

Skowhegan Healthy Maine Streets – Stories of Success and Updates 2013

In July of 2013, Skowhegan HMS sponsored a Women's Self Defense class offered by the Skowhegan Police Department and Somerset Sherriff's Department. Class registrations were limited to 20 participants and the class was filled with a waiting list. The class was held at the Skowhegan Community Center. Feedback was positive with participants stating that they learned many useful techniques and information that makes them more aware of their safety and surroundings. They also stated that they would participate in future classes and would be interested in a series around self defense. We are in the process of scheduling future workshops to accommodate the waiting list and past participants who would like additional training.

Our monthly meetings have included guest speakers to address tobacco laws and policies, the Affordable Care Act, and substance abuse policies – focusing on prescription drug misuse and medical marijuana.

Because of the Healthy Maine Streets grant, New Balance Foundation funding, and the investment of our Wellness Committee and dedicated business owners, the Children's Cottage has received Green and Healthy Maine Streets funding to help with the completion of a second (and third) floor renovation project that will include space for a fitness center for the downtown area, a school of performing arts, and office space.

After attending the Charette in October, a member of our Wellness Committee contacted Tim Downing, who was a speaker at the Charette, to inquire about DuraTherm constructing sandwich board signs for the Main Street businesses to promote wellness in the downtown using consistent messaging. This was an item in our New Balance Foundation grant. DuraTherm is now in the process of constructing the signs and is donating them to our program - which will free up funding for other wellness related activities!

A team from Skowhegan HMS participated in Skowhegan's annual RiverFest Celebration Bed Races. 5 members of the Wellness Committee raced down the main street pushing or riding on an iron bed frame. Although victory was not achieved, they did succeed in realizing how much fun physical activity can be and are determined to up the anti with concentrated training for next year's race.

We will be kicking off a Winter Wellness Challenge on November 27th encouraging community members to maintain their weight within two pounds throughout the holiday season. They will be weighed at the beginning of the program and six weeks later to see if they have met their goal. Participants are also encouraged to track physical activities during this timeframe and prizes will be awarded for anyone who maintains throughout the program and also for physical activity tracking.

We will be holding a Helper's Training in December to train peer supporters in the workplace and community to assist others with tobacco cessation. This will coincide with the kick-off of a Quit and Win program being held by Redington Fairview General Hospital in January.