

# 2016 WHAT'S HAPPENING

Healthy Kids Las Cruces Newsletter

January 2016

## New Year, New You?

Year after year I hear people go on and on about all the changes that will occur in their lives come January 1st. I myself have even said I am going to eat better, exercise more consistently, drink more water only to feel like a failure come January 30th when I haven't been able to make huge life changes. Or even start.

Change is hard and letting yourself down is bad for you self-preservation too. So this year I am thinking of one change I can focus on for the first part of the year. Once I have that change mastered I will take on another. What do you think? I'll update you on my "pilot project".

One way to encourage healthy behavior changes among our children is the 5-2-1-0 Challenge. The challenge is not always done in the beginning of the year, but covers most of the healthy behaviors children need to thrive.

- 5** Eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables a day
- 2** No more than 2 hours of screen time (computer, TV or game)
- 1** At least 1 hour of physical activity a day
- 0** Drink more H2O.

Here in Las Cruces, Mayor Miyagishima sponsors the 5-2-1-0 Challenge with all of the third grade classes, but parents and families can use the materials and concepts to get their families on a healthy track. Materials can be found here:

<http://archive.healthykidsnm.org/challenge.shtml>



## Upcoming Events

January 6  
Las Cruces Car Seat Safety Fitting Station  
Sisbarro Auto, 425 W. Boutz Rd.  
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

January 11  
Las Cruces Public School students in all grades will return to school

January 20  
Las Cruces Car Seat Safety Fitting Station  
Sisbarro Auto, 425 W. Boutz Rd.  
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

### \*Immunization Information\*

The New Mexico Department of Health's Las Cruces Central Public Health Office, 1170 N. Solano Drive, provides full-time immunization services for children and adults. Immunizations services are available for walk-in customers from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. and by appointment only from 1:15 to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For additional information and to make an appointment call the Las Cruces Central Public Health Office at (575) 528-5001



Go to <https://www.facebook.com/HKLasCruces>

## City of Las Cruces Water Polo Camp

The City of Las Cruces Parks & Recreation Department will present a Water Polo instructional camp at the Regional Aquatic Center, 1401 E. Hadley Ave., from Jan. 19-22, 2016. The camp will offer fundamental instruction in the sport of water polo for children 6 to 12 years of age.

Registration will be Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and on Saturday, 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., beginning Dec. 28, 2015 and ending Jan. 8, 2016, at the Regional Aquatic Center.

Camp fee is \$20 per person for four classes, age groups and camp times are:

Guppy Group Camp	Shark Group Camp
Ages 6 - 9	Ages 10 - 12
6:30-7:30 pm.	7:30 - 8:30 pm.

For more information:

Contact the Las Cruces Regional Aquatic Center  
(575) 541-2782

### Community & Families

Lead: Mark Johnston  
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City of Las Cruces Parks and Recreation Director



## Enjoy Your State Parks with a First Day Hike!

New Mexico State Parks will sponsor free, guided hikes in 14 state parks on New Year's Day as part of America's State Parks First Day Hikes. First Day Hikes offer individuals and families an opportunity to begin the New Year rejuvenating and connecting with the outdoors by taking a hike on January 1, 2016 at a state park near you.



Park staff and volunteers will lead the hikes, which average from one to two miles or longer depending on the scheduled hike. In New Mexico, hikes will be offered at the following locations and times listed on the attached document

or on our website at [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com)

### Community & Regional Planning

Lead: Andy Hume  
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Downtown Coordinator, Las Cruces Community Development



## Encouraging the kids to EAT more 5 veggies!

By the first week of November, salad bars were installed in all Las Cruces public schools. The District Nutrition Advisory Council has been discussing ways to increase usage of the salad bars.

One way is to encourage the students. At Doña Ana Elementary, the Nutrition Services Manager encourages the children by directly speaking to them to go to the salad bar and it works! Other suggestions have been adding salsa to the salad bar; and the idea of buying machines that chop all the veggies into a chopped salad, which are appropriate sized pieces for the students to eat. A final one is to put announcements on the morning announcements over the loud speaker about "what is on your salad bar today". Discussions will continue as new ideas emerge.

We will keep you posted.

### Education Setting

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## By age two, most kids can navigate touch screens

By age two, many kids can unlock and navigate touch screens with ease, swiping their way through apps much like their parents do, a small Irish study suggests. That's because regular use of smartphones and tablets appears widespread - even among children as young as one - and most parents who have touch-screen devices download apps and games specifically for their toddlers to use, the study found.

Traditional play in toddlers is changing rapidly, and touchscreens are becoming the most frequently used 'toy' for many children," said senior study author Deirdre Murray, a pediatrics researcher at the University College Cork in Ireland.

Whether this is good or bad for child development remains to be seen, and may very much depend on what types of apps children use, how much time they spend staring at tiny screens and how much the technology helps kids engage with the world around them, Murray added by email.

"Moving from passive television to interactive apps is probably a good thing," Murray said. "Children learn best when adults interact with them in their play and learning, no matter what the toy."

To assess how tech-savvy toddlers might be, Murray and colleagues surveyed 82 parents of children ages one to three years over a five-month period in 2014. Most respondents - 82% - owned a smartphone or tablet, and 87% of parents with touch-screen devices let their child use the gadgets, too.

Kids got to use the devices for around 15 minutes a day on average, and about two-thirds of them had their own apps on their parents' tablets or phones. Nine out of 10 parents who owned a tablet or smartphone said their child was able to swipe, while half reported that their kid could unlock the screen and nearly two-thirds thought their child could search for specific touch screen features.

Because touch-screens appear so simple for many toddlers to navigate, the devices might prove helpful in assessing or aiding development, the researchers conclude in a report scheduled for publication in Archives of Disease in Childhood. The technology might also foster communication skills in non-verbal children or kids with certain cognitive or developmental disorders, the authors suggest.

This study, however, didn't assess the potential benefits or harms of using touch-screens or explore what types of apps or games might be best for children to use or avoid.

Still, the findings reflect a reality of parenting in the digital age, said Dr. Larry Rosen, of California State University Dominguez Hills.

"Parenting is tough and draining with two-year-olds and to be able to engage their attention for periods of time with simple, easy-to-use touch-screen technology is, for many parents, a gift," Rosen, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email.

Many doctors, though, backed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, advise parents to avoid screen time before age two because it's thought to interfere with learning and language development. These recommendations predate the invention of smartphones and tablets.

"I think those recommendations no longer make sense," Rosen said.

**Instead, parents who do let children use mobile devices should focus on making sure screen time occurs only in moderation and without taking away from play involving people. They should also consider three things when handing tablets and phones over to their children.**

**"First, the apps must be educational," Rosen said. "Second, they should involve parental play time, and finally, they should not be used for more than 30 minutes at a time followed by interactive, creative free play."**

SOURCE: Arch Dis Child 2015. <http://bit.ly/1pXvOpb>

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### Healthcare Setting

Lead: Dr. Danielle Nixon

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**LA SEMILLA**  
LEARN GROW INSPIRE

La Semilla's website is looking pretty fancy. It has been fun watching this organization blossom into all they offer now. Don't take my word for it...take a look for yourself

<http://www.lasemillafoodcenter.org/index.php>

Oh!! And enjoy a tall glass of water when you do!



### Food System

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Director of Development & Administration