

# Ithaca Health Alliance Newsletter

## Free to Be...A Female Athlete

By Ellen Staurowsky

In a land where the rivers run free  
In a land through the green country  
In a land to a shining sea  
And you and me are free to be you and me  
(Lawrence & Hart, 1972)

In 1972, actress Marlo Thomas and the Ms. Foundation for Women developed the *Free to Be...You and Me* project to challenge gender stereotypes and to convey a message of empowerment to children that they could become whatever they wanted to be. In a retro back-to-school ad this year by Target, that message reverberates once again in its music and imagery. The ad features triplets representing three ways to be what you want to be — a smart girl, a female athlete, an artist/dancer. The female athlete is situated in the center of the commercial, attired brightly in yellow, striding boldly out of school, tennis racket in hand.

Few today would balk at that image but in 1972, the same year in which Title IX of the Education Amendments Act was passed, the notion that girls could aspire to be great athletes was a novel, not mainstream idea. Since Title IX, girls participating on high school varsity teams has increased 1000 percent, from just under 300,000 opportunities nearly four decades ago to over 3 million today.

As a Women's Sports Foundation report entitled *Her Life Depends on It II* released last December shows, moderate and consistent levels of physical activity and sports involvement for girls is essential to their physical, mental, and emotional health and well being. Girls are more likely to stay in school and go

on to college if they play sports. They are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors that threaten their health such as alcohol use, illicit drug use, smoking, and unprotected sex or sex with multiple partners.

In a recent study by Betsy Stevenson from the University of Pennsylvania, there is more than a passing connection between rising girls' sport participation, a 20% increase in women's education, and about a 40% increase in employment for 25-to 34-year-old women.

With renewed emphasis on school-based fitness programs inspired by First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move* program, there is no better time to look at what sports and physical activities are available to children in your local school and to ensure that those programs are equitable. While the nation is so much farther ahead in providing opportunities for girls to participate in sports in 2010 than it was in the early 1970s, nevertheless more work needs to be done. Girls still comprise only 1 in 3 high school athletes.

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## ITHACA FREE CLINIC HOURS AND OPERATIONS

Mondays: 2–6 p.m. (walk-ins to MDs, appointments for complementary providers)  
Tuesdays: 3–7 p.m. (by appointment only)  
Thursdays: 4–8 p.m. (walk-ins to MDs, appointments for complementary providers)

Located at 225 South Fulton Street, Suite B (upstairs), Ithaca, NY. Relocating soon to 521 West Seneca Street. • (607) 330-1254

The Ithaca Free Clinic is a project of the **Ithaca Health Alliance**. More than 80 percent of our work is done through volunteer efforts. Whether you're interested in working with the Clinic or the Health Alliance, if you're looking for a volunteer opportunity, call the Clinic Coordinator at 607-330-1254.

### The Ithaca Health Alliance

The IHA was founded in 1997. Our mission is to facilitate access to health care for all, with a focus on the needs of the un- and under-insured of New York State.

### Become a member of the IHA!

IHA members receive discounts from participating health providers and are eligible through the Ithaca Health Fund for grants and loans that pay for emergency and preventive care. To learn more about membership, call 607-330-1253 and ask to speak to the Office Manager.

### Information about the IHA

PO Box 362, Ithaca, NY 14851  
Phone: 607-330-1253 • Fax: 607-330-1194  
Email: [office@ithacahealth.org](mailto:office@ithacahealth.org)  
Web site: [www.ithacahealth.org](http://www.ithacahealth.org)

*This quarterly newsletter is a production of the Ithaca Health Alliance.*



## Kale Chips

Submitted by Betsye Caughey

1 bunch of kale, stemmed and cut into 3-inch pieces  
2 tablespoons nutritional yeast  
½ tablespoon apple cider vinegar  
½ tablespoon organic tamari (wheat-free soy sauce)  
1 tablespoon sesame oil

Preheat oven to 350°. Trim and wash kale, spinning dry in a salad spinner. Combine the yeast, sesame oil, apple cider vinegar, and tamari together until creamy. Add kale to the bowl and coat evenly. It may seem like you don't have enough coating, but you don't want the leaves to be soggy.

Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet and cook at 350° for about twenty minutes. Check on the chips halfway and move around to evenly bake, preventing the outer leaves from burning.

You can make these a variety of ways once you learn the method. If you don't like sesame oil and tamari, substitute extra virgin olive oil and a teaspoon of kosher salt. Other variations include using garlic powder or cayenne pepper. ♣

*Betsye Caughey is the Alliance's Outreach Coordinator and a member of the Education Subcommittee. She can be reached at [outreach@ithacahealth.org](mailto:outreach@ithacahealth.org).*

## Free to Be... *continued from pg. 1*

They have access to \$165 million less in athletic scholarship funding at the college and university level.

While barriers to sport participation have been weakened, they are not yet gone. Girls still confront obstacles, in the lack of role models, social pressures, and body image issues and, at times, lack of parental encouragement. Girls from lower socio-economic backgrounds in urban and rural settings and girls of color engage less in physical activity and suffer long-term health problems as a consequence.

More work also needs to be done to better understand the injuries female athletes experience by participating in sport, such as anterior-cruciate ligament tears (ACL injuries or knee injuries) and concussions. Some recent data suggests that physical training programs for girls do need to be gender-conscious in terms of how we go about skills development and strength and conditioning.

Parents and local school authorities can be vigilant in advocating for programming that keeps both boys and girls active and moving toward a bright future. One piece of legislation pending in the United States Congress to help in that process is the High School Sports Information Act sponsored by Senator Olympia Snow (R-ME). This bill, if enacted, would assist the public in assessing how well schools are doing in allocating resources equitably to support athletic programs for boys and girls and the degree to which they are complying with the mandates of Title IX.

By celebrating the progress that has been made and strategically working to address remaining impediments to girls' participation in sport, we can continue to foster a climate for girls where they can

joyfully be free to be the female athletes they were born to be. ♣

*Ellen J. Staurowsky is professor and graduate chair in the department of Sport Management and Media at Ithaca College. She can be reached at [stuarows@ithaca.edu](mailto:stuarows@ithaca.edu).*



## Ithaca Health Alliance Annual Elections Completed

Thanks to members for making short order of the annual elections. The Board of Directors will make officer selections in the fall. For now, the names and functions of board members follow:

**Deirdre Silverman**, President  
**Barbara Alden**, Treasurer  
**Govind Acharya**, Secretary  
**Alexandra Clinton**, Director  
**Fran Spadafora Manzella**, Director  
**Scott McCasland**, Director  
**Ammitai Worob**, Director ♣

## Contacting the Alliance's Executive Director

For inquiries about programming, opportunities to donate, and general development of the Ithaca Health Alliance and its projects, send email to Bethany Schroeder at [executivedirector@ithacahealth.org](mailto:executivedirector@ithacahealth.org) or, after October 1, call 607-882-9060. ♣

# Big Tobacco's Impact on Youth

By Erin James

Nationally, over 400,000 people die a year from tobacco use. In New York State alone, over 25,000 deaths that can be attributed to its use. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

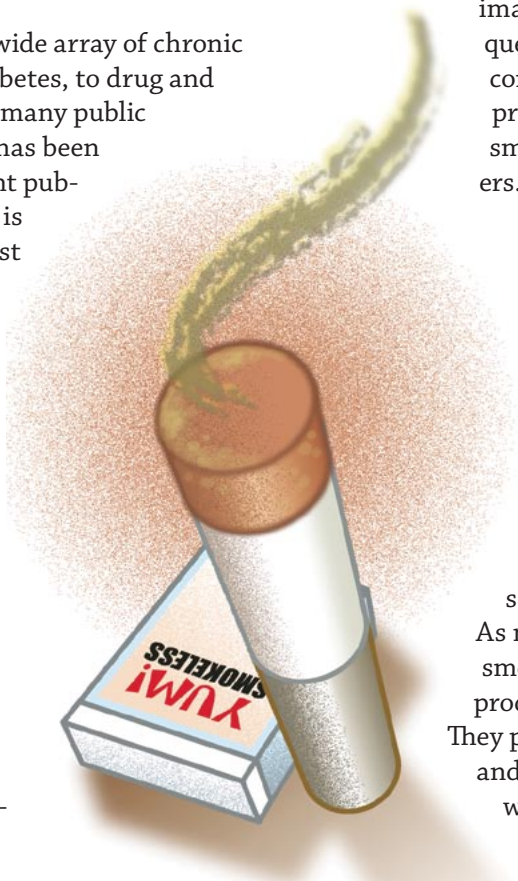
Youth today are faced with a wide array of chronic health issues, from obesity, to diabetes, to drug and alcohol use. This generation faces many public health concerns. Much attention has been given to obesity as the most urgent public health issue, and while obesity is an important health issue, we must not forget that the use of tobacco is lethal. It has been estimated that 389,000 youth alive in New York State today will die from tobacco-related diseases.

Almost 90 percent of adult smokers took their first puff before the age of 18. This should come as no surprise when you consider the powerful effect that the tobacco industry's marketing has on youth. It is no coincidence that the advent of characters like Joe Camel brought an increase in youth consumption of Camel cigarettes.

Because so many people die each year from tobacco-related illnesses, the tobacco industry has to work hard to recruit new smokers to replace those that have died. Sophisticated marketing is one way to build brand loyalty and ensure a lifetime of use. As chemist Claude Teague noted in a R.J. Reynolds memo titled, *Research Planning Memorandum on Some Thoughts About New Brands of Cigarettes for the Youth Market* in 1973:

“Realistically, if our Company is to survive and prosper, over the long term, we must get our share of the youth market. In my opinion this

will require new brands tailored to the youth market. ...Several things will go to make up any such new “youth” brands, the most important of which will be the image and quality—which are, of course, interrelated. The questions then are: What image? And what quality? Perhaps these questions may best be approached by consideration of factors influencing pre-smokers to try smoking, learn to smoke, and become confirmed smokers.”



Creating cartoon characters to serve as the face of tobacco was certainly one way to influence pre-smokers. A current trend is the use of smokeless tobacco products like Camel Orbs Fresh. These are tablet-like smokeless tobacco products that are easily mistaken for candy. The packaging is similar to Tic Tacs, and the Orbs themselves look similar to the small mints. As more and more areas are becoming smoke-free, these tablet-type tobacco products are increasing in popularity. They provide an alternative to cigarettes and allow people to get their nicotine fix where smoking is prohibited.

To make smoking more palatable, cigarettes were engineered to promote nicotine addiction. Ammonia was added to cigarettes in order to increase the speed and efficiency of nicotine absorption. Also added to cigarettes were eugenol and menthol, both used to numb the throat so that the smoker doesn't feel as much throat irritation and is therefore able to inhale more smoke more deeply. Between marketing that, intentionally or not, influences youth and the flawlessly addictive cigarette itself, it is no wonder that tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

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# Healthy Living: A Teen Perspective

By Sierra Olson

As a junior at Ithaca High School, I have witnessed first-hand the lack of attention most teens give to their health. Whether it's lack of exercise or poor nutrition, many teens are guilty of not treating their bodies properly. These "health crimes" can be due to various factors such as lack of time, knowledge, and access to health promoting resources like organic foods and exercise facilities. However, it is essential that such obstacles are overcome and that health becomes a higher priority.

With SATs on the horizon and the demands of AP courses, it seems nearly impossible to stay in shape. Even so, I manage to allot time out of my hectic schedule to take a break and exercise. I make sure that I exercise at least three times a week for an hour each time. My exercise routine generally consists of going to the gym for cardio and weight lifting, horseback riding, and walking and jogging in my neighborhood. I also do exercise programs, such as Pilates and Yoga, on the TV and with DVDs. The key to staying fit is to find activities and a routine that you personally enjoy and look forward to doing. In that way, you will make a greater effort to be healthy. Many teens worry that if they take time to exercise instead of doing school work, their grades will slip and they will

become over-burdened with work. However, I have found that taking a break from academics has the opposite effect. Exercise is an excellent stress reliever and helps get oxygen flowing, which consequently helps me focus better and be more relaxed.

Eating healthy is also an essential part of taking care of your body. The nutrients that we put into our bodies can make a world of differences to how we function and feel. Quite a few teens often ignore such advice and can be found replacing fruits and veggies with Cokes and Snickers. The majority of teens do not realize that these are the most important years to get nutrients that will help prevent diseases and poor health later in life. It is also helpful to go food shopping with your parents so you can select snack foods such as yogurt and veggies. I have found that the challenge of healthy eating is actually enjoyable to take on and I have learned an enormous amount of information, once I decided to properly take care of my body. I am even interested in having a career involving health later in life and I feel that the more teens put health higher on the list of their priorities, the more teens will experience the positive benefits now and for the rest of their lives. ♣

*Sierra Olson lives, plays, and stays fit locally.*

## Big Tobacco and Youth

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Our community is not immune to the influence of Big Tobacco. That's why **Tobacco Free Tompkins** is dedicated to reducing the social and economic burden of tobacco use in Tompkins County by fostering the shift toward a smoke-free community norm. Tobacco Free Tompkins is a Community Partner of the **New York State Tobacco Control Program** and is funded by

a grant to the Tompkins County Health Department from the New York State Department of Health. ♣

*Erin James is a former volunteer with the Ithaca Health Alliance Education Subcommittee. She is now employed as an educator with the Tompkins County Health Department.*

## Studies & Trends in Teen Drinking: More Health Threats, Youth-Targeted Products

While teen drinking has always been a modern public health concern, there are some new studies and trends that are cause for alarm. A March 2010 report by the Partnership for a Drug Free America reported a 4 percent increase in teen alcohol consumption between 2008 and 2009. Some attribute the rise to a slackening of prevention and education efforts over the last decade, in comparison to the 1980s and 90s. Another cause for concern comes from a recent study in Pediatrics, in which Harvard researchers reported that teen girls who drink alcohol are at significantly higher risk of developing benign breast disease as early as their 20s. Other recent trends with dangerous implications include the popular combination of mixing energy drinks with alcohol. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) this practice increases binge drinking and the likelihood of being taken advantage of sexually (see the CDC Fact Sheet). The CDC and Food and Drug Administration have also been raising awareness about the increased production and marketing of caffeinated alcoholic beverages, called CABs by the CDC. These products usually have higher alcohol content than beer. Many of these products are marketed to youth with appealing images and messaging. One brand is packaged like a soda can and has 12 percent alcohol, sugar, caffeine, and wormwood (plant from which absinthe is derived). It comes in flavors like blue raspberry, watermelon, and cotton candy. A “List of Manufacturers of Caffeinated Alcoholic Beverages” can be found on the Food and Drug Administration’s website (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodIngredientsPackaging/ucm190448.htm>).

Currently the FDA is examining the legality of these products, given the variety and nature of their ingredients. More education is needed to raise awareness among teens and their parents about the myriad health threats of teen alcohol abuse and the marketing of CABs to youth. ❖

Centers for Disease Control Alcohol and Public Health Fact Sheet:

<http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/cab.htm>

Berkey, C.S., Willett, W. C., Frazier, I. A., et al. (2010). *Prospective Study of Adolescent Alcohol Consumption and Risk of Benign Breast Disease in Young Women*. *Pediatrics*, 125(5), pp. e1081-1087. Published online April 12, 2010.

## Water-pipe Use and Other Dependencies

A recent study sought to analyze the sociodemographic characteristics of water-pipe users among young adults in North America and, at the same time, considered psychoactive substance use among the same study group. Specifically, 871 young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 submitted responses; the same group of participants were also studied through a second research effort about nicotine dependence in teens.

Findings indicated that 23 percent of participants used water pipes. Characteristics that increased the likelihood of water-pipe use included younger age, male gender, speaking English, not living with parents, and higher household income. Cigarette smoking, the use of other tobacco products, alcohol ingestion, binge drinking, and the use of marijuana or other illicit drugs led to “markedly higher” water-pipe use among young adults in the study. Researchers concluded that water-pipe use may be higher among youth with socioeconomic advantages. They called for interventions to help people make educated choices about water-pipe use. ❖

Dugas, E., Tremblay, M., and Low, N. C. P., et al. *Water-Pipe Smoking Among North American Youths*. (2010). *Pediatrics*, 125(6), pp. 1184-1189. Published online May, 2010.

*Brooke Hansen is associate professor of anthropology at Ithaca College and a long-time member and representative of the Alliance. For four years, Bethany Schroeder served as the president of the IHA board of directors. She is now the executive director of the Ithaca Health Alliance.*

# UPDATES & EVENTS

## FUND UPDATE

By Rob Brown, Office Manager

In June the Board of Directors voted unanimously that Preventive Exam grants through the Ithaca Health Fund will no longer require a provider's discount. In the second quarter of 2010, the Fund made twenty-four grants valued at \$7112 to help pay uninsured medical expenses. Furthermore, advocacy for members with catastrophic medical bills helped to facilitate more than \$43,000 of discounted care. Unprecedented numbers of people have needed help through the Alliance's donated membership program, and we're actively seeking donations to help us offer more donated enrollments through the rest of the year. ❖

## OUTREACH UPDATE

By Betsye Caughey, Outreach Coordinator

In the spirit of true community collaborative efforts, three local groups fundraised on behalf of Ithaca Health Alliance: Ithaca High School's Link Crew sponsored a Walk for Health; Lucia Sciore held a Tribal Belly-Dancing Benefit; and Mighty Yoga donated the proceeds from the studio's classes, in celebration of their one-year anniversary. As news of our upcoming Clinic move has spread, the Alliance has been featured multiple times in the media, including WHCU, the Ithaca Times, Tompkins Weekly, and the Ithaca Journal. Finally, we are looking forward to the return of the students for the fall semester, starting with the Cornell POST and Ithaca College PLUNGE students who have committed to helping us with the beginning stages of our move to 521 West Seneca Street. ❖

## FREE CLINIC UPDATE

By Sadie Hays, Clinic Coordinator

In the first 6 months of 2010, the Ithaca Free Clinic provided over 1450 patient visits. More than half of these visits (760) were to Medical Doctors, who volunteer 5–20 hours of their time each month to help sick and injured area residents. In late September, 2010, we will move into a larger clinic. These new offices will provide much needed additional space for two physicians to see patients during each shift,

while allowing other modalities, such as chiropractic, acupuncture, massage, occupational therapy, and herbal medicine, growing room as well. ❖

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Martin Ginsburg, Ithaca Free Clinic volunteer physician, will give a public talk, "**Falls—How to Prevent Them**" on Wednesday, September 15, at 10:30 a.m. at Lifelong.

The Ithaca Health Alliance and Free Clinic will **move offices at the end of September**. If you'd like to volunteer in the effort, contact Sadie Hays at [clinic@ithacahealth.org](mailto:clinic@ithacahealth.org) or Bethany Schroeder at [executivedirector@ithacahealth.org](mailto:executivedirector@ithacahealth.org). The new location will be at 521 West Seneca Street. Members and the general public will receive notice of our upcoming open house. Please plan to attend.

**First Peoples' Festival** will be held in conjunction with Apple Fest at Dewitt Park, Saturday, October 2 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Festival will feature Native American flute playing, art, crafts, food, storytelling, song, and dance. Free and open to all. For more information, visit <http://multicultural-resource.org/>.

**Open house at the new Ithaca Health Alliance Space:** Save the date, October 20, for an open house from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at our new address, 521 West Seneca Street. Please plan on attending; further information will appear on the listserv.

**Alliance Quarterly Forum:** In November the Community Relations and Outreach Committee in conjunction with the Education Subcommittee plans to offer a topical presentation, including updates on the Alliance and the Free Clinic. Look for more information on the listserv in the near future. ❖



**Ithaca Health Alliance**  
PO Box 362  
Ithaca, NY 14851

607-330-1253  
Find us online at  
[www.ithacahealth.org](http://www.ithacahealth.org)



# **Ithaca Health Alliance** Newsletter



## **Late Summer 2010**

**Free to Be...A Female Athlete • Kale Chips  
A Teen Perspective on Health  
Teens and Tobacco, Alcohol & Other Drugs  
Upcoming Events • IHA Updates**