

# 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.

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**Life Education Centers  
Pledge for Life Partnership**

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Parents of

## Second Graders

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

This lesson focuses on the brain and how it controls the body. We encourage you to talk with your child about these lessons and to add your own family values.

### Topics covered include:

- ▲ How each part of our body has special jobs to do.
- ▲ How the brain controls our body and sends messages to different body parts.
- ▲ How our brain controls our thoughts and feelings.
- ▲ How the health of our body affects our actions, feelings and decisions.
- ▲ Each of us has a special and unique personality and this is what makes us different from everyone else.



## Review Questions:

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

- **What was Harold the Giraffe singing about?** (*Ways to keep your body healthy: Exercise, healthy foods, etc.*)
- **What can you say about the game, *Head-to-Toe Tic Tac Toe*?**  
**What did you learn about your organs?** (*For example, the brain is the boss of the body. The liver has 500 jobs to do every day. The small intestine helps digest our food. The stomach is the first place food goes after being swallowed. The lungs help us breathe oxygen into our blood. The heart pumps blood to all parts of the body. The kidneys get rid of liquid waste and the large intestine stores leftover food or waste.*)
- **What did you learn from the *Talking Brain*?** (*That the brain controls all of our body functions and is the part that makes each of us unique – no one else is just like me.*)  
**Show me the dance you did.**
- **Did you like *Nevergladonia*? Why?** (*It is a place where people are “never glad” to be themselves. They do not like the way they look, so they buy masks to change their faces.*)
- **Why was Zoey, the little boy, taken to *Nevergladonia*?** (*To tell the people there that it is ok to be happy with the way you are. It is not important how you look, but it is important how you act and feel. He sings about how our personalities make us unique and special.*)
- **What is so special about each of us being good at different things?** (*It makes life more interesting and enables us to help each other by using our special talents.*)



## Follow-up Activities

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

- Discuss the way the brain gets information through our five senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste) and how our bodies react to these different messages. For example, what do you do when you touch something hot, smell an onion or hear a loud noise.
- Talk about the different personality of each family member, as well as some friends, TV characters and celebrities. Have your child show you how she would act if she was that person.
- Help your child identify how family members and friends are similar, yet different. For example, identify different physical characteristics like eye and hair color or height and weight. Identify things that they like to do.
- At the dinner table or in a car, have family members name all the labels that describe them. For example, brother, friend, son, good person, playmate, human being, caring person, happy person, grandson, American or healthy. Discuss the importance of these roles in the home and at school.
- With your child, plan balanced meals using foods and recipes that have been passed down from your parents and grandparents.
- Tell your child or research with her the customs and traditions of the nationalities in your family.

These are just a few ways that we can teach our children how special they are and how important it is for them to take care of their bodies and minds. These discussions help them to choose ***Wise Highs...Choices You Can Live With!***

**To visit the LEC or to learn more, contact Brenda Wetzel, director of Life Education programs at 815 936-4606.**