



Helping people with developmental disabilities lead productive, happy lives and connecting with the human spirit in us all.

New Wellness Center Offers Holistic Approach to Health at Lambs Farm

Libertyville, IL - In order to meet the holistic health needs of their men and women with developmental disabilities, Lambs Farm recently launched a new Wellness Center. This new program is a continuation of the legacy of Lambs Farm that encapsulates yet another way to advance the person-centered philosophy. It will make life better for all the men and women they serve, allowing older Participants to adjust to their changing lives with the respect and dignity they deserve and providing younger Participants with experiences that are meaningful and life-changing.

The new Center provides Participants a variety of options to practice healthier behaviors, offer a more holistic approach to promoting healthy choices, and foster a wellness culture. At Lambs Farm, wellness includes the sports and activities offered in Recreation, the enrichment and educational elements of Quest classes and Fine Arts, and the health and & nutrition initiatives of Dietary.

“By collaborating together, our departments will be able to better address the needs of each Participant, young and old,” said Lambs Farm Wellness Manager Kreig Alm.

On January 28, Participants, staff, and volunteers celebrated the kickoff of the new Wellness Center in the Lambs Farm gymnasium. Everyone was able to participate in fun fitness contests such as a sit and reach test, a shuttle run and raffles while learning about the upcoming wellness initiatives.

As part of the program, each month will feature a wellness theme to educate and inform Participants and staff. Special events will be held and articles will be included in the organization’s publications in order to convey a unified message.

“We want the ideas to be integrated into the whole culture of Lambs Farm, so we are also educating the staff each month and encouraging them to sign up to lead an exercise session with the Participants,” said Lambs Farm Dietitian Darlene Holop.

In addition, the continual Recreation exercise challenges serve as motivating factors to encourage the men and women to stay active. For instance, in the month of February the fitness challenge was to have 50 people exercise each day.

A zumba class is also now available for all who are interested and new fitness equipment will be added throughout the year. The 10 Special Olympics sports will continue to serve as a challenging and competitive component for Participants too.

Each month “Wellness Days,” open to all, highlight the month’s theme and will focus on specific residential homes in order to personalize the information. Some themes throughout

the year will be: Aging Gracefully, Proper Hydration, Diabetes Awareness and Stress Management.

On February 11, gymnastics instructor Kelly Lilja visited the campus to help lead an ability sensitive exercise class for the month's theme of Sports & Activities. The class was so well received by program Participants that she has continued to come back to teach classes each month.

For National Nutrition Month in March Jewel-Osco Dietitian Aimee Zajc led an interactive educational session to teach Participants more about healthy eating. Year-round nutrition education will also focus on interactive cooking classes to help Participants learn to prepare meals that meet individual dietary needs.

In addition to the current "Be Well" Lambs Farm Quest class, our Dietitian has added a class called "Mission Slimpossible" modeled after Weight Watchers which includes food journaling, portion control and an overall support system to help achieve wellness goals. Another new offering, "Healthy Adventures," is designed to take Participants into the community to enjoy wellness related activities such as rock climbing, yoga, indoor bocce and visits to local health food stores.

Overall, the Wellness Center allows Lambs Farm Participants to more easily incorporate healthy practices into their everyday lives. From new equipment, to new classes, to special events, it assures that all men and women have the opportunity to experience the highest quality of life no matter their age or disability.

On June 27, Lambs Farm will host their annual Fun & Fit Family Day 5K run/2 mile walk which will benefit the Wellness Center. Runners can enjoy a brisk run or walk around Old School Forest Preserve, then browse sponsor booths, and join in the fun & fit activities for the whole family. Spend the day visiting Lambs Farm's Farmyard & Attractions, browsing the many shops, and enjoying a healthy meal at the Magnolia Café & Bakery. Register online at www.lambsfarm.org or call 847.990.3749.

Lambs Farm is a premier nonprofit organization whose mission is to help people with developmental disabilities lead productive, happy lives and connecting with the human spirit in us all. Based near Libertyville, Illinois, Lambs Farm strives to maintain exemplary vocational, residential and recreational programs, and to operate our organization in a manner that will continue to help people grow.