

Free - Please Take One!

# #64

February 2024



# NorthernHealth

AHA Newsletter



[www.athabascahealth.ca](http://www.athabascahealth.ca)



[facebook.com/AthabascaHealth](https://facebook.com/AthabascaHealth)



## Black Lake Sledding Party - Photo Submitted by Brenda Mercredi

Do you have a great photo? Send it to [pamela.huerto@athabascahealth.ca](mailto:pamela.huerto@athabascahealth.ca) & it might be featured on an upcoming cover! Stories, updates, events or other contributions are also welcome.



## Dene Phrase

Neghā nita

I love you

## Joke

Why don't skeletons  
fight each other?

They don't have the  
guts!



AHA believes in a future where people & the land are healthy, where communities, families and individuals live in peace & harmony, where traditional values, concepts & health practices are maintained respected & understood in partnership with contemporary care.

## Fun Fact

Blue ice gets its color when pure ice is compressed, squeezing out air bubbles. This makes the ice denser, absorbing less red light and giving it a beautiful blue tint.



## Contact

Pamela Huerto, RD

[pamela.huerto@athabascahealth.ca](mailto:pamela.huerto@athabascahealth.ca)

# Relationship Warnings

*teen dating violence*  
**FEBRUARY**  
*awareness month*



## 8 Warning Signs



Relationships are always a work in progress. No relationship is perfect. Relationships are complicated, and no two relationships are ever the exact same. Relationships can be confusing, frustrating, empowering, exciting, and so much more.

Thinking through the possible warning signs of an unhealthy relationship can help us notice red-flags in our own relationships. It's important to be aware of the warning signs.

Even if something isn't on this list, trust your gut and trust yourself.

**#1 FEELING IN DANGER** - If you feel like you're in danger or unsafe, even if you don't have concrete examples of being in danger, or if you can't quite put your finger on it, that can be a sign of an unhealthy relationship. You should not feel worried or anxious about your safety with your partner.

**#2 BEING ISOLATED** - You deserve to be connected to your support systems, peers and caring adults. If we feel like our partner is trying to isolate us from our community, that can be a big red flag.

**#3 LACK OF CONSENT OR RESPECT FOR BOUNDARIES** - You have the right to make decisions over your body, your life and your relationships. You should never feel pressured into doing something you don't want to. Your body, your choice. Boundaries are guidelines that we set between us and other people in ourselves to help make us feel safe and comfortable.

**#4 CO-DEPENDENCE** - If you feel like your entire world revolves around your partner and you feel like you can't be without that person your relationship may be codependent it means you always feel like you need to spend all of your time and energy on your partner above and beyond everyone else

**#5 MANIPULATION** - Manipulation is when your partner lies, deceives or tricks you. If you often feel like your partner is trying to control your actions or your feelings this could be something to reflect on. For example, if your partner is always monitoring your posts and telling who you should be friends with on social media you may want to ponder.

**#6 UNHEALTHY COMMUNICATION** - You should not feel scared to communicate your needs, or to start up a conversation with your partner.

**#7 ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIPS** - You shouldn't always be worried about your relationship. All relationships go through ups and downs, but you shouldn't be constantly panicked that the relationship might end, or that your partner might break up with you spontaneously.

**#8 LACK OF RESPECT** - If you consistently feel that your partner does not respect you (e.g., your ideas, values, interests) this could be something to continue thinking about it.

# Nutrition Month Bingo

## 🎉 Nutrition Month Wellness Bingo! 🎉

Eat a vegetable	Add fruit to breakfast	Try a new recipe	Floss or brush your teeth	Go for a walk
Home-cooked meal	No phone/TV during meal	Eat 3 meals in the day	Attend a community event	Eat with others
Try a new food	Cook for someone else	<b>BINGO FREE SPACE!</b>	Do something you enjoy	Get 7-9 hours of sleep
Pack a healthy lunch	Visit a friend	Pack a water bottle	Stretch your body	Take time to relax before bed
Do something kind	Eat a traditional food	Fruit or veggie at every meal	Anything to connect with nature	Eat breakfast

### How to Play:

- Complete 5 activities in a row (side to side, up and down, or corner to corner) to get a "Bingo!".
- Submit photos of you doing the activities and your Bingo grid, and you will be entered to win!
  - Deliver bingo sheets to Stephanie Bearman (Visiting Dietitian)
  - Email photos to [sbearman@athabascahealth.ca](mailto:sbearman@athabascahealth.ca)
  - Message the Athabasca Health Authority Facebook page
- The last day to submit is **Midnight on March 31, 2024.**
- You can win 1 of 4 **Instant Pot Multicookers (plus a cookbook)!**

You get 1 entry into the prize draw for every "Bingo!" (5 in a row) you send us.





# Dene Medicine

## Rat Root

*Acorus calamus*

Also called sweet flag, sway or muskrat root. It is a tall wetland plant that has been used in traditional medicine over centuries to treat various ailments.

Adapted from: Dene Medicine: An On-the-Land Healing Resource for Dene Communities

### BENEFITS

Treats colds, coughs, headaches, calms nerves, inflammations, improves immune system, is an antioxidant



The plant emits a sweet and spicy fragrance, particularly from its rhizomes (underground stems). This aromatic characteristic has led to its historical use in various cultures for purposes such as perfumery, potpourri, and as a natural air freshener.

The fragrance has made it a notable and distinctive plant, and in some cultures, it has been used for its pleasant scent in sachets and herbal blends.

### LOCATION

Grows under the ground on a reed-like plant in marshes.

### HARVESTING

Flowers in May – July. In fall after first frost, dig earth around plant and pull out roots growing from different angles. Dry several days before using. Replant roots you leave.

### MEDICINAL PROPERTIES

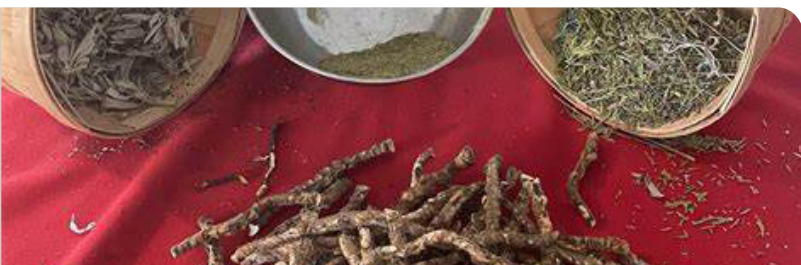
Flowers have antioxidant powers, plant is anti-inflammatory, improves immune system.

### USE

Chew root for cold and swallow its juice. Use powder in tea to treat cough, calm nerves. Burn tips of roots and breathe in smoke to treat headache or head cold.

### WARNINGS

Although calamus has been used for its fragrance and eaten, it has not been studied much by scientists. There are medical reports of toxicity where people have had severe nausea and prolonged vomiting over many hours after eating it.

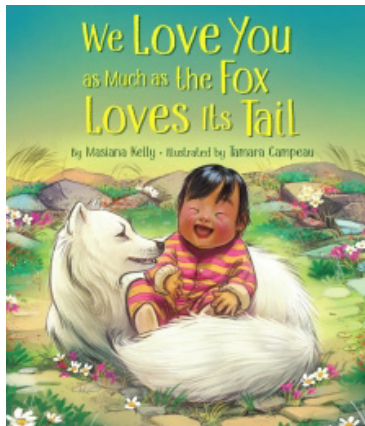




# Look In a Book

**"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark."**

**- Victor Hugo**



## **We Love You as Much as the Fox Loves its Tail**

Masiana Kelly

For Young Readers

This loving bedtime poem shares all the ways in which a family will welcome their long-awaited new member. Sharing love as deep as the beluga dives and as warm as the shaggy hair of the muskox, this poem envelopes a new baby in the embrace of their new home in all its forms—the Arctic landscape and the welcoming arms of family.

Written by Inuk/Dene writer Masiana Kelly, and illustrated with warmth and softness by Tamara Campeau, this sweet and simple narrative celebrates the beauty of creating a family and the unbounding love waiting to be shared with a new little soul.

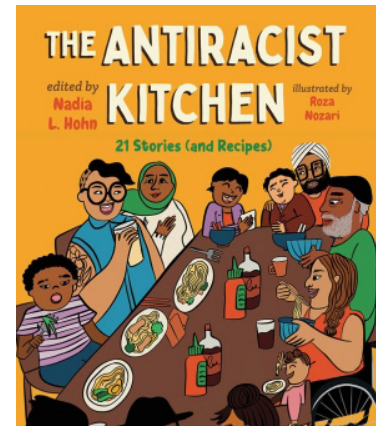


## **Burning Cold**

Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley  
Sean Qitsualik-Tinsley  
Richard Van Camp

Journey to the depths of the Arctic and beyond in this unique collection of stories from the award-winning volumes of Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection.

Burning Cold is a captivating volume of Indigenous graphic stories written by acclaimed authors Sean and Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley and Richard Van Camp. Time travel on the back of a wolverine, swim with shapeshifters beneath the ice, and travel through the skies with aliens. From traditional stories to reimagined futures, this collection showcases some of the finest comic book and graphic novel work from the North.



## **The Antiracist Kitchen**

Nadia L. Hohn

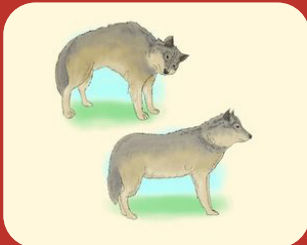
Cookbook

What if talking about racism was as easy as baking a cake, frying plantains or cooking rice? The Antiracist Kitchen: 21 Stories (and Recipes) is a celebration of food, family, activism and resistance in the face of racism. In this anthology featuring stories and recipes from 21 diverse and award-winning North American children's authors, the authors share the role of food in their lives and how it has helped fight discrimination, reclaim culture and celebrate people with different backgrounds. They bring personal and sometimes difficult experiences growing up as racialized people. Chopped, seared, marinated and stewed,

# Keep Moving

# 3

**DIABETES  
CANADA**



## Yoga

### Wolf Pose

Teaching: Humility

To see ourselves in relation to all that sustains us, not greater than.

1. Start on your hands and knees, like a tabletop.
2. Inhale and drop your belly down, lift your head, and stick your butt up.
3. Exhale and arch your back up, tucking your chin to your chest.
4. Repeat the Movements:
5. Keep going back and forth, moving with your breath.
6. Go at your own pace, and enjoy the stretch.

This is a simple and gentle way to warm up your spine in yoga.

[www.kidsyogastories.com/indigenous-teachings/](http://www.kidsyogastories.com/indigenous-teachings/)



## How many hours of your day are spent sitting?

**Try these tips from Diabetes Canada to move more!**

1. **Set a timer and take mini movement breaks** - Start with 30 seconds every 10 minutes, or 3 minutes every 30 minutes to stand up, stretch & walk around. Place the timer further away, so you have to get up & walk over to reset it.
2. **Find a Space to Pace** - Stuck on hold? Stand up & pace around the room while you wait for your call to be connected.
3. **Take a stand** - When your phone rings, stand up to take the call.
4. **Do it the old way** - Hit pause on the TV remote instead of binge-watching and get up for a break. Walk down the hall to speak to a colleague instead of messaging them.
5. **Post a reminder** - Use sticky notes around your space to remind you to get up and move.
6. **Take the heel-toe express** - Can you walk part of the way? Park at the far end of the parking lot.
7. **Choose to use your body over technology** - Walk instead of driving. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Wash the dishes by hand.
8. **Recess!** Take a break to play with children, pets or other adults.
9. **Embrace inconvenience** - At home or work, move daily-use items (ex. phone, pencils, stapler, remote) further away so you have to stand up to get them.
10. **A Watched Pot Never Boils** - Waiting for a microwave or kettle? Practice balancing on one leg & then the other.

# Lateral Kindness

Artwork: "Uplift" - Koyah Morgan-banke (2023), "Sacred Feather" - Brooke Gillam (2024),



## From Lateral Violence to Lateral Kindness!

Lateral kindness is an approach to address lateral violence based on Indigenous values that promote social harmony and healthy relationships. Lateral violence impacts people around the world, but it manifests in unique ways for Indigenous people because of the impacts of colonization, racism, and intergenerational trauma. Lateral kindness has the ability to impact public health in a number of ways.

### Pink Shirt Day:

**"I chose a sacred feather because it symbolizes and represents a high honour, wisdom, power, and freedom. The three hearts inside represent kindness, friendship and love. When I tied the two together it felt right because my heart told me it felt like it was meant to be." - Brooke Gillam - 2024 T-shirt Design Winner**

Pink Shirt Day has its origins in a heartwarming act of kindness that unfolded in Canada in 2007. The story revolves around a high school student in Nova Scotia who faced bullying for wearing a pink shirt to school. Witnessing this injustice, two fellow students, David Shepherd and Travis Price, decided to take a stand. In an impressive display of solidarity, they rallied their peers to wear pink shirts the next day, symbolizing support for the victim of bullying.



This seemingly small yet impactful act of kindness set off a movement that eventually led to the establishment of Pink Shirt Day. Now observed annually on the last Wednesday of February, Pink Shirt Day encourages people worldwide to wear pink shirts as a visible symbol of opposing bullying and advocating for kindness.

The profound connection between Pink Shirt Day and lateral kindness is evident. Lateral kindness, or kindness among peers, aligns perfectly with the core of Pink Shirt Day. The movement underscores the importance of fostering a culture of compassion, empathy, and support among individuals at the same hierarchical level. By urging widespread participation in wearing pink shirts, Pink Shirt Day conveys a clear message that kindness is a collective effort.

The history of Pink Shirt Day reveals the ripple effect generated by a seemingly simple act of kindness, demonstrating that individuals, when united, can make a significant impact in combating bullying and promoting a culture of lateral kindness. The movement serves as a reminder that everyone plays a role in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for one another.



# Northlands College



**Northlands College did a recent tour of our facility. AHA would like to encourage local youth to consider education in health care & support their home communities!**

## Black Lake Clinic Update

### Your Health, Our Priority!

To make sure everyone gets the care they need without long waits, please schedule appointments in advance at the Black Lake Health Centre.

This helps us serve you better and keeps things running smoothly. Thank you for working with us to make sure everyone gets the care they need on time.

#### APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE

- Monday to Friday
- 10:00AM - 4:30PM

#### MORE INFORMATION:

- 306-284-2020
- [www.athabascahealth.ca](http://www.athabascahealth.ca)



Appointments will be required starting Feb. 12/2024. Emergencies will be seen.

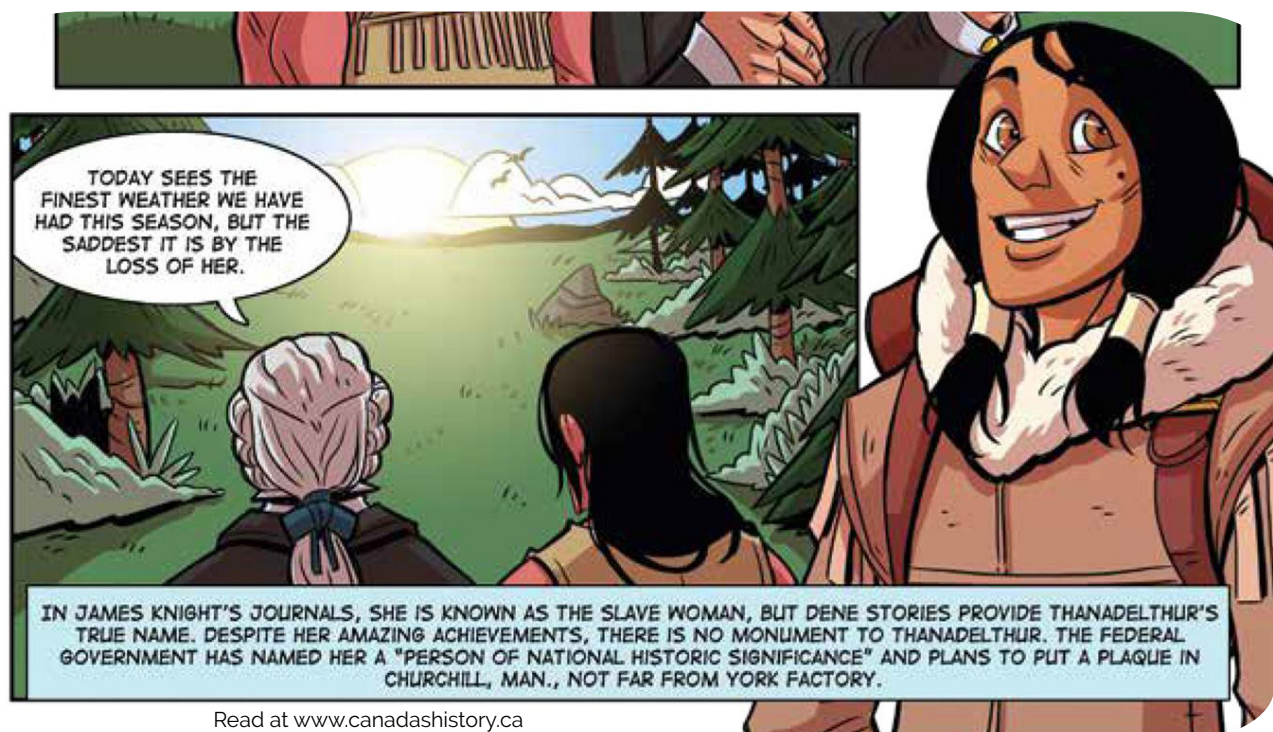


# Thanadelthur Day



National Thanadelthur Day is a day of recognition and celebration dedicated to honoring the contributions and legacy of Thanadelthur, an important historical figure.

Thanadelthur, a Dene woman and interpreter, played a pivotal role in facilitating peaceful relations between the Dene, Cree and European fur traders in the 18th century. Her diplomacy and language skills were instrumental in fostering understanding and cooperation during a challenging period. National Thanadelthur Day serves as an opportunity to reflect on her courage, resilience, and the positive impact she had on intercultural relations. It is a day to acknowledge and appreciate the rich cultural heritage of Indigenous communities, recognizing the significance of individuals like Thanadelthur in shaping our shared history.



# AHA - The Future

## Accreditation 2024

Accreditation Canada delivers a wide range of high-impact assessment programs for health and social service organizations, powered by Health Standards Organization (HSO), and customized to local needs. Accreditation Canada works with more than 900 expert peer surveyors with extensive health care and social services experience and trained in Accreditation Canada's customized, continuous assessment program.

For more than 60 years, Accreditation Canada has been working with health, social and community service organizations to advance quality and safety.



**ACCREDITATION**  
CANADA

### What is accreditation?

Accreditation is an ongoing process of assessing health care and social services organizations against standards of excellence to identify what is being done well and what needs to be improved.

Accreditation is important because it helps create better health care and social services for you, your family, and your community. It allows organizations to understand how to make better use of their resources, increase efficiency, enhance quality and safety, and reduce risk.

### How does accreditation work?

Accreditation is an ongoing process of assessing health and social services organizations against standards of excellence to identify what is being done well and what needs improvement.

Organizations that take part in the accreditation program choose to do so because they have first-hand knowledge of the contribution accreditation makes in improving quality, reducing risk, and strengthening accountability.

Accredited organizations devote time and resources to identify what they are doing well and what could be done better—and then take action to address issues so they can provide the best possible care and service to their patients and clients in order to save and improve lives.

### What does being accredited mean?

When you see the Accreditation Canada seal, you can be certain that the health care organization is working hard to meet our standards to deliver safe, high-quality care. They do so because better quality means better health.

**AHA currently has Accredited status from our survey in 2019!**



### When is our next accreditation Survey?

AHA will be having its next review at the end of April 2024. It is an excellent opportunity to learn where we can make improvements to provide the best care possible to the communities we serve, and the best work environment for our dedicated team members!

### Why should accreditation matter to you?

We believe that you and your family have the right to safe, high-quality health care services. Accreditation helps ensure health organizations improve quality, safety, and efficiency so they can provide you and your family with the best possible care and service.





AHA would like to express our gratitude to Dr. Mendez and the Virtual Care and Remote Presence Robotics Programs Team. We look forward to more exciting opportunities in the future to improve client care for our northern communities.

# Team AHA

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## New Students



Michelle Throassie is in Indigenous Social Work, and is working on her practicum with the AHA Safe Shelter until the middle of April.

Since joining on January 9, she has actively supported our families with life skills, proving herself as a collaborative team player. Eager to learn, she consistently asks insightful questions and engages in various aspects of shelter operations. Notably, she actively contributes to monthly staff meetings and participates in online training sessions.

We are very honored Michelle chose the shelter to complete this practicum.

## AHA Team Updates



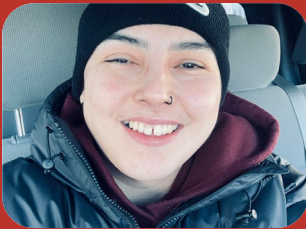
Tracey Medal  
Medical Transportation Clerk  
AHA Health Facility



Kim-Ann MacAuley  
Director of Primary Care  
AHA Health Facility



Vernelle Toutsaint  
CEV Worker  
AHA Safe Shelter



Georgianna McDonald  
Youth Wellness Worker  
Fond du Lac



Janessa Toutsaint  
Youth Wellness Worker  
Black Lake



Trina Robillard-Disain  
Early Years Child Worker  
AHA Health Facility

Congratulations to Joel Bishop, one of our dedicated paramedics, on being the proud parent of **New Brunswick's first baby of 2024!** We wish Joel and his family joy and happiness with their recent arrival.



# Team AHA

## Random Acts of Recognition (RAR)

Our Random Acts of Recognition peer-to-peer recognition program was developed as a way of empowering employees to acknowledge above-and-beyond performances by their co-workers. We are offering everyone the opportunity to focus in on the qualities of Community, Excellence, Diversity and Integrity.

This round we want to recognize three amazing team members! Thank you for being so fantastic!

**Why these standards?** Community, Excellence, Diversity and Integrity encompass most desirable workplace qualities and are universally recognized standards to aspire to. They inspire us to

achieve our personal best. Here are a few examples of what we are looking for:

- Getting it done – no matter what it takes
- Making ethical decisions – even when it's hard
- Projecting a welcoming presence
- Taking time to thank others
- Leading others by example – Show the way!
- Learning and developing – Keep growing!
- Celebrating each other's differences
- Including others
- Making it right when things started out wrong
- Taking time to help others

**Do you know of an AHA team member who deserves some recognition? Let us know!**

- Tell us who you would like to recognize.
- Tell us why – what did they do? Be specific.
- Send your nomination to [feedback@athabascahealth.ca](mailto:feedback@athabascahealth.ca)



### RANDOM ACT OF RECOGNITION

*"I would like to nominate Elizabeth MacDonald for her exceptional dedication. Despite working under short-staffed conditions for an extended period, she consistently goes above and beyond. Elizabeth invests her personal time, coming in on weekends and staying late, to ensure that everyone receives their pay promptly."*

**ELIZABETH MACDONALD**

Human Resources Coordinator  
Athabasca Health Facility



**COMMUNITY - EXCELLENCE - DIVERSITY - INTEGRITY**



# Creative Community



**Vernelle & Brenda led a educational & creative workshop on using Cricut machines! It was an enjoyable & enlightening experience!**







## Sledding Party in Black Lake

AHA Family Support Worker, Beth Mercredi, AHA Youth Wellness Worker, Janessa Toutsaint helped families get outside & have fun with a day of sledding!

Beth and Janessa worked together to make sure families felt connected and supported. As everyone slid down the snowy hills, the sounds of laughter made special memories that lasted even after the party was over.



## Food & Fun

AHA's visiting dietitian, Stephanie Bearman, ran two workshops in collaboration with other team members this past month. The first was an overnight oats workshop with the prenatal women in Fond du Lac alongside Mary Ann McDonald.

Next a fun evening with raclette grills was hosted alongside Shannon Kormos at the regularly scheduled Stony Rapids Women's Group.

Watch for more fun food programming in our communities! Next month she will be handing out Nutrition Bingo cards for our wellness activity! (see pg 3)!



Z Z W F C S A Q Y K J I U T K  
 S F R K B I E X E R C I S E T  
 A N N P L M B Y B S X T Q F Z  
 Z F T Z E M C P U M P U G C J  
 U H S C I V R M S L D X N W E  
 V Z K V B A E R C O M Z I L E  
 A C C D W X N R O W O L C N G  
 E A L S U B T L Y J G S B G M  
 Q R C S B G B Q V D U P U R Z  
 C H A T U I C S S M A M S T V  
 V K A K I S Q X M K Z Y P U R  
 K B B M Z V O S M I W P V A U  
 J X E M E O E G H D S P U J N  
 L H N A N D O G E P M Z K L N  
 H E A L T H M Q A L M J O G I  
 J T C G O X U I R X M F Z H N  
 V Z P W A N S F T Q Z U O H G

Find the words listed below in the word find!

HEART  
 HEALTH  
 RUNNING  
 MUSCLE  
 BLOOD  
 PUMP  
 EXERCISE  
 ACTIVE  
 JUMP

There is one more word hidden. Can you find it?  
 Hint: Kids should be active \_\_\_\_\_ of the week.

## EVERYDAY HEART HEALTH

1. Live tobacco free
2. Exercise daily
3. Learn CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)
4. Eat heart-healthy foods
5. Drink plenty of water
6. Wash your hands
7. Be well rested
8. Limit your intake of candy and sweets

### Hearty Chili ~ One Pot Wonder

Adapted from: [spendwithpennies.com](http://spendwithpennies.com)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 large onion chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper chopped
- 4 cloves garlic minced
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin seasoning
- 1 ¼ cups brown lentils
- 19 ounce kidney beans drained and rinsed
- 28 ounce canned diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 4 cups beef broth, vegetable or chicken broth

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat.
2. Cook onion and bell peppers until softened, about 5 minutes.
3. Add garlic, chili powder, and cumin. Cook 1 minute more.
4. Add lentils, beans, tomatoes, tomato sauce, and broth.
5. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer cook covered 25 minutes. Uncover and cook an additional 15 minutes or until chili reaches desired thickness.

