

New year, new attitude?



By Abbotsford News

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It's a new year, and now it's time for a new lifestyle.

Black Press has partnered with Kin's Farm Market to launch the Green Fighters Challenge in 13 communities in the Lower Mainland, which will follow participants over several months as they change their life and get healthy.

One person will be chosen from each participating community to make a change and win prizes. The grand prize will be a cruise for two from Cruise Experts. It will be awarded at the end of the 13-week contest. However, one Green Fighter will win a prize each week during weekly challenges.

But it's not just the participants who will be able to win. Canadian Tire will provide prizes for readers as well as the challengers as part of their commitment to healthy living, and you are encouraged to check out the Green Fighters website to follow the participants' progress and share your thoughts about how you are eating better and getting fit yourself for 2013.

The [Canadian Cancer Society](#) has noted that changing just one thing about your life, whether it's eating more vegetables or quitting smoking, can reduce your cancer risk. Kin's Farm Market is pleased to be able to provide fruits and vegetables to the participants in the Green Fighters Challenge, as well as produce to every customer that will put you on the road for achieving your New Year's resolution and a healthier lifestyle in general. The Green Fighters site will regularly include recipes, special offers and tips for making a change, whether it's to your diet or fitness level.

2013 is shaping up to be a year of change for UBC student Ben Duenas.

After spending most of his days during the last few years in a classroom, the chemical engineering student is looking to make some changes in his life.

"While going to school full time, I didn't have time to exercise," said Duenas. "I've made it my New Year's resolution to get out there and try new things."

The 23-year-old, who was cooling down after a short workout at Bear Creek Park in Surrey, also wants to rev up his social life.

"I've been sitting in class far too long, so I just signed up for jiu-jitsu (a Japanese martial art) and ballroom dancing," Duenas said. "I hope to meet new people outside the classroom."

For Sukhmani Pannu, also 23, getting in shape and staying in shape has become her goal for this year. She has already made some changes to the way she eats.

"I found that I used to have a meal around 6:30 or 7 p.m. every night, but now I eat earlier, around 5 p.m. and then have a small salad."

The strategy seems to be working, Pannu said, as she's already dropped 20 pounds.

A recent poll of Lower Mainland residents, however, shows Duenas and Pannu may be in the minority.

Results of an Ipsos Reid survey (commissioned by Fitness Town Surrey) released last month indicate just 14 per cent of people actually made New Year's fitness-related resolutions last year. And of those who did, about two-thirds stuck to them.

Those who abandoned their healthy plans listed lack of motivation, laziness, and lack of time as their top reasons for abandoning their good intentions.

When asked what would motivate them to continue with keep-fit resolutions, survey respondents said having more time would help, as would personal support from a trainer or nutritionist, or having someone to work out with.

Others people said more money – to buy equipment or for a gym membership – might prompt them to exercise, as would a better schedule (such as a more flexible work timetable) or having a regular schedule or fitness program created for them.

When asked how often they engage in sports or other exercise, just 20 per cent of poll respondents said they exercised between five and seven times a week, while 40 per cent said two to four times a week was average for them. About four per cent said they never exercise.

Of those who do exercise, almost 70 per cent agreed they do so to lose weight.

Also included in the survey results were questions about eating during the Christmas holidays. While 71 per cent admit they overindulged, 63 per cent said they felt guilty about it.

Other figures indicated the holiday season and its overabundance of turkey dinners and desserts have had a clear impact on the urge to get back on a healthy path.

Fifty-five per cent of those polled said they were inspired to get fit right before the holidays, an impulse that dropped by about 11 per cent during the holidays. However, more than 73 per cent of respondents said they were wanted to get fit right after the holiday season.

For Pannu, it doesn't matter what the statistics show, she said she just wants to get healthy – and look good.

"I want to be a fitness trainer, so I need to have a six-pack," she said, laughing.

For more information or to apply to become the Green Fighters challenger for your community, check out

www.kinsgreenfighters.com.

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