



# Broadway Presbyterian Church

## Health Ministry Memorandum

### A Message from Mary Health Ministry Coordinator

August 2012

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#### Message From Mary

##### Health Ministry Coordinator

Happy August! It's hard to believe that summer is already coming to an end. Hopefully we will find some relief from the heat we have been experiencing. I know many families are preparing for their children's return to school and those preparations include shopping for school clothes. A few things to keep in mind while shopping include:

#### DRAWSTRINGS IN CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission calls drawstrings in children's clothing a "hidden hazard." Remove all drawstrings from children's outerwear. Even shortened strings can be hazardous. The CPSC reports that children between the ages of 2 and 8 are at risk for accidental strangulation by drawstrings on jackets and hooded sweatshirts. Strings can get caught on playground equipment, like slides or monkey bars.

Waistband drawstrings are also hazardous. The CPSC notes even older children up to 14 years old can be at risk for drawstrings getting hung in vehicle doors, especially school buses.

#### NAME LABELS

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children advises parents to be cautious when labeling their child's backpack, lunchbox, jacket or other clothing items. If your child's name is easily visible, a potential abductor can use it to gain your child's trust. Keep name labels on the inside of jackets and in discreet areas of a backpack or lunchbox.

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**FOOD SAFETY:** Preparing lunches for your children to take to school or bringing your lunch to work, means food can go unrefrigerated for extended periods of time. This gives bacteria a chance to grow and multiply, increasing the risk of food poisoning. Here are some food safety tips to keep in mind when preparing bag lunches:

**KEEP LUNCHES COLD:** The very nature of bag lunches makes it nearly impossible to keep food properly refrigerated, particularly while driving to work or taking the bus to school. Even if your school or workplace offers a refrigerator for storing lunches, you still have to do some careful planning to make sure the food you pack for lunch doesn't end up being the cause of a foodborne illness.

**INSULATED LUNCH BAGS:** Soft, insulated lunch bags or boxes are the best choice for keeping lunches cold. Metal or plastic lunch boxes without insulation don't do as good a job, but they're certainly better than paper lunch bags.

If you use paper lunch bags, double bagging creates an additional layer of insulation to help protect the food inside. Remember that insulated lunch totes and lunch boxes should be washed with hot soapy water **after each use**.

**FROZEN GEL PACKS:** No matter what sort of lunch bag or box you use, you definitely need to place some kind of ice pack inside it to keep the food cold. Small, frozen gel packs are a perfect choice. You can also freeze a juice box or a small bottle of water and pack it in your bag or lunch box. Not only will this help keep your lunch cold, but your frozen drink will thaw by lunchtime and you will have a cold, refreshing juice or water to enjoy with your lunch.

**PROTECT PERISHABLE FOODS:** Perishable foods include cooked meats like cold cuts and other lunch meats, as well as pre-made tuna salads, chicken salads and egg salads are potential targets for the bacteria that cause food poisoning. They must be kept refrigerated. Any store-bought, packaged lunch combos containing lunch meats, crackers and cheese need to be kept cold, also.

Everyone needs to be mindful of food safety, see more on page about food safety on page 6. I hope these tips help!

I am in the Health Ministry office two days a week. If you have any concerns about your health or need information, access to resources or referrals for healthcare, contact me at [mary.pedersen@broadwayqc.org](mailto:mary.pedersen@broadwayqc.org) or call 309.786.2631.

Keep safe and stay healthy as summer winds down and the school year begins.  
God bless you,  
Mary

## HOW TO HANDLE THE HEAT

**IT HAS BEEN CRAZY HOT!** What can you do to stay safe during this hot summer? What signs should you know about to recognize a heat related illness? Be aware of who is at greatest risk and what actions can be taken to prevent a heat-related illness or death. The elderly, the very young and people with mental illness and chronic diseases are at highest risk. However, even young and healthy individuals can succumb to heat if they participate in strenuous physical activities during hot weather.

Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. If a home is not air-conditioned, people can reduce their risk for heat-related illness by spending time in public facilities that are air-conditioned. Suggestions for preventing a heat-related illness include frequently drinking water or nonalcoholic fluids; wearing lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing; and reducing or eliminating strenuous activities or doing them during cooler parts of the day.

People suffer heat-related illness when the body's temperature control system is overloaded. The body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough. In these cases, a person's body temperature rises rapidly. Very high body temperatures may damage the brain or other vital organs. Several factors affect the body's ability to cool itself during extremely hot weather. When the humidity is high, sweat will not evaporate as quickly, preventing the body from releasing heat quickly. Other conditions that can limit the ability to regulate temperature include old age, youth (age 0-4), obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, mental illness, poor circulation, sunburn, prescription drug use and alcohol use.



## HOW TO HANDLE THE HEAT (cont'd)

**Heat stroke** occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106° F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

### **Recognizing Heat Stroke**

Warning signs of heat stroke vary but may include the following:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103° F, orally)
- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness

### **What to Do:**

If you see any of these signs, you may be dealing with a life-threatening emergency. Have someone call for immediate medical assistance while you begin cooling the victim. Do the following:

- Get the victim to a shady area.
- **Cool the victim rapidly using whatever methods you can.** For example, immerse the victim in a tub of cool water; place the person in a cool shower; spray the victim with cool water from a garden hose; sponge the person with cool water; or if the humidity is low, wrap the victim in a cool, wet sheet and fan him or her vigorously.
- Monitor body temperature, and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102° F.
- If emergency medical personnel are delayed, call the hospital emergency room for further instructions.
- Do not give the victim alcohol to drink.

Get medical assistance as soon as possible.

Sometimes a victim's muscles will begin to twitch uncontrollably as a result of heat stroke. If this happens, keep the victim from injuring himself, but do not place any object in the mouth and do not give fluids. If there is vomiting, make sure the airway remains open by turning the victim on his or her side.

**Heat exhaustion** is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, those with high blood pressure, and those working or exercising in a hot environment.

The warning signs of heat exhaustion include the following:

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting



Fainting

The skin may be cool and moist. The pulse rate will be fast and weak, and breathing will be fast and shallow. If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. See medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

To cool the body during heat exhaustion you should:

- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages.
- Rest.
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath.
- Seek an air-conditioned environment.

Wear lightweight clothing.

Do everything you can to “keep your cool” during the hot summer!



## SUMMER FOOD SAFETY

Summertime Food Safety: Foodborne illness and food poisoning increase in the summer months, when the weather is warmer. There are two reasons for this. First, the natural causes. Bacteria are present throughout the environment in soil, air, water, and in the bodies of people and animals. These microorganisms grow faster in the warm summer months. Most foodborne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110 °F.

Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid. Given the right circumstances, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Second, there are the "people" causes for the increase in summertime foodborne illnesses. Outside activities increase. More

people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues, and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides -- thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities -- are usually not available.

We can Fight BAC!™ by following these four simple steps to safer food in the summertime.



## KID'S CORNER

The 2012 Summer Olympics begin on July 28<sup>th</sup> and the United States has many exciting athletes to watch. Michael Phelps is greatest swimmer in Olympic history, but 27-year-old Ryan Lochte could be the new face of Team USA this summer. He already has six Olympic medals to his name (three gold, two silver, one bronze), and he's the current world record holder in both the 200 and 400-meter individual medley. Ryan and Michael Phelps put on a few thrilling duels at the recent U.S Olympic Trials in Omaha, with Phelps winning twice and Lochte once. Regardless of who wins, whenever these two step into the pool, it is must-see TV.

17-year-old Missy Franklin is called the "Female Michael Phelps" and is on the verge of swimming superstardom. If she medals in all four of her individual events and makes each of Team USA's three relay squads, she could become the first American female athlete to win seven medals at one Olympiad.

Gabby Douglas is a 16-year-old gymnast from Des Moines, Iowa with a winning smile and breathtaking aerial acrobatics. She took first place at the U.S. Olympic Trials last weekend, edging out defending World Champion Jordyn Wieber thanks to a gorgeous floor exercise. The American women are favored to take home the gold thanks to the duo of Douglas and Wieber.

Allyson Felix is a three-time Olympic medal winner, claiming the silver in the 200-meter dash in both 2004 and 2008, as well as the gold in the 4x400-meter relay in 2008 and is one of Track and Field's top athletes to keep an eye on this summer's Olympic games.

Ashton Eaton, 24, broke the Decathlon's 11-year-old world record at the U.S. Olympic Trials in Eugene, Ore. this summer. If he can follow that performance with a gold medal in London, he could be the most marketable American decathlete since Dan O'Brien and Dave Johnson ruled the sport two decades ago.

The USA's Men's Basketball team has been plagued with injuries. Key players like Dwight Howard and Derrick Rose combined with an improving international field have people asking if the U.S. men's basketball team can repeat as Olympic champions. The pressure is on LeBron James, Kevin Durant and Kobe Bryant to bring home one last gold medal before the NBA follows through on its proposal to limit, or even withdraw from, Olympic participation. Could this be the last Summer Olympics that we see professionals on the team?

To celebrate the Olympics, you can organize your own Olympic games with your friends. Plan running relays, swimming, and tumbling routines!

What is your favorite sport? Who is your favorite athlete? What is your favorite team? Email me at [mary.pedersen@broadwayqc.org](mailto:mary.pedersen@broadwayqc.org) and tell me!



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**We're on the Web!**

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