

EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit

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SNAP-Education staff use *The OrganWise Guys* program to teach healthy choices in a unique style

The OrganWise Guys is a popular curriculum taught to kindergarten, first, and second graders by University of Illinois Extension Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—Education (SNAP-Ed) instructors. Characters with organ-inspired names “teach” the children about healthy lifestyle choices—both physical health and core character development. Hardy Heart, The Kidney Brothers, Madame Muscle, Calci M. Bone, Peri Stolic, Windy and Sir Rebrum are common topics of discussion for 2,740 local students.

“OrganWise Guys is one of my favorite programs to teach,” mentioned SNAP-Ed instructor Tara Agama. “My job is fun and incredibly rewarding.”

The Organ Wise Guys (OWG) curriculum is unique and engaging, as it includes a stuffed doll with removable stuffed organs, exercise cards, and story books that help put the care of organs in perspective. This helps children understand the importance of taking care of their body from an early age.

By using this particular curriculum, learning about good nutrition and organ health becomes exciting for kids. “It’s amazing to see their faces light up when they see the doll and learn about how the different organs function.”

The K-2 Special Education class at Northmoor Primary School in Peoria is one of 158 classrooms in which our team of ten SNAP-Ed staff teach OWG throughout Fulton, Mason, Peoria and Tazewell counties. Tara teaches OWG at Northmoor and was able to incorporate paper OWG dolls into her lesson.

“The first time I was in the classroom this year, I noticed some of the children seemed to have difficulties understanding the concept of the stuffed doll and its organ parts,” Tara explained. “The teachers DeVona Brown and Taina Rodriguez mentioned that the children do best with individual hands on learning, so I created a paper doll with paper organs for each of the students to use during my lessons.

“I believe that this hands-on activity helped the children understand the concept of organ care and the location of our organs even better. I’m grateful for the opportunity to make a positive impact by teaching them about the importance of organ care in a unique way,” she concluded.



Photo by Tara Agama | Illinois Extension

A teacher at Northmoor Primary School in Peoria helps students with their personal OrganWise Guys paper doll during a lesson taught by SNAP-Ed instructor Tara Agama. The OrganWise Guys curriculum is a popular program SNAP-Ed staff teach to kindergarten through second graders throughout the four county unit.

Tara Agama

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