and final installment.

**Sandra Halter**
*Social Services Clinician, Graves County*

I have been on the adult protective services (APS) Western Lakes team since the team was formed. I was hesitant about the shift from working with children and adults to exclusively adults. The hesitancy was unfounded. My experiences with the APS team have enriched my personal and professional life more than I could have imagined.

All too often, our society discounts the elderly and those with disabilities as having little to offer. How wrong! The older members of our society have an abundance of wisdom. Listening to their stories of hardships such as The Great Depression, stories of faith and family has enhanced my understanding of human nature and the inner strengths possessed by mankind.

I worked with a woman who escaped Adolf Hitler's occupation of Czechoslovakia. She shared stories of the rich and colorful culture of her native land.

Working with individuals with disabilities has been a delight and a learning experience. I have learned it is more fruitful to concentrate on their abilities rather than disabilities. Every individual has something to offer society. Sometimes it is only the ability to love. Their love is unconditional.

Working with these individuals has taught me to listen and learn. The lessons I learn from one individual will benefit the others that follow. Working with APS makes me appreciate the blessings I have in a loving family, good health and the ability to use the precious knowledge I gain in my work with adults to my daily life.

**Cabinet Staff Takes Strides for Wellness during March Madness Walk**

*By Anya Armes Weber*

The Wellness Committee thanks all staff who participated in last Thursday's March Madness Walk.

"We appreciate the great participation from staff across the state who joined the Cabinet's Journey to Wellness by taking a walk together or on their own," said CHFS Wellness Committee Chairwoman Julie Brooks. "It was a great way to celebrate basketball season while we stepped up our exercise."

The walk also allowed staff to show their school spirit by wearing colors or gear that represent their favorite state college or university's basketball team.

The Wellness Committee sponsored a survey that asked participants to name their favorite team. The winners were the University of Kentucky Wildcats with 53 percent of the vote. Second place honors go to the University of Louisville Cardinals, who got 16 percent of the vote.

Visit the Personnel Cabinet's Journey to Wellness website to learn more about how healthy decisions can improve your well-being. Or e-mail Julie Brooks or Kris Hayslett for more information about this and other Cabinet wellness activities.

**CHFS Health News**

**Take Part in American Diabetes Alert**

This year, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) wants all Kentuckians to be a part of the American Diabetes Alert, which is set aside the fourth Tuesday in March, to raise awareness about the seriousness of diabetes and help people identify certain qualities that may make them susceptible to the disease.

"Many Kentuckians have very little knowledge about diabetes or how it affects the body," said Linda Leber, education coordinator for the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program. "We think if more people know what diabetes is and what increases their risk, they'll be better equipped to prevent or recognize the disease – for themselves and their loved ones."

DPH, along with the American Diabetes Association and the National Diabetes Education Program, encourages everyone to take the Diabetes Risk Test, which requires users to answer seven simple questions about weight, age, lifestyle and family history -- all potential risk factors

for diabetes. People scoring 10 points or more are at a high risk for type 2 diabetes and are encouraged to see a health care professional for further evaluation.

Often brought on by poor lifestyle habits, diabetes has become a health crisis. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 25.8 million people in the United States have diabetes. Of those, only 18.8 million have been diagnosed.

“In Kentucky, an estimated 366,000 adults have diagnosed diabetes and an estimated 226,000 adults have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes and are at very high risk for developing the disease,” said DPH Commissioner William D. Hacker M.D. “We must make better choices about the things we eat and the amount of physical activity we’re get and start curbing rates of this disease.”

Diabetes is a condition that results when the body’s blood glucose (commonly referred to as sugar) is too high. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. In type 2 diabetes, the body may not produce enough insulin or it doesn’t effectively use the insulin it has, or both occur at the same time. Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use glucose, which is the basic fuel for the cells in the body. When glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into the cells, the cells may feel starved for energy and the elevated blood glucose may damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves or heart.

Many people can have diabetes for years and not know it because they may not have any symptoms. Signs of diabetes are: thirst, frequent urination, feeling very hungry or tired, unintentional weight loss, having sores that heal slowly, dry and itchy skin, blurred vision, and a tingling or loss of feeling in the feet. A blood test to check your glucose levels will show if you have pre-diabetes or diabetes. Pre-diabetes is present when blood sugar levels are elevated, but not high enough to be classified as diabetes.

The disease affects all races and ethnic groups, but African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are more commonly affected. Other risk factors include having high blood pressure; having a family history of the disease; having diabetes during pregnancy; or having a baby that weighs more than nine pounds at birth.

Both the American Diabetes Association and the National Diabetes Education Program offer a Diabetes Risk Test to help you find out if you are at risk for type 2 diabetes. The risk test and other diabetes information can be found at www.diabetes.org or call (800) DIABETES or www.ndep.nih.gov.

For more diabetes-related information, call the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program at (502) 564-7996 or visit their website at http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/info/dpqi/cd/diabetes.htm.

For more information, contact Linda Leber at the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program at (502) 564-7996.

**Employee Enrichment**

*By Anya Armes Weber*

Every member of your work team is important, and it’s important that everyone brings different strengths to the team. Nancy Foy, author of “Empowering People at Work,” writes that every

team needs a good “finisher,” someone with a strong sense of order who follows through on good ideas.

A good finisher, notes Foy, has these traits:

- Finds errors that others miss.
- Feels comfortable performing work that demands a high degree of concentration.
- Anticipates potential problems.
- Develops a sense of urgency at the beginning of a project.
- Has a knack for making sure the details are right.