

The Life Education Center

The Life Education Center (LEC) program teaches students in kindergarten through high school the benefits of making sound, healthy choices for their bodies and minds.

Two mobile units travel to 61 public and private schools in Kankakee and Iroquois counties -- reaching approximately 14,000 students annually.

The LEC's curriculum aligns with Illinois State Standards. Instructors use hands-on materials, visuals, discussion and role playing to teach students about the human body, the dangers of its abuse and about the different skills needed to deal with peer pressure. TAM, a transparent anatomical mannequin, teaches the younger students about their bodies and provides older students with an inside view of how chemical substances harm the body. LEC mascot, Harold the Giraffe and his friend, Jocko the Monkey, are favorites with the younger students who learn the importance of exercise and eating good foods.

The LEC also provides a forum for older students. A three-part research-based curriculum proven to delay the onset of alcohol use is taught to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students at participating schools and "Class Action" is being used with high school students. Junior and senior high school students, along with their parents, are encouraged to make a pledge to follow and support laws prohibiting underage alcohol use in the Partnership's annual "*Make a Pledge - Make It Stick*" social marketing campaign.

LEC program parent guides were paid for in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services.



**Life Education Centers
Pledge for Life Partnership**

Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education

189 E. Court St. Suite 403
Kankakee, IL 60901 (815) 936-4606

Visit our website at: www.i-kan.org

Parents of Kindergartners

In the Life Education Center, kindergartners learn how to choose *Wise Highs*, choices for a happy, healthy body and mind...*Choices You Can Live With!*

This lesson focuses on instilling a sense of awe about the human body as well as teaching the importance of eating foods from all of the different food groups. We encourage you to talk with your child about this lesson and to add your own family values.

Topics covered include:

- ▲ The magnificent human body and its many parts.
- ▲ Where the various body parts are located and what they do.
- ▲ The importance of eating a balanced diet and being careful about the amount of sweets and fats we put in our bodies -- even at snack time.



▲ What keeps us alive -- being able to breathe, move, eat and grow.

Review Questions:

By asking the following questions, your child can share with you what he has learned in the Life Education Center:



- **Who is Harold?** *(A giraffe puppet who likes to sing about food and the things we need to stay healthy.)*
- **What did Jocko the monkey learn while playing with his friends?** *(He needs to eat foods from all the food groups in order to have the energy he needs to play with his friends. Bananas alone are not enough.)*
- **How did students help Jocko decide what other foods he should eat?** *(We told him on the telephone about foods from the other food groups that he could eat along with bananas.)*
- **Tell me about the game you played with Jocko.** *(Food sorting)* **Did you help him sort groceries into the food pyramid?**
- **What are the five basic food groups?** *(1. Meats & Beans 2. Milk or Dairy 3. Breads & Cereals 4. Fruits 5. Vegetables.)*
- **Why is it important to eat good foods?** *(To give us energy to learn and play; to help our bones and other body parts grow. When Jocko only ate bananas, he fell asleep and didn't have any energy to play with his friends.)*

- **What are good choices?** *(Those that keep you healthy and that you can live with for the rest of your life.)*
- **How do you learn to make good choices?** *(By talking to your parents, grandparents, teachers and other adults who you know love and care about you.)*

Follow-up Activities

The following activities can be used to reinforce the lesson taught in the Life Education Center.

- Discuss things the body can do like moving, thinking, breathing, growing, running, jumping, talking.
- Help your child remember something incredible that has happened to her body since she was a baby. (Show her several pictures from each year of her life to see how much she has changed, while in other ways how she is the same.)
- Play a game like “Simon Says” for identifying body parts. Ask your child to point to major parts and organs like the heart, lungs, bones, muscles, stomach and brain.
- Discuss things we need to give our bodies, like water, food, rest, exercise, fresh air.
- Have your child plan a balanced meal for the family and let him help you prepare it.
- Ask your child to suggest healthy foods to eat at snack time and let her pick them out at the grocery store.

These are just a few ways to teach our children how special they are and to help them choose **Wise Highs...Choices You Can Live With!** To visit the LEC or to learn more, call Brenda Wetzel, director of Life Education programs at 815 936-4606.