



## January—Food Deserts/Food Swamps

### Food Deserts and Food Swamps

Think we all have equal access to healthy nutritious foods? Think again! We have neighborhoods/areas of town that are considered food deserts or food swamps. What is a food desert and what is a food swamp you ask?

Food deserts can be described as geographic areas where residents' access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh fruits and vegetables) is restricted or nonexistent due to the absence of grocery stores within convenient travelling distance. For instance, according to a report prepared for Congress by the Economic Research Service of the US Department of Agriculture, about 2.3 million people (or 2.2 percent of all US households) live more than one mile away from a supermarket and do not own a car. In urban areas, access to public transportation may help residents overcome the difficulties posed by distance, but economic forces have driven grocery stores out of many cities in recent years, making them so few and far between that an individual's food shopping trip may require taking several buses or trains. In suburban and rural areas, public transportation is either very limited or unavailable, with supermarkets often many miles away from people's homes.

A food swamp is an area where an abundance of fast food, junk food outlets, convenience stores, and liquor stores outnumbers healthy food options.

It's distinct from a food desert, which is a neighborhood with little access to affordable, nutritious food. The USDA describes a food desert as "a low-income census tract where either a substantial number or share of residents has low access to a supermarket or large grocery store."

I happen to live in a neighborhood that is clearly a food swamp. We live within a few minutes walk of the disgusting McDonald's, Burger King, Popeye's, Subway, Taco Bell, Dairy Queen and many gas stations. The nearest grocery store is quite the jaunt for someone walking especially with groceries in tow. Thankfully, my family has good reliable transportation, but I don't know that's the case for all my neighbors.

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*January Quote: "You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you." — John Bunyan*

Club  
President:

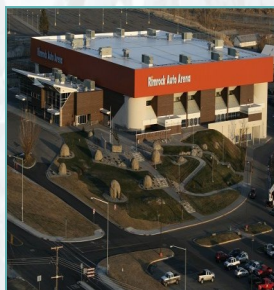
Rene Critelli





**January Volunteer Opportunities:**  
Enjoy the month off!!

**Future Volunteer Opportunities:**  
February 22—Monster Trucks  
April 17-19—PBR  
April 26—Cher  
May 15—In This Moment  
June 13—Food Truck Battle



Come weekly at 7:00 a.m. on Friday to the Yellowstone Room and get to know your fellow Exchangites!



**81<sup>st</sup> BEST CLUB BULLETIN**  
Exchange Club  
75 or more members



# EXCHANGE

BREAKFAST EXCHANGE CLUB OF BILLINGS, MT

## Too Much Junk Food is the Major Problem, Not Just Too Little Healthy Food

Food swamps are a stronger predictor than food deserts on obesity rates among people in the U.S. That means that a high density of fast food stores and junk food outlets outweighs the presence of a grocery store in a neighborhood.

## Imbalanced Food Environments

The balance among fast food restaurants, convenience stores, and grocery stores is a more important determinant of obesity levels than the presence of supercenters, farmers' markets, or other specialized food stores. The food swamp effect was stronger in counties with greater income inequality and where residents are less mobile.

## Effect of Built Environment on Obesity

The research suggests that "policies, like zoning laws, could lower obesity rates by about three percent. These results are consistent with the notion that the built environment shapes health, even after controlling for selection and individuals' preferences to live in certain neighborhoods."

Healthy By Design received a grant in the summer of 2016 to develop a healthy neighborhood plan for the Southside neighborhood which is considered a food desert. Their grocery store plan has been finalized and you can request a copy from Healthy By Design staff but much more work needs to be done not only for the Southside neighborhood but others as well.

Just in my little ole humble opinion, we need many more neighborhood grocery stores, community gardens, and farmer's markets and a whole lot less fast food and convenience food businesses.

Yes, it will take lots of work and things wouldn't be reversed immediately, but if you've looked around lately, you'll notice, something is needed to curb the obesity trend as well as the growing number of people on medications for high blood pressure, diabetes, as well as numerous other health problems. Everyone, regardless of where they live or access to transportation should have equal access to fresh nutritious foods.

[Foodispower.org](http://Foodispower.org)  
[Bluezone.com](http://Bluezone.com)





THE BREAKFAST  
EXCHANGE CLUB OF  
BILLINGS, MT

PO Box 2224  
Billings, MT

www.breakfastexchangeclub.org

*Exchange, America's Service Club, is a group of men and women working together to make our communities better places to live through programs of service in Americanism, Community Service, Youth Activities, and its national project, the Prevention of Child Abuse.*

Looking for something to do and support community organizations at the same time?

Didn't find much for January :(

Mondays—Community Monday @ Hooligans (each week benefits different organization)

Tuesdays—Pint night at Last Chance Cider House (each week benefits different organization)

Tuesdays—Bingo Night at 406 Kitchen & Taproom (each week benefits different organization)



# EXCHANGE

BREAKFAST EXCHANGE CLUB OF BILLINGS, MT

## CAP Center Corner

### The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

#### How many children witness the abuse of their mothers?

Studies show that 3-4 million children between the ages of 3-17 are at risk of exposure to domestic violence each year. U.S. government statistics say that 95% of domestic violence cases involve women victims of male partners. The children of these women often witness the domestic violence.

Witnessing can mean **SEEING** actual incidents of physical/and or sexual abuse. It can mean **HEARING** threats or fighting noises from another room. Children may also **OBSERVE** the aftermath of physical abuse such as blood, bruises, tears, torn clothing, and broken items. Finally children may be **AWARE** of the tension in the home such as their mother's fearfulness when the abuser's car pulls into the driveway.

#### What are the feelings of children who are exposed to battering?

Children who are exposed to battering become fearful and anxious. They are always on guard, watching and waiting for the next event to occur. They never know what will trigger the abuse, and therefore, they never feel safe. They are always worried for themselves, their mother, and their siblings. They may feel worthless and powerless.

Children who grow up with abuse are expected to keep the family secret, sometimes not even talking to each other about the abuse. Children from abusive homes can look fine to the outside world, but inside they are in terrible pain. Their families are chaotic and crazy. They may blame themselves for the abuse thinking if they had not done or said a particular thing, the abuse would not have occurred. They may also become angry at their siblings or their mother for triggering the abuse. They may feel rage, embarrassment, and humiliation.

Children of abuse feel isolated and vulnerable. They are starved for attention, affection and approval. Because mom is struggling to survive, she is often not present for her children. Because dad is so consumed with controlling everyone, he also is not present for his children. These children become physically, emotionally and psychologically abandoned.

#### What behaviors do children who witness domestic violence exhibit?

The emotional responses of children who witness domestic violence may include fear, guilt, shame, sleep disturbances, sadness, depression, and anger (at both the abuser for the violence and at the mother for being unable to prevent the violence).

Physical responses may include stomachaches and/or headaches, bedwetting, and loss of ability to concentrate. Some children may also experience physical or sexual abuse or neglect. Others may be injured while trying to intervene on behalf of their mother or a sibling.

The behavioral responses of children who witness domestic violence may include acting out, withdrawal, or anxiousness to please.

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# EXCHANGE

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The children may exhibit signs of anxiety and have a short attention span which may result in poor school performance and attendance. They may experience developmental delays in speech, motor or cognitive skills. They may also use violence to express themselves displaying increased aggression with peers or mother. They can become self-injuring.

## **What are the long-term effects on children who witness domestic violence?**

Whether or not children are physically abused, they often suffer emotional and psychological trauma from living in homes where their fathers abuse their mothers. Children whose mothers are abused are denied the kind of home life that fosters healthy development. Children who grow up observing their mothers being abused, especially by their fathers, grow up with a role model of intimate relationships in which one person uses intimidation and violence over the other person to get their way. Because children have a natural tendency to identify with strength, they may ally themselves with the abuser and lose respect for their seemingly helpless mother. Abusers typically play into this by putting the mother down in front of her children and telling them that their mother is “crazy” or “stupid” and that they do not have to listen to her. Seeing their mothers treated with enormous disrespect, teaches children that they can disrespect women the way their fathers do.

Most experts believe that children who are raised in abusive homes learn that violence is an effective way to resolve conflicts and problems. They may replicate the violence they witnessed as children in their teen and adult relationships and parenting experiences. Boys who witness their mothers’ abuse are more likely to batter their female partners as adults than boys raised in nonviolent homes. For girls, adolescence may result in the belief that threats and violence are the norm in relationships.

Children from violent homes have higher risks of alcohol/drug abuse, post traumatic stress disorder, and juvenile delinquency. Witnessing domestic violence is the single best predictor of juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. It is also the number one reason children run away.

[www.domesticviolenceroundtable.org](http://www.domesticviolenceroundtable.org)

## **Committee Happenings:**

**BECON Committee**—Your January BECON Editor is Dave Weller.

**Social Committee**—The holiday party is scheduled for January 18th.

**Food Truck Battle Committee**—Committee has the date for June 13th. Working on securing bands and recipient/s of funds raised.

**Freedom Shrine** —Freedom Shrine rededication coming up in January at McKinley School.

## **Other Happenings:**

**District Convention**—May 8th and 9th in Butte

**National Convention**—July 22nd—25th in Colorado Springs, CO

**GET INVOLVED!**

