

April Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champions, a wellness coach and 74 of her coworkers who earned a middle school grand prize in the Just 10 Challenge last fall;
- a seminar/webinar from Cigna to help you relieve stress through stretching and strengthening;
- what it means to "mind your wellness";
- an eight-week program from Kaiser Permanente to help you better understand diabetes and learn to manage or prevent the disease;
- Cigna's onsite health coaching; and
- more!



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar—

Stretch and Strengthen at Your Desk

A good s-t-r-e-t-c-h feels good all over and helps take the stress out of a hectic day. Come and learn some simple stretching and strengthening exercises to keep you stress-free and energized.

Thursday, April 24, 2014

4:30–5:30 p.m.

CESC Cafeteria

850 Hungerford Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Tuesday, April 29, 2014

4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

Wednesday, April 30, 2014

10:00–11:00 a.m.

Shady Grove Bus Depot

16651 Crabbs Branch Way

Rockville, Maryland 20855

Please register for the seminar/webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#) with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will be sent 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:



Well Aware Webinar Library

Well Aware is proud to have built a diverse library of webinar recordings from the past year.

[Click here](#) to watch a great webinar on Sugar Cravings, or scroll through the list of other webinar choices. This is a great option for watching on your own, or with a group at a staff or Professional Learning Community meeting.

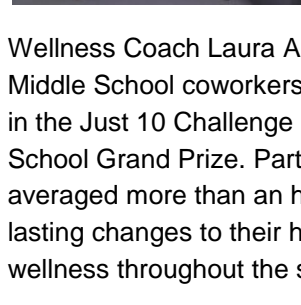
The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC).

To learn more about employee wellness, visit our [website](#). To view this e-mail newsletter as a .pdf document, click [here](#).

Questions or comments about your employee wellness program?

Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or wellness@mcpsmd.org.

Wellness Champions Prove Their Strength in Numbers



Laura A. Eyler, health education teacher, and coworkers, Neelsville Middle School

Wellness Coach Laura A. Eyler and 74 of her Neelsville Middle School coworkers stepped up last fall to compete in the Just 10 Challenge and walked away with a Middle School Grand Prize. Participating staff members averaged more than an hour of activity per day and made lasting changes to their health, leading to a culture of wellness throughout the school.

"Neelsville staff thinks it is important to support each other's physical and social-emotional health," Melissa Sigley, resource teacher, said. "By connecting with each other through these Well Aware challenges, we encourage each other in living healthier lives so we are better able to meet the needs of our students."

Participants suggest a number of reasons Neelsville opted to take part in Just 10. Some joined the challenge because they see themselves as highly competitive. They wanted to do their best and push themselves even further. Others saw it as a chance to improve their health and perhaps win a prize for their school.

But what—or who—motivated them to keep going?

A number of participants praised the actions of their coach, Laura, their team captains, and Vicky Lake-Parcan, Neelsville's principal.

"Laura was our chief cheerleader and, at times, drill sergeant," Melissa said. "The team captains also played a pivotal role in keeping the staff motivated throughout the challenge. Also, our principal considers the health of our staff a top priority."

Others believe that peer pressure motivated them the most; they set daily goals and encouraged each other to meet them. For still others, it was simply the chance to get in shape and improve their health in the process.

"Our staff has regular conversations about health, wellness, and eating right," Emilia F. Roberts, special education teacher, said. "I'm still hearing lots of motivational chatter in the hallways about when and where we will be doing our workouts."

This ongoing—and growing—excitement about health and wellness at Neelsville is clearly bringing the school's staff together in a supportive, and yes, healthy way.

"There seems to be a new level of cohesion among the staff at Neelsville," Yvette Baldwin, psychologist, said.

"We are motivated to not only continue our wellness activities, but also to be accountable to one another. The administrators are equally involved in the wellness challenges. There is a true sense of community."

Neelsville's Just 10 success is proof that our wellness challenges can bring positive change to a staff! What has your school or office done to adopt a culture of wellness?

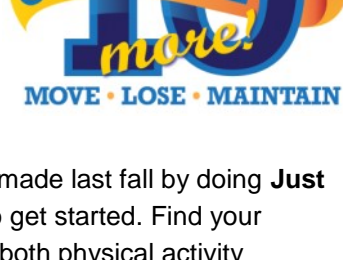
There's Still Time To Do Just 10 More!

Participating Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) employees have reached the halfway point in Well Aware's current physical activity challenge, **Just 10 More**. So far, Well Aware has given out 24 individual prizes to employees for logging their physical activity.

It is not too late to join! Continue adding to the fitness gains you made last fall by doing **Just 10 More**. If you did not participate last fall, now is your chance to get started. Find your baseline activity level, then do **Just 10 More!** We are rewarding both physical activity challenge veterans and those who begin now to achieve an improved level of health and wellness.

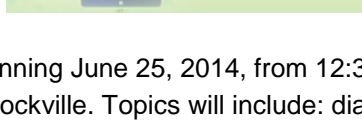
If you exercise and log at least 60 minutes per week, you will be eligible to win a weekly prize in the Activity Novice category. Those who meet the Surgeon General's goal of 150 minutes of activity per week and log this activity will be eligible for an Activity Expert weekly prize. School and office teams will need to average a minimum of 30 minutes per day to be eligible for grand prizes.

To participate, register for a [Well Aware Online Fitness Log](#) account and start logging your activity. If you have used the fitness log previously, you do not need to register for a new account. For more information on **Just 10 More**, including detailed rules and prize information, click [here](#).



InSTEP with Diabetes

Diabetes affects more than 25 million adults in the United States. Are you or your spouse living with diabetes or been diagnosed with pre-diabetes? If so, join Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente for InSTEP with Diabetes, an eight-week program to help you better understand the disease and learn skills for healthy living.



InSTEP with Diabetes will be held on Wednesdays beginning June 25, 2014, from 12:30–1:30 p.m. in the Aspen Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. Topics will include: diabetes facts, nutrition and food choices, physical activity, testing your blood sugar, diabetes medicines, and recommended care. You do not need to be a Kaiser Permanente member to participate.

Registration for the summer class is underway. Take advantage of your summer break and gain control of your health and wellness! Space is limited, so register early. For more information or to register, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

NATIONAL WALKING DAY

A Step toward a Healthy Routine

On Wednesday, April 2, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) celebrated National Walking Day with the American Heart Association. Why? Physical inactivity is a huge national problem. Seventy percent of Americans do not get enough exercise. That is true for many of us right here at MCPS. And it means we are at greater risk for heart disease, stroke, and other blood vessel diseases.

Well Aware wants you to know we are not going to take it sitting down! During April—and beyond—we will join millions of men and women across America as they pledge to live a healthier lifestyle and become physically active.

For most of us, walking is easy. Just put one foot in front of the other. Step by step, day after day, you walk to make progress. Make a daily walk a habit.

- Start a walking group with your coworkers, or hold a walking meeting.
- Visit www.Heart.org/NationalWalkingDay and use the American Heart Association's free tips and tools to establish your walking routine and stay motivated.

Mind Your Wellness

At some point in your life, you probably have been told to mind your business. Now, Well Aware is asking you to Mind Your Wellness!

Mind Your Wellness is a fun, interactive, and transformative seminar series for Montgomery County Public Schools employees emphasizing personal responsibility and teamwork. Each seminar provides user-friendly exercises and principles for implementation at work, home, and on the go.

The series is designed to improve how you think, breathe, eat, talk, walk, sleep, and much more. Each participant will be empowered with wellness information and exercises in a daily and weekly format that encourages accountability.

Mind Your Wellness

Tuesday, May 13, 2014, and Tuesday, May 27, 2014

4:30–5:30 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Manifest Ra, life balance expert, transformational speaker, and tai chi and chi gong ambassador, will facilitate each seminar. To register for the series, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Health Coaching

Sometimes, just knowing you need to make changes in your life is not enough. To gain healthier life skills for the long term, it helps to use the buddy system. Whatever your goals, a Cigna onsite health coaching session can guide you to take strategic steps to improve your health and quality of life.

Cigna's onsite health coaches are highly trained health professionals who simplify the process of getting healthier. They provide a powerful combination of support, practical advice, and accountability to help you make positive, satisfying, and lasting changes. During your 20-minute onsite coaching session, you can explore the factors that influence your health and receive feedback, alternative strategies, and tips for making better choices.

Cigna coaches will be available to meet with you Wednesday, April 23, 2014, between the hours of 1:00–5:00 p.m. in the Aspen Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville.

To sign up for a 20-minute onsite health coaching session, [e-mail Well Aware](#). (You do not need to be a Cigna member to participate.)

Colorectal Cancer: Routine Screening After Age 50 Advised for Most; Earlier if High Risk

Colorectal cancer can be prevented. Knowing the signs and symptoms of colon cancer and understanding your risk may stop a cancer occurrence.

All adults with an average risk of colorectal cancer need to undergo routine screening for colon and rectal cancer beginning at age 50. African Americans face a slightly higher risk. Those with a family history of colorectal cancers should speak with their doctors about early screenings.

Learn more about [Colorectal Cancer](#) and the different [screening methods](#).