

July Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion, an ESOL teacher who joined Well Aware's virtual 5k training program and, as a result, improved her distance and mile time significantly;
- a webinar on the types of skin cancer and ways to prevent the disease;
- the *Your Race, Your Pace* redux;
- another *InStep with Diabetes* class;
- a new tool to help you balance your work, home, health, and emotional well-being; and
- more!



Don't Miss It

This month's free webinar— Skin Cancer Awareness

Join us for this webinar that provides an overview on the types of skin cancer and how to recognize them, as well as measures you can take to prevent the disease.

Thursday, July 23, 2020
4:00–5:00 p.m.
Webinar

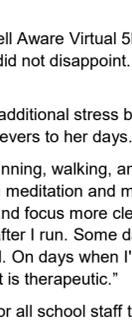
Please **email Well Aware** to register for the webinar. After registering, you will receive a link to the webinar in your Outlook email as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

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

Presented by: CareFirst

This Month's Wellness Champion Runs to Manage Her Stress

Jennifer Neukam, ESOL teacher, Ashburton Elementary School



Ms. Jennifer L. Neukam, ESOL teacher at Ashburton Elementary School, leads a busy life. Between her work schedule and managing the lives of her four children, it isn't always easy to manage. Even so, she has found solace in running. "Running has always calmed me down when I am stressed," Jennifer said. "It gives me the break I need to sort through my thoughts and focus on what I have to get done. Also, it's a social thing; I get to see my friends and catch up. It's fun for us to register for races, set goals, and achieve them."

This avid runner joined the MCPS Well Aware Virtual 5k training program to improve her running technique, and the program did not disappoint. She improved her distance and mile time significantly.

Jennifer has found ways to ease the additional stress brought on by COVID-19. Along with running, she's added other stress relievers to her days.

"During the pandemic, I have been running, walking, and riding my bike to manage stress," Jennifer said. "I also started watching meditation and mindfulness videos on YouTube, which have helped me start my day and focus more clearly. Running is definitely helping during this time. I always feel better after I run. Some days I may not be up for a full run, but any run is better than no run at all. On days when I'm recovering from a run, I walk my dog, which feels great too! Movement is therapeutic."

Jennifer thinks exercise is essential for all school staff to help them manage work and home stress.

"Many of us have families to go home to, so we wear work and home hats," Jennifer said. "Exercise is a release that gives us energy and helps us to manage our stress. Running is my activity of choice. But it can be anything from walking to yoga to aerobics."

She also acknowledges the importance of being healthy role models for children.

"If we model healthy behaviors, our children will be more likely to make good choices in their diets, activities, and sleep, while staying on top of their school work."

Jennifer plans to add high-intensity interval training, strength workouts, and yoga to her exercise routine. She has advice for anyone considering starting an exercise program.

"I would say to start small by making a commitment to walk a little more each day," Jennifer said. "Set a 5k race as your goal, then work your way up to a walk/jog, then to all jogging/running. In a short time, you'll be amazed how good you feel about your progress. Ask a friend to run with you. It's more fun and will force you to be accountable to that person and not make excuses."

InStep with Diabetes: Online Class Starting

Diabetes affects more than 25 million adults in the United States. Are you or your spouse living with diabetes? Join Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente for InSTEP with Diabetes, a three-week, web-based program to better understand diabetes and learn skills for healthy living. Learn about 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.

The next online class starts on Thursday, July 9, 2020. **Learn more and register**.

Stay Active This Summer

Summer is a great time to get back into walking, biking, jogging, or just playing outside with your kids. Getting active now will make it easier to keep it up when we get back to our hectic schedules in the fall. From Zumba and yoga to tai chi, Well Aware and CareFirst are offering a number of options to help you get fit this summer.

For a class list and schedule, **email Well Aware**.

Be Well 365 for Staff

Balancing your Work, Home, Health and Emotional Well-being

It is important to take care of our mental health and as well as our physical health, even more so as we navigate working remotely and cope with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. MCPS provides support for personal and work concerns, for you and your family. **Learn more**.

Wellness Initiatives

Don't Miss the Opportunity to Attend a Free Summer Health Screening

Having a yearly physical or biometric health screening gives you the information you need to take better control of your health and well-being. And that's important, because it is easier to take care of others when you have made yourself a priority.

Learning more about your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and body mass index will give you much more information about your current health status. This allows you to learn your risk levels for common health problems, including heart disease, colon cancer and diabetes, and gives you a clear picture of your health and where you need to make changes.

Managing and improving your health has never been easier. And, if you complete your annual physical or biometric health screening by **October 2, 2020**, MCPS will pay 1 percent more of the total cost of your 2021 health insurance premiums—reducing your contribution by 1 percent. To get started, visit the **Wellness Initiatives for Employees web page**. Then, review the **Well Aware biometric health screening schedule** and sign up for your summer health screening.

In addition to completing your biometric health screening or physical exam, you can save another 1 percent of the cost of your health insurance by completing your medical plan's online health risk assessment by **October 2, 2020**. Your health risk assessment is accessible through your medical plan's website.

Learn more about Wellness Initiatives.

Your Race, Your Pace Returns for the Summer!

Crossing the finish line is one of the best feelings in the world. Whether you are running or walking a road race, biking, swimming, or meeting another goal you set for yourself, the finish line symbolizes your hard work, determination, and consistency.



This summer, Well Aware is challenging you to commit time to train for your race in the *Your Race, Your Pace* physical activity challenge. Your race might be a walk around the block, a 5k run, or a 30-mile bike ride. Your race might be completing a yoga class, or perfecting your tennis swing. Each race is unique.

Use the online **Well Aware Fitness Log** to track your progress and fill out and post the race bib for motivation. **Learn more**.

MCPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

With the ongoing global health crisis, many of us are finding ourselves increasingly stressed and worried—about our health, the economy, or everyday activities that we generally wouldn't think twice about. Please know that in these uncertain times, the MCPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to support the emotional well-being of you and your family members. With the understanding that we are all working to maintain our personal safety, and the safety of our family and community, a range of options are being offered including no-cost telephone counseling and teletherapy. Please see contact information below:

In-House EAP

Telephone: 240-314-1040

- Jeffrey Becker, LCSW-C, CEAP
Email Jeff
- Robyn Rosenbauer, LCSW-C, CEAP
Email Robyn

External EAP Via KEPRO

Telephone: Toll-free 866-496-9599 to speak with a call center counselor

- **EAPhelpink.com**, Company Code: MCPS

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