



## September 2011 Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the September 2011 Well Aware eNews!

Read on to learn about—

- Managing your cholesterol
- How a teacher at Stephen Knolls is inspiring healthy activity for staff and students
- New fitness challenges for all staff members, including
  - The *Work It Circuit Challenge* for elementary school staff
  - *MCPS on the Move* for secondary school and central services staff

## Wellness Champion Motivates Staff and Students



**Meet Yvonne White, Teacher**  
**Stephen Knolls School**

Yvonne White and her colleagues at Stephen Knolls School recognize their health as a critical component of student achievement. Their work is often highly physical, as they provide a special education program for students with mild to severe cognitive deficits and multiple disabilities. When Yvonne, a teacher, began to truly appreciate the important link between her physical wellbeing and the success of her students, she got moving and motivated her coworkers to do the same. With her leadership, staff has met with success in the MCPS on the Move program, participated in healthy eating seminars through their health room, enjoyed on-site fitness classes taught by their own staff members, and rejuvenated a defunct walking club. The staff is marveling at the changes. According to one elementary teacher, “The weekly vigorous activities helped clear our minds of ‘stuff’ and our bodies of stress. We were therefore able to come to school mentally and physically renewed the next day.”

Watch the [Bulletin](#) in late September to see the full story about Yvonne and her contributions to staff and student wellness at Stephen Knolls!

## Get Fit This Fall!

### New Programs Target All Staff Members with Incentives to Be Active

This fall, Well Aware challenges you to participate in a 12-week fitness challenge. Elementary school staff members are invited to participate in the new *Work It Circuit Challenge*, and secondary school and central services staff members are invited to participate in *MCPS on the Move*. Each program is designed to benefit employees by increasing physical activity while allowing for plenty of chances to have fun and win prizes, too.

**Elementary Schools: Get Ready to *Work It Circuit***

### Don't miss it!

**Cholesterol Seminar:**  
*The Highs and Lows of Cholesterol*

**Wednesday, September 14**  
10:00–11:00 a.m.

**West Farm Bus Depot Training Room**

11920 Bournefield Way  
Silver Spring, MD 20904

**Thursday, September 15**  
4:00–5:00 p.m.

**Sligo Middle School Cafeteria**

1401 Dennis Ave  
Silver Spring, MD 20902

**Tuesday, September 20**  
4:30–5:30 p.m.

**Carver Educational Services Center Auditorium**

850 Hungerford Rd  
Rockville, MD 20850

**Wednesday, September 21**  
10:00–11:00 a.m.

**Bethesda Bus Depot Maintenance Lunch Room**

10901 Westlake Dr  
Rockville, MD 20852

**Wednesday, September 21**  
4:00–5:00 p.m.

**Neelsville Middle School Cafeteria**

11700 Neelsville Church Rd  
Germantown, MD 20876

Spread the word with our [flyer!](#)

Presented by:



Elementary school staff members enjoyed a wildly successful run with last year's *MCPS on the Move*, during which they logged over 140,000 hours of exercise. The Work It Circuit Challenge invites elementary school staff, school bus operators, and bus attendants to keep that momentum going by adding a 12-week circuit training program. Each school will be given two circuit training manuals and fitness kits to use before or after school. The fitness manuals even will be available on the wellness website for use at home. Once again, staff members will be able to participate as individuals or may band together in teams of four to nine people.



Just like last year's program, staff members will track their activity using a password-protected online journal. Activity is not limited to the circuit training program that is provided. Any and all activity—from the circuit training program to a walk around your school—may be logged and will count toward the competition.

Prizes will be offered throughout to keep motivation high. In addition to the grand prize, prizes will be awarded for participation and high activity, including fresh fruit and vegetable deliveries, healthy cooking demonstrations, and yoga or Zumba classes.

Learn more about the [Work It Circuit Challenge](#).



#### Secondary Schools and Central Services: Get On the Move

A partnership between MCPS and Kaiser Permanente, *MCPS on the Move* is a 12-week fitness competition that emphasizes the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. Last year, *MCPS on the Move* was introduced to

all elementary school staff. A total of 132 schools participated, and together they burned over 51 million calories and reduced their average Body Mass Index (BMI) from obese to normal.

This year, secondary schools and central services will build on that success. Staff members working at secondary schools and central services can compete as individuals or create teams of four to nine people each. Staff will be required to log their daily activities in a password-protected online journal, which will track health, fitness, and weight loss goals. The physical activity can include walking, everyday household chores, or an organized exercise program.

As motivational incentive, prizes will be awarded throughout the challenge. In addition to grand prizes at the middle school, high school, and central services levels, various prizes will be offered for participation and activity. Prizes include fresh fruit and vegetable deliveries, healthy cooking demonstrations, and yoga or Zumba classes.

Learn more about [MCPS on the Move](#).

#### Don't wait!

Both the *Work It Circuit Challenge* and *MCPS on the Move* will need **at least one** volunteer coach at each school or location. Coaches coordinate activities, motivate staff members to participate, and encourage continued engagement with the competition. If you are interested in being a coach, let your principal or supervisor know. But hurry! **Coaches must be named by September 6, 2011.**

#### Important Dates for Both the *Work It Circuit Challenge* and *MCPS on the Move*:

**September 6, 2011:** Coaches must be named

**September 19, 2011:** Registration opens

**October 3, 2011:** Competition begins

**December 23, 2011:** Competition ends

## Keep Your Cholesterol in Check

High cholesterol can significantly increase your risk of high blood pressure and diabetes, both stroke factors. There may be no symptoms or warning signs of



ers. There may be no symptoms or warning signs of high cholesterol, which raises the importance of having your physician check for it regularly.



### A few things you should know to maintain healthy cholesterol levels

- The liver manufactures most of the cholesterol that is found in your bloodstream. However, additional cholesterol is introduced into the bloodstream by eating foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol. This includes animal products like eggs, red meat and high-fat dairy products.
- Anyone can develop high cholesterol regardless of age, gender, or race.
- High levels of cholesterol in the blood (200 – 240 mg/dL for adults) may lead to narrowing of the arteries and has been associated with the development of cardiovascular diseases.
- These diseases can lead to heart attacks and strokes, which are credited as the leading cause of death in America—more than all other diseases combined.

[Learn more](#) about cholesterol, including recommended healthy cholesterol levels and the difference between good cholesterol and bad cholesterol.

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### Are you at risk?

1. Does your brother, sister, mother, or father have high cholesterol levels?
2. Do you regularly eat foods that contain saturated fats, such as animal products, cocoa butter, coconut oil, or palm oil?
3. Do you regularly eat hydrogenated fats found in vegetable oil, margarine, and processed foods?
4. Do you regularly eat foods high in cholesterol and fat, such as eggs, whole milk dairy products, and meats?
5. Are you overweight by 20 pounds or more?
6. Do you avoid foods high in fiber, such as carrots, oat bran, beans, fruits, and vegetables?
7. Are you unaware of your blood cholesterol level?

#### If you score:

**5 + YES answers:** Speak with your physician about your cholesterol level and lifestyle habits.

**3–4 YES answers:** Speak with your physician about how to concentrate on changing those “yes” answers to “no” answers.

**2 or fewer YES answers:** Congratulations for paying close attention to your health.

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Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or [wellness@mcpsmd.org](mailto:wellness@mcpsmd.org).