



# Get Healthy Ottawa

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Allendale students to walk & bike to school 1
- Senate approves legislation for Michigan schools 1
- 10 ways to "Take 10" for Healthy Holidays 2
- Winter Tips for Outdoor Activities 2
- Smoke-Free Ottawa Spearheads Youth Initiative 3
- OCWC—Features Southeast Action Team 3
- Winter Family Fitness 4

## Allendale Students to Walk and Bike Safely to School

The Ottawa County Wellness Coalition, Allendale Township and the Michigan Department of Community Health joined forces to build a one-half mile non-motorized pathway down Pierce Street from 68<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Allendale. When the rest of the path is completed, students

will be able to bike and walk safely down Pierce Street to the Allendale Elementary and Middle Schools. Increasing access to safe routes to school encourages students to be more physically active and adopt healthy lifestyles.



## Senate Agriculture Committee Approves Legislation to Encourage Schools to Use Michigan Grown and Processed Food

The Senate Agriculture Committee approved a legislative package that encourages Michigan schools to use food grown or processed in Michigan to help children eat healthier and support the state's agriculture industry, said Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom, chair of the committee. "Farm-to-school programs can help address rising concerns about school nutrition and childhood obesity," said Van Woerkom, R-Norton Shores. "The programs provide students with fresh, healthy food while also increasing their knowledge of nutrition and agriculture. "House Bill 6368 will create the Farm-to-School Procurement Act which requires the Michigan Department of Education and Michigan Department of Agriculture to work cooperatively to increase purchasing of Michigan agricultural products for school breakfast programs and lunches.

"Keys to our state's economic

recovery begin with legislative initiatives such as these," said Rep. Geoff Hansen, R-Hart, who sponsored House Bill 6366 in the package.

"Leveling the playing field for our local growers and opening up new markets will increase their bottom line and help the local economy.

"As a grocer, I am pleased that this package introduces our children to local agriculture. Educating them on our agricultural heritage at this early stage will ensure we remain a national leader in this industry."

House Bills 6365 and 6366 will allow school districts, public school academies, and intermediate school districts to make food purchases costing less than \$100,000, the current federal threshold, without obtaining competitive bids as long as the process is open and fair.

"Raising the threshold for

school food purchases could cause more schools to buy Michigan grown or processed food," Van Woerkom said.

"This could open new markets for state producers and processors and help farmers remain economically viable by giving them a new and reliable group of customers."

Chris Bedford, president of the Center for Economic Security, testified in support of the legislation. "A farm-to-school program offers a place to begin a fundamental regeneration of Michigan's struggling economy," said Bedford, who is from Montague. "It provides our children a better, healthier diet, and puts money back into local communities."

The bills have been sent to the full Senate for consideration.





*Holidays can be quite stressful . . .  
"Take 10 " for Healthy Holidays!*

## Ten Ways to "Take 10" for Healthy Holidays!

- 1. Take a break:** 10 minutes a day is all it takes. A small break can make a big difference in your attitude. Regular relaxation can also help fight off colds and other infections.
- 2. Take a walk:** Moving for 10 minutes can help you maintain a healthy weight and a healthy attitude. Take 3 ten-minute walks and your heart will get the benefits too!
- 3. Take a nap:** A good night's sleep is essential for good health, especially when your days are beyond busy. A 10-minute daytime nap can also help boost energy levels.
- 4. Take a bath:** With or without bubbles, running water is relaxing. A 10-minute bath (or shower) can soothe tired muscles and release holiday tension.
- 5. Take a call:** It does make a difference to "reach out and touch someone." Connect with a special friend or family member for 10 minutes by phone or in person.
- 6. Take a dog break:** Fresh air is good for humans and animals. Take 10 minutes to throw a few balls and bring some sunshine into your life and the dog's life!
- 7. Take a child break:** Children have the right attitude toward holidays—wonder and joy. Just 10 minutes with a child can help revive anyone's sagging spirits.
- 8. Take a book break:** A good book can give you a healthy rest from the holiday hubbub. Put all your lists aside for 10 minutes and curl up with a book and a cup of tea.
- 9. Take a snack break:** Stress often leads to over-eating. Sit down for 10 minutes and eat a nutrient-rich snack, life fruit and cheese, half a sandwich or a handful of nuts.
- 10. Take a music break:** Holiday songs, carols and hymns are a lovely way to take a break, to relax, or even to dance. Try a 10-minute sing-a-long as a stress reliever.



## Winter Tips for Outdoor Activities

When it comes to winter activities, a little help is sometimes needed. So, here are our top winter tips. These tips are useful for all of us who will be heading outdoors this winter for fun and fitness.



- 1. Stay hydrated—even though temperatures are down, you still sweat when you exercise.**
- 2. ID Yourself- Take an ID with you at all times for emergencies.**
- 3. Layer your moisture wicking clothes to stay warm. Use a vented shell that is either water proof or water resistant.**
- 4. Dry off quickly after exercising to avoid chill.**
- 5. Dress as if it is 15 degrees warmer than the thermometer. Your body warms as you exercise within 10 minutes or so, dress accordingly.**
- 6. Start your exercise into the wind to avoid chilling on the way back.**
- 7. Bring someone along to enjoy your time outside.**
- 8. Be seen by wearing reflective clothing, vests and accessories.**
- 9. Stay indoors if outdoor conditions will not allow you to get out.**
- 10. Wear sunglasses to avoid glare from sun and snow**
- 11. Let someone know you will be venturing outdoors and will let them know when you are expected back.**
- 12. Have your cell phone with you in case an emergency arises.**

Be safe, be sensible and enjoy this upcoming winter!



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and enjoy  
this upcoming winter!*





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The Ottawa County Wellness Coalition (OCWC) is a collaboration of local agencies, hospitals, businesses, schools, area residents and other organizations within the community working to address the issues of overweight/obesity and unhealthy lifestyles in Ottawa County.

Check out [www.gethealthyottawa.org](http://www.gethealthyottawa.org) - Physical Activity Database

## Winter Family Fitness

Looking for an excuse to head outdoors with your kids? Here's a statistic that's pretty much guaranteed to get you and your kids off the couch. A mother's participation in physical activity increases the likelihood that her child will be physically active by 22% while a father's participation in physical activity can increase the likelihood that his child will be physically active by 11%. Once you've made up your mind to do something to encourage your kids to be more active this winter, you simply need to block off some time in your family's schedule each week for family fitness. Here are some fun ways to get—and stay—active as a family this winter.

**Hit the Slopes.** (The toboggan slopes, that is.) Remember how much fun you had going tobogganing as a kid? Well, last time I checked, there was no law saying you had to bow out of all that fun, just because you're old enough to pay taxes. So grab your scarf, slip into a pair of snow pants, and hitch a ride on your kid's toboggan. (If that doesn't leave you feeling a good decade or two younger, I don't know what will!)



**Give Frosty and Yourself a Workout.** Spend an afternoon making snowmen, snowwomen, snow children, and snow pets—well, you get the picture. All that

snow-rolling is surprisingly good exercise, as are the snow angels (think jumping jacks!) that your kids will no-doubt be inspired to make while they're frolicking around in the snow.

### Make Tracks.

There's no easier time to spot animal tracks than when the ground is covered in a blanket snow, so bundle up your kids for a winter hike and head to the nearest park or conservation area to see what types of animal tracks you can discover. Or, if that seems like too much work, you can scout your own neighborhood for signs of squirrels, rabbits, dogs, cats, and other animals on the move, and have fun making your own tracks at the same time.

**Play Frisbee.** Who says you can only play Frisbee on a sizzling hot summer day? Frisbee is a lot more fun—and a lot more challenging—when played on a cold winter day. After all, there's always the chance you're going to lose your Frisbee in a snowdrift. (A word to the wise: white is not the color of choice for a winter game of Frisbee!)

**Play Soccer in the Snow.** The uneven terrain makes it extra challenging to chase the ball down the field. Kids of all ages



will get a kick out of trying their hand at a game of "soccer," so plan to host a mid-winter tournament on your street. (You can invite everyone back to your house afterwards to warm up over a steamy cup of hot chocolate.)

**Know When to Stay Indoors.** There will be times this winter when no one wants to venture outdoors because the weather is simply too miserable to make it any fun. In that case, you'll want to have some indoor fitness activities lined up. You'll no doubt find that you score big points with your kids if you set up an indoor play area at home where they are allowed to break the standard "no rough-housing in the house rule." Remove lamps and other breakable objects and let your kids know that—in this one part of the house at least—rolling, climbing, jumping, and tumbling aren't just allowed: they're actually encouraged! And, of course, there are plenty of great indoor fitness activities that can be enjoyed in the community year-round: everything from bowling to swimming to roller-skating.

