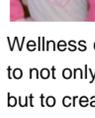


November Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the November issue of the Well Aware eNews! Read on to learn about—

- this month's wellness champion—a wellness coach whose above-and-beyond efforts have established a steadfast culture of wellness at her school;
- a seminar/webinar from Cigna where you can learn to eat more mindfully and avoid letting your emotions control your food intake;
- a sweet-free challenge for the upcoming holiday season;
- the MCPS Wellness Initiatives program and related biometric health screenings;
- the latest Small Changes, Big Results mini challenge; and
- more!

Wellness Champion Goes Above and Beyond to Bring a Culture of Wellness to Her School



Teresa A. Tippett, resource teacher, Rocky Hill Middle School

When it comes to wellness coaches, Rocky Hill Middle School (RHMS) has one of the best in Montgomery County Public Schools.

Wellness coach Terri Tippett has gone above and beyond to not only promote Well Aware programs at her school, but to create additional wellness programs and an entire culture of wellness at RHMS.

Terri established a Health and Wellness Club (HAWC) at the school that emphasizes the importance of replacing unhealthy habits with healthy ones. The 36 club participants have collectively lost 352 pounds, but their commitment to eating healthy, exercising three times a week, and weighing in each Friday is about more than losing weight. For some it is an enhancement to their way of life; for others it brings vast improvements to their health and well-being.

"We need to change our habits so that it becomes a lifestyle change and not just a weight loss challenge," Terri said. "I come up with weekly themes and challenges for everyone. This includes awarding a prize to the challenge winner every Friday afternoon."

One week, the club held "add a side salad" week and the winner won fixings for a salad. They also held "healthy snacks" week; the prize was a bag of carrots, some low sodium popcorn, and almonds. The winner of "walk this way" week, which encouraged staff to add 30 minutes of walking to each day, won a pair of moisture wicking socks.

"I believe it is working" Terri said. "Even those not formally participating have told me about the progress they are making with their eating and exercise habits. They tell me how great everyone looks and that it has influenced others to take control over their caloric intake and output."

Terri's coworkers agree that the school's wellness culture has been well established. Staff members regularly encourage each other to make healthy choices. "Not HAWC approved" signs in the staff workroom and at staff appreciation events serve as reminders to RHMS employees to choose healthy foods. And, because she is mindful of each participant's journey towards healthy living, their wellness coach challenges them appropriately.

"Terri models good health and healthy choices for club members and for all Rocky Hill employees," Marta E. Riccio, classroom teacher at RHMS, said. "Her excitement and enthusiasm are contagious."

Terri and other HAWC members enjoy the camaraderie of the club. Participants share their recipes, struggles, successes, and, as Terri puts it, "laughs." She intends to keep the club going and thinks it will evolve into more of a maintenance club in which members continue sharing with one another.

"It has been deeply fulfilling to see the positive changes my colleagues have made with their lives," Terri said. "I am thrilled with the success of the club and with my own success in taking more control over my life."



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar—

Mindful Eating: Controlling Food Intake

If food is a way for you to relieve boredom or stress or to reward yourself, it could be a path to unwanted weight gain. Come and explore how to eat more mindfully instead of letting your emotions control what, when, and how you eat.

Friday, November 7, 2014

10:00–11:00 a.m.
Shady Grove Bus Depot
16651 Crabbs Branch Way
Rockville, Maryland 20855

Wednesday, November 12, 2014

10:00–11:00 a.m.
West Farm Bus Depot
11920 Bournefield Way
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

4:30–5:30 p.m.
CESC Auditorium
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Thursday, November 20, 2014

4:00–5:00 p.m.
Webinar

Please register for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#) with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will receive a link to it as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our [printable flyer](#). See the [Wellness Webinar Library](#).

Presented by:



Small Changes, Big Results Physical Activity Challenge Is Under Way!

Small Changes, Big Results, the fall physical activity challenge, is well under way! With nearly 200 teams registered, a competitive spirit is building among school and office teams for the grand prize grants! It is not too late to join! The Small Changes, Big Results challenge is asking you to take small steps to realize big health gains this school year.

Maintain Don't Gain, the second Small Changes, Big Results *mini* challenge, begins Monday, November 17, 2014. With the holidays approaching, many people worry that the extra food and goodies will lead to unwanted weight gain. Participate in the mini challenge by taking small steps each day to prevent this weight gain. View and print the mini challenge calendar from the [Small Changes, Big Results](#) web page, enter your activity in the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) for a chance to win prizes, and enjoy the holiday season without the added weight!

Join us! Make this school year your healthiest yet!

Enter the Sweet-free Zone

During the holiday season, you easily can be tempted to eat and drink food items that are high in fat, sugar, and calories. Social events, parties, and gifts throughout the holiday season can influence you to stray away from your healthy diet.

Well Aware is once again asking Montgomery County Public Schools employees to avoid the holiday bulge by taking the sweet-free challenge! Interested? Post [this flyer](#) on the door of your school or office staff lounge, break room, or kitchen to designate the area as a sweet-free zone.

Whether in the zone or not, there are healthy habits and practices you can follow during the holidays to stay on track and avoid overindulging in an excessive amount of sweets.

- Stay active on a daily basis.
- Drink water to stay hydrated and decrease hunger.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep to help decrease cravings.
- Eat foods rich in natural sugars as opposed to those rich in processed sugars.
- Enjoy your favorite holiday treats, just limit the portion size!

Feel free to share these ideas with the Parent Teacher Association to promote a culture of wellness during the holiday season. [E-mail Well Aware](#) to let us know how your staff is celebrating the holiday season in a healthy way.

Three Ways to Avoid or Manage Diabetes

November is Diabetes Awareness Month. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) wants you to know it is never too late to start living a healthy, active lifestyle, and have fun while doing it!

1. **Join the ADA this month**—[Visit online](#) each week to get tips on staying healthy throughout the holiday season; learn how to host a special, food-themed event; and vote for your favorite recipes to help create the perfect holiday meal.
2. **Participate in InStep with Diabetes**—Have you been diagnosed with diabetes or pre-diabetes? Learn to help control the disease or prevent a further diagnosis at this eight-week educational diabetes program being offered by Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente. To participate in the next session, [e-mail Well Aware](#) and we will update you on the dates and locations of upcoming classes.
3. **Watch the [Sugar Cravings webinar](#)** (scroll to the bottom of the Wellness Webinar Library web page) to discover the eight causes of cravings and the 10 steps for dealing with them. You also will learn about natural sweeteners, the difference between natural and artificial sweeteners, and how much added sugar is sensible for daily consumption.



The Great American Smokeout

Each year, the American Cancer Society (ACS) marks the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November by encouraging smokers to use the date to make a plan to quit, or to plan in advance and quit smoking that day. This year, the event will be held on November 20, 2014. By quitting—even for one day—smokers will be taking an important step towards a healthier life—one that can lead to reducing cancer risk.

Are you interested in quitting? One helpful method is to attend Well Aware's free tobacco cessation program, Quit for Good. [Learn more](#). If you and/or your spouse are interested in taking the spring class, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Another way to quit smoking is to keep your hands busy while you are experiencing a craving. The ACS has created a mobile game app called Zombie Smokeout. If you are a smoker, play this fun iPhone, iPad and Android mobile game to help distract you from your craving and keep your hands busy during the urge to smoke passes. [Download the game](#).

Learn About Your Health and Reduce Your 2016 Medical Insurance Costs: Schedule a Biometric Health Screening Today!

As part of the new MCPS Wellness Initiatives program, you can learn more about your health and reduce your medical insurance costs by completing biometric health screenings of your cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar, and body mass index. If you complete a biometric health screening between October 13, 2014, and October 9, 2015—and yearly thereafter—you will be eligible for a 1 percent increase in MCPS contributions toward your medical insurance, effective January 1, 2016. This means that your contribution to your medical coverage will be reduced by 1 percent if you complete the screening within the above timeframe.

Your primary care physician may conduct the screenings or you can attend one of the free screenings Well Aware is offering to MCPS staff. If you choose the second option, please register for the screening associated with your insurance plan. Remaining dates, times, and locations for the fall are:

CareFirst*:

Monday, December 29, 2014

11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Maple Room
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Cigna:

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

12:00–6:00 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center Auditorium
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

Kaiser Permanente:

Friday, November 7, 2014

12:00–6:00 p.m.

Mobile Van
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Monday, December 1, 2014

12:00–6:00 p.m.

Mobile Van
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

To register for a biometric health screening, [e-mail Well Aware](#) with the date and time that you prefer.

[Learn more](#).

***Note to CareFirst BlueChoice plan members:** At the time of your screenings, you must complete a health information release form and have it signed by your medical provider. The CareFirst Biometric Screening Information form is available on the ERSC Forms web page. If you are a CareFirst member, be sure to bring the form to your primary care physician or to a Well Aware screening for completion and signature. Then, follow the instructions on the form for sending it to CareFirst's wellness organization, Health Fitness Corporation (HealthFitness).