

September Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion—a Just 10 More spirit award winner—who challenges herself physically to reap benefits at work and home;
- a seminar/webinar from Cigna to teach you to maximize the time you spend working out;
- how you can make small changes that lead to big results;
- Well Aware's fall health screenings;
- Another chance to join the Jump Start lifestyle challenge; and
- more!

Wellness Champion Benefits from Well Aware's Activity Challenges Both at Home and at Work



Jessica C. Ewers, special education teacher, Rosemary Hills Elementary School

Mrs. Jessica C. Ewers, special education teacher at Rosemary Hills Elementary School, looks forward to Well Aware's physical activity challenges each year. Jessica, one of the spirit award winners from last spring's Just 10 More Challenge, takes full advantage of them. She sees it as a win-win, both for her and her daughter.

"Personally, I look forward to the wellness challenge every year," Jessica said. "It is a time that I truly focus on not just being more active, but on being more of an active participant while parenting."

Instead of pulling out the Play-Doh, Jessica will suggest that she and her daughter take a nature walk. Instead of watching a cartoon, they will put on the country music station and dance around the living room. At the park, Jessica doesn't just watch her daughter play; she climbs, slides, and runs right along with her.

"Although my initial motivation was to get my steps in," Jessica said, "it's turned into much more than that."

The wellness challenges also brought together the Rosemary Hills staff. Every Tuesday at 4:15 p.m., a core group of staff members, aged 25–65, danced together under the direction of a Zumba instructor. They continued this even after the spring challenge ended. In addition, the school's staff created a wellness bulletin board where they kept a graphic representation of how many cumulative steps each team had taken. They found this to be both rewarding and motivating. They also provided staff with healthy lifestyle tips and regular healthy recipes.

"We look forward to continuing these traditions in the fall," Jessica said. It's rewarding to see staff encouraging each other, congratulating each other, and coming together to help foster healthy changes in each other's lives."



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar—

Making Workouts Count

Is your regular workout routine not working for you anymore? Join Well Aware and Cigna as we come together to learn how to maximize the benefit of your time at the gym or on the walking trail.

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

4:30–5:30 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center Cafeteria

850 Hungerford Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Thursday, September 18, 2014

4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

Monday, September 29, 2014

10:00–11:00 a.m.

West Farm Bus Depot

11920 Bournefield Way

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Please register for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#).

If you register for the webinar, you will receive 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: Cigna

Wellness Survey: Share Your Ideas and Interests with Us

Be sure to tell Well Aware about any programs, activities, and/or incentives you would like us to consider in the coming year.

[Complete our survey](#) so we can offer the wellness programming you most need and want. Also, let us know whether or not you have participated in wellness activities in the past. Your responses will be kept confidential.



Small Changes, Big Results: Well Aware's Physical Activity Challenge for the Fall

Cut out carbohydrates. Reduce calorie intake by half. Quit cold turkey. Run a marathon.

You may believe that drastic changes to your lifestyle are the only ways to achieve the results you want, but that is hardly the case. In fact, when changes are drastic, they are potentially overwhelming. Small lifestyle changes are much easier to achieve and maintain.

Join Well Aware this school year for Small Changes, Big Results, an expanded physical activity challenge that adds five mini challenges to our regular fall and spring challenge line up. Small Changes, Big Results will help you embrace small changes and accomplish big results.

By setting and accomplishing small, tangible changes, you get an immediate sense of gratification, which is self-motivating. You can check that goal off of your to-do list and proudly exclaim, "I did it!" When successful, small lifestyle changes are more likely to become habits and can lead to increased self-confidence, in addition to a healthier body.

Small Changes, Big Results challenge rules and important fall dates are available on the [Well Aware website](#). Further details will be published next month in the *Well Aware eNews* and *the Bulletin*, and on the [Well Aware website](#).

RUN@WORK Day is Coming!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) estimates that 64 percent of adults in the United States are either overweight (33 percent) or obese (31 percent), meaning they have excess weight of 30 pounds or more. The rise of overweight and obesity and the resulting health conditions has a dramatic effect on health insurance costs around the country. It is estimated that overweight and obesity health-related medical costs have reached an all-time high of \$75.8 billion per year (www.cdc.gov).

To help combat this epidemic, the Road Runners Club of America will hold its 9th Annual RUN@WORK Day nationwide on September 19, 2014. Well Aware encourages you to plan fun runs and walks around your school or office with your coworkers.

The goal of RUN@WORK Day is to encourage adults to get 30 minutes of exercise each day, either before work, during lunch, or immediately after work in accordance with the federal government's Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

So how can you participate in RUN@WORK Day? Simply make time to run or walk for 30 minutes on September 19, 2014, and bring a coworker or family member with you. Is your school or office participating? Send your story with photos to [Well Aware](#).

A Series of Fall Health Screenings Planned

Heart disease statistics are staggering. Nearly 70 percent of all Americans have some form of heart disease, making it the number one cause of death for both men and women. Your cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar, and body mass index numbers are key indicators of your risk for heart disease and other serious illness. If you know these important numbers, you can make changes to improve your health and reduce your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and other serious illnesses.

Join Well Aware as we offer free biometric health screenings for MCPS staff. Please register for the screening associated with your insurance plan.

CareFirst:

Friday, October 10, 2014

12:00–6:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, MD. 20850

To register for a Carefirst screening, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Cigna:

Friday, October 17, 2014

12:00–6:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, MD. 20850

To register for a Cigna screening, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Kaiser Permanente:

Friday, November 7, 2014

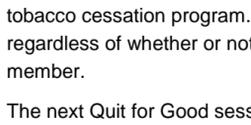
12:00–6:00 p.m.

Mobile Van

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, MD 20850

To register for a Kaiser Permanente screening, [e-mail Well Aware](#).



Are You Ready to Quit for Good?

MCPS and Kaiser Permanente are teaming up again this fall to bring you the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program. The free program is available to employees and their spouses, regardless of whether or not you participate in MCPS employee benefits or are a Kaiser member.

The next Quit for Good session will begin Thursday, October 16, 2014. Meetings will take place weekly beginning from 4:30–5:30 p.m. in the Maple Room of 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. You must register to participate by e-mailing [Well Aware](#).

The program is course-based and consists of classes led by a nurse practitioner with assistance from Kaiser Permanente clinicians and other health experts. Discussion topics include risk assessment, stress management techniques, healthy weight management strategies, the skills necessary to successfully live tobacco-free, and more. In addition to the class meetings, participants receive support through a help line and from peer sponsors who understand what it takes to quit. Learn more about the program by visiting the [Well Aware website](#).

Jump Start Lifestyle Challenge Redux

Well Aware and CareFirst are offering a second chance to join the Jump Start Lifestyle Challenge, a weight loss challenge piloted back in January. This six-week challenge, which is now available to all MCPS employees, will begin on Thursday, October 9, 2014.

The program pilot, held in a few schools and central services, was a great success. More than 150 pounds were lost, 100 percent of participants increased their daily intake of fruits and vegetables, and 85 percent reported that the program increased their ability to manage stress.

During the first week of the Jump Start challenge, participants will receive information about the program; the remaining five weeks of the program are for quick weigh-ins. For more information or to register for the Jump Start, e-mail [Well Aware](#).

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.