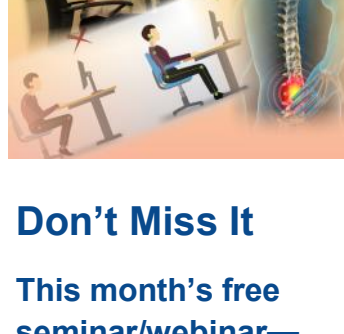


April Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champions, Goshen Elementary School staff who are improving their health by attending weekly Zumba classes;
- a seminar/webinar on back pain and what to do if you suffer from it;
- how far we have advanced in the MCPS Grand Prix;
- National Cancer Control Month;
- the Healthy for Good movement; and
- more!



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar— Back in Shape

Join Well Aware and CareFirst for Back in Shape, a seminar/webinar where you will learn about the basic structure of the back, the symptoms most associated with back pain, when to contact a health professional regarding back pain, and steps to take to manage back pain.

Thursday, April 12, 2018
10:00–11:00 a.m.

Shady Grove Bus Depot
16651 Crabbs Branch Way
Rockville, Maryland 20855

Wednesday, April 18, 2018
10:00–11:00 a.m.

West Farm Bus Depot
11920 Bournefield Way
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Thursday April 26, 2018
4:00–5:00 p.m.

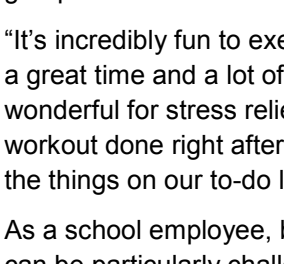
Webinar

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 in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. See the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

Presented by: CareFirst

Wellness Champions Commit to Workout Wednesday Zumba



Goshen Elementary School Staff

Julie B. Robeson, first grade teacher at Goshen Elementary School, and her coworkers have been exercising together regularly since last fall. Led by Shana Orbach, a third grade teacher at the school, the group is dedicated to its Workout Wednesday Zumba.

"It's incredibly fun to exercise with each other; we have a great time and a lot of laughs," Julie said. "Zumba is wonderful for stress relief! It's also amazing to get our workout done right after school. It streamlines one of the things on our to-do lists!"

As a school employee, balancing work and home life can be particularly challenging. But the staff at Goshen clearly recognize the value of getting active—together. The bonds that are formed through exercising together leads to better work relationships, greater understanding, and a deeper level of collaboration during the workday.

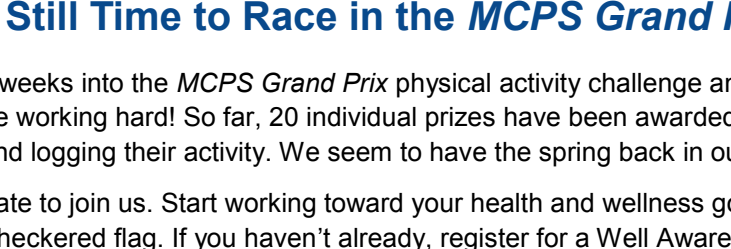
"Exercising together helps keep us motivated and keeps health and wellness a priority," Julie said. It leads to a happier attitude and outlook and a greater ability to deal with stress and live life in a positive way."

While admitting that starting something new can be hard, Julie has some advice for her fellow MCPS coworkers.

"Do it!"

Julie knows the pitfalls. Starting anything new can seem like a hassle at times. She also knows that you can keep it simple; you can choose any kind of exercise, as long as the group is willing to give it a try. Also, depending on the activity, experts aren't always necessary. All it takes is one person who is willing to stand up, take a risk, and volunteer to lead.

"Then all you need to do is pick a day, offer it up to staff, and commit to doing it each week," Julie said. "We might have different people attending each week due to differing schedules, but the staff knows Zumba is always there as an option. Stay motivated, stay committed, the benefits far outweigh any obstacles!"



There's Still Time to Race in the MCPS Grand Prix

We are four weeks into the *MCPS Grand Prix* physical activity challenge and MCPS staff members are working hard! So far, 20 individual prizes have been awarded to staff for exercising and logging their activity. We seem to have the spring back in our steps!

It is not too late to join us. Start working toward your health and wellness goals as you race toward the checkered flag. If you haven't already, register for a Well Aware Fitness Log account and begin logging your activity. Any activity counts! **Learn more** about the *MCPS Grand Prix*.

Drive Attention to Prevention: It's National Cancer Control Month

This year, an estimated half million Americans will lose their lives to cancer, and three times that many will be diagnosed with this devastating illness. Cancer patients are parents and grandparents, children and cherished friends; the disease touches almost all of us and casts a shadow over families and communities across our nation.

During National Cancer Control Month, we remember those we have lost, support Americans fighting this disease, and recommit to progress toward effective cancer control.

Prevention and screening are our best defenses against cancer. All Americans can reduce their risk by eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, limiting sun exposure, avoiding excessive alcohol consumption, living tobacco-free, and taking advantage of appropriate regularly scheduled cancer screenings.

Learn more about screening for many types of cancer.

Article courtesy of: Benefit & Risk Management Services

Wellness Initiatives: Know Your Numbers

If you are covered by an MCPS-provided medical insurance plan through CareFirst or Kaiser Permanente, you can learn more about your health and reduce your contributions to your health insurance with the Wellness Initiatives program. To take full advantage of these rate reductions, complete a biometric health screening and a health risk assessment yearly, and, if you use tobacco, consider quitting.

Participation in Wellness Initiatives is easy! To earn the maximum 2 percent incentive toward your health insurance premiums, each year you need to complete—

- an online health risk assessment, and
- a biometric health screening.

To learn more about how to complete these tasks, including details about how your participation will be reported to MCPS, visit the **Wellness Initiatives for Employees web page**.

Well Aware offers onsite biometric health screenings to make participation even easier. For dates, times, and locations, visit the **Biometric Health Screenings web page**.

Stress Less This Spring

Seated yoga, meditation, and tai chi are wonderful practices that help you to lower your stress level and learn techniques for managing pressure and anxiety. Join Well Aware as we continue these practices into the spring.

Guided Meditation

Mondays
5:00–5:45 p.m.
Room 223
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Seated Yoga

Wednesdays
4:30–5:30 p.m.
Café 45 (*unless otherwise announced*)
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Tai Chi (Rocking Horse Road Center)

Wednesdays
5:00–6:00 p.m.
Room 148
4910 Macon Road
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Tai Chi (45 West Gude Drive)

Thursdays
4:45–5:45 p.m.
Lower Level Gym (*unless otherwise announced*)
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Teachers: Can't make it to any of these classes? Try one of these online resources to help you manage your stress this spring:

Yoga for Teachers

Guided Meditation for Teachers



Look for Another Chance to Quit for Good This Fall

The U.S. Surgeon General has said, "Smoking cessation [stopping smoking] represents the single most important step that smokers can take to enhance the length and quality of their lives."

It's hard to quit smoking, but you can do it. To have the best chance of quitting and remaining a nonsmoker, you need to know what you're up against, what your options are, and where to go for help. We can help!

Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente have teamed up to produce an eight-week tobacco cessation class for our staff and their significant others. Classes are beginning to form for the fall. To learn more about the program, visit the **Well Aware website**.

Remember: By quitting you can avoid paying a 25 percent smoker (tobacco-user) surcharge to the total cost of your health insurance premiums. **Learn more** about the smoker surcharge.

American Heart Association: Healthy for Good Movement

MCPS and Well Aware participate in the annual National Walking Day with the American Heart Association (AHA) each April. This year, AHA has expanded National Walking Day to a month-long initiative to *Move More in April* as part of its Healthy For Good movement.

Healthy For Good is designed to inspire all Americans to live healthier lives and create lasting change. The approach is simple: *Eat smart. Add color. Move more. Be well.* See below for resources to share with your coworkers for each week in April. Also below is a tip sheet with ways to Move More in April.

- **Week 1 education**
- **Week 2 education**
- **Week 3 education**
- **Week 4 education**

Check out this **Tip sheet for healthy living** for ideas on how you can Move More in April.

The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). Learn more about employee wellness by visiting our **website**. View this e-mail newsletter as a **PDF document**. Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or **e-mail Well Aware**.