## February Well Aware eNews Welcome to the February issue of the Well Aware

eNews! Read on to learn aboutthis month's wellness champion—a physical education teacher and his colleagues, who have

- moved their school's wellness program to the next level through collaboration, administrative support, and grants; a seminar/webinar on planning for healthy meals; this year's National Wear Red Day;
- another chance to climb Flights to Fitness;
- healthy habits to prevent heart disease; and
- more!
- **Wellness Champions Move Staff** Wellness to the Next Level

**Kyle Finke and Harmony Hills** 

## **Elementary School**

Kyle Finke, center, with other Harmony Hills staff Harmony Hills Elementary School has been at the forefront of MCPS staff wellness activities for many years. Recently, Kyle Finke, physical education teacher, and the school's wellness committee have established even more ways to promote wellness at

the school—for staff and students.

partnership with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. After completing an assessment through the Alliance of the school's wellness efforts, the wellness committee determined that overall staff wellness and classroom activity breaks would be its primary focus this school year. "During pre-service week, we built a Wellness

Wednesday into our agenda, during which staff had

One way they have done this is by forming a

an opportunity to participate in a wide variety of physical activities like yoga, Dane Dance Revolution, and an obstacle course," Kyle said. "Staff members also were able to participate in a mindfulness session, and we offered healthy snacks to encourage healthy eating."

The wellness committee also initiated several wellness clubs for the school's staff. The clubs were selected based on results from a staff survey and include yoga, fitness workouts, sports/games, and a walking club. "The wellness team is continually looking to gather our coworkers' ideas and opinions and incorporate them into the decisions we make," Kyle said.

cultivate a culture of wellness school-wide.

meetings to further promote wellness.

developing a school-wide culture of wellness.

have certainly helped our efforts," Kyle said.

maximize our impact, especially at the local level."

Today is National Wear Red Day!

squats, or marching in place.

said.

**Don't Miss It** This month's free seminar/webinar-

**Planner** 

**Become a Master Meal** Each of us has a unique lifestyle. Creating meal plans that meet your nutritional needs while accommodating your lifestyle can be challenging. It also can help to motivate you to eat better and

more efficiently. At this seminar/ webinar, you will hear about the different types of foods, their benefits, and the best way to incorporate them into your daily life. You will also learn to plan healthy meals and maintain a healthy attitude in the process. Thursday, February 14, 2019 10:00-11:00 a.m. Shady Grove Bus Depot 16651 Crabbs Branch Way

Wednesday, February 20, 2019 10:00-11:00 a.m. West Farm Bus Depot 11920 Bournefield Way Silver Spring, Maryland 20904 Thursday, February 21, 2019 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Webinar

Rockville, Maryland 20855

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

In addition to staff wellness, the school has adopted classroom activity breaks to support student wellness and learning. Activities during the brief breaks may include stretches, "The benefits of physical activity for students throughout the school day are many," Kyle

engagement in learning tasks." The Harmony Hills wellness team is working hard to promote its wellness events. Every Wednesday, the committee sends an e-mail to school staff to celebrate all of the healthy happenings at the school. Sending the weekly Wellness Wednesday e-mails also helps to

said. "They include increased attentiveness, reduced behavioral distractions, and more

Kyle credits the Harmony Hills administration for the success of the wellness committee's initiatives. The administration has supported the committee in acquiring grants to help fund wellness activities, helped promote wellness initiatives by highlighting them in the Staff Bulletin, and built time into the pre-service agenda for staff to focus on their own personal

"We certainly have the support from the top, which has led to our success," Kyle said. Kyle also acknowledges the importance of financial support and team building when

"The grants we've received from Well Aware and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation

wellness. They also allowed committee members to lead active team builders before staff

"Our e-mails highlight various staff members and their wellness accomplishments and provide resources for classroom teachers to use during classroom activity breaks," Kyle

Just as important has been the collaborative approach the committee has taken to addressing the schools' wellness needs. Harmony Hills has wellness committee representatives from the classroom, the health room, and its Linkages Center. "Collaboration has definitely made the committee's work more manageable and practical when implementing action items," Kyle said. "There are so many resources available out

there to support wellness endeavors, and having a wellness team can really help to

each year, killing approximately one woman every 80 seconds." It doesn't have to be that way, however. AHA tells us that "80 percent of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented with education and action." Well Aware encourages all MCPS employees to make heart health a priority. Schedule your

annual preventive check-up to review your overall health, measure your blood pressure, check your cholesterol and look for signs of heart disease, stroke, and other illnesses.

Do your part to educate yourself, your friends, and your family this year. Join the movement to end heart disease and strokes in women because it's not just a man's disease. Let's all

As announced in The Bulletin last month, the American Heart Association (AHA) is holding its yearly National Wear Red Day today, Friday, February 1, 2019, to call attention to heart disease. According to AHA, "Heart disease and stroke cause 1 in 3 deaths among women

G: Get Your Numbers O: Own Your Lifestyle R: Realize Your Risk E: Educate Your Family D: Don't Be Silent

Are you ready to quit? Quit for Good is a free, eight-week tobacco cessation class for MCPS

percent tobacco-user surcharge waived and, depending on when the program is completed,

For more information on the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program, visit the Quit for

Good web page. E-mail Well Aware to reserve your spot in the next class.

The Best Time to Quit ... Is Now!

Is your school, office, or depot wearing red today? Share pictures of your coworkers

participating in National Wear Red Day by e-mailing them to Well Aware.

Watch this video to learn more about National Wear Red Day.

staff and their spouses. The class covers everything from nicotine replacement therapy, coping techniques, stress management, nutrition, and more. Tobacco-users who complete the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program can have the 25

refunded. Learn more.

Flights to Fitness:

well as your leg muscles.

**Guided Meditation** 

850 Hungerford Drive Rockville, Maryland 20850

February 6, 13, 20, 27

Seated Yoga Wednesdays

March 6, 13

4:30-5:30 p.m.

Tai Chi Thursdays 4:45-5:45 p.m. Robinson Room 45 West Gude Drive Rockville, Maryland 20850

Café 45 (Lower Level) 45 West Gude Drive Rockville, Maryland 20850

Tuesdays and Thursdays

1901 Randolph Road

8712 Oakmont Street

numbers.

web page.

Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

School), e-mail Well Aware.

Register here

Wednesdays

John F. Kennedy High School

Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

3:00 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center

Tuesdays (no class on February 5)

Mondays 5:00-5:45 p.m. Room 223

in the U.S.!

Climb the Tallest Buildings

Stair climbing can be a wonderful way to keep fit.

Go Red!

## Most of us work in or live near a building with stairs. Stair climbing can be done anytime throughout the day as a break in your routine. The activity benefits your heart, your mind, as

Well Aware is challenging you to climb the tallest buildings in the United States! If traveling around the country is not possible, you can climb the equivalent of these buildings in flights

of stairs. Form a team and complete the buildings together to share your sense of achievement! It is a great way to stay in shape during the cold winter months.

For details, visit the Flights to Fitness web page on the Wellness website. Stress Less This Winter

Don't let the winter blues get you down. Try these alternative ways to beat them this winter.

4:30-5:30 p.m. Café 45 (Lower Level) 45 West Gude Drive Rockville, Maryland 20850 Sit and Be Fit Looking for an exercise class that increases your heart rate, helps build muscle, but is still low impact and done from a chair? Look no further!

Yoga Mondays and Thursdays 5:00-6:00 p.m. All-purpose Room

3:30 p.m. Auxillary Gym Redland Middle School 6505 Muncaster Mill Road Rockville, Maryland 20855 Fridays 4:30 p.m. Washington Grove Elementary School

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) employees who have diabetes and are covered by the CareFirst medical plan have the option of participating in a diabetes case management program to have their copayments for diabetes supplies waived. In order for copayments for diabetic supplies and medication to be waived in 2020 and each year thereafter, MCPS employees who are diabetic and covered by a CareFirst medical plan are required to—

Well Aware eNews. Challenge registration will begin on February 25, 2019.

Feel Like a Million

prescription refills, i.e., you have refilled your prescription regularly to ensure you have enough medication for daily use, your copayments for diabetes supplies will continue to be waived during calendar year 2020. If you have diabetes, maintaining regular use of your prescription medications is a key component in controlling the disease. By meeting these two requirements every year, CareFirst members with diabetes will continue to receive diabetic supplies without a copayment while more closely managing their disease. If you have diabetes and are covered by a CareFirst medical plan and would like to participate in a diabetes case management program, or you would like to confirm your status as a program participant, please contact the customer service department of your medical plan. For more information please e-mail Well Aware.

**Healthy Habits to Prevent Heart Disease** February is Heart Disease Awareness Month. Did you know that every 40 seconds,

exercise—which can be hard to fit in to our busy lives!

You Can Fight Heart Disease

and resilience can become a reality.

the areas of fitness, nutrition, balance, and purpose, the goal of improved energy, focus, The challenge will begin on February 1, 2019. For more information or to register, please e-mail Well Aware. 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.

Rocking Horse Road Center 4910 Macon Road Rockville, Maryland 20852 Zumba Mondays 4:30-5:30 p.m. Gymnasium Flora M. Singer Elementary School 2600 Hayden Drive Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Can't make it to a class? Try some of these online resources to manage your stress this winter: Yoga for Teachers **Guided Meditation for Teachers** Wellness Initiatives: Get to Know Your Numbers

To register for any of these classes (except for the Zumba class at John F. Kennedy High

We live our lives by the numbers: phone numbers, PIN numbers, and our social security

You can learn about these vital health numbers and reduce your financial contribution to your health insurance by participating in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Wellness Initiatives program. To take full advantage of the program, complete a biometric health screening and health risk assessment yearly. And, if you and/or your spouse smoke,

But do you know the heart health numbers that could literally save your life? Healthy numbers mean a healthy heart. If you follow a healthy lifestyle—eat a balanced diet, get

regular exercise, and avoid smoking—you can turn any bad numbers around.

consider quitting. Doing so will go a long way toward improving your numbers.

**Diabetes Management Program** 

For more information on the Wellness Initiatives program and to see a schedule of

upcoming on-site biometric health screenings, visit the Wellness Initiatives for Employees

maintain their participation in the diabetes management program, and use medications prescribed to treat their diabetes exactly as their doctor has instructed without missing any days. Since January 15, 2017, CareFirst has been tracking affected employees' adherence to these requirements. If, during calendar year 2019, you have not missed any days between

challenge. With another challenge just around the corner, think of the progress you can make before the end of the school year! Gather your team, or get yourself ready for the individual competition. Look for details in the February 20 issue of The Bulletin and on February 25 in an e-mail announcing the challenge. Details also will be in the March issue of

someone in the United States has a heart attack? One of the most important lifestyle modifications that can significantly reduce the risk of developing heart disease, is regular

Click on each link below for important tips on fighting heart disease, as well as simple exercises you can do at your desk, in your classroom, or even on public transportation.

The Spring Physical Activity Challenge is Coming!

In the fall, MCPS employees trained hard in the To the Moon physical activity

Work Desk Workouts and How to Stop the Sitting

Kaiser Permanente and Well Aware invite you to participate in a six-week challenge to motivate you to Feel Like a Million! This fun, interactive game show theme challenge inspires you to adopt habits to help you feel your best. By focusing on simple daily actions in