



2023-2024 Wellness Toolkit

The purpose of this Wellness Toolkit is to provide you with easy to implement, weekly wellness announcements and weekly social media messages to support the wellness culture in your school.

- Implement weekly wellness announcements and claim 1-point in Establishing a Wellness Culture for item #1

Week 1

Social and Emotional Wellness: Getting Outdoors

Did you know?

Spending time outdoors has shown to improve memory, concentration, creativity, and the immune system. It is also important for regulating sleep patterns and lowering stress.

Challenge:

Spend 10 minutes outdoors each day. This can be on your lawn soaking up the sun, standing outside and listening to birds chirp, or on your porch looking at the stars!

Week 2

Social and Emotional Wellness: Talking Positive

Did you know?

Speaking kind and encouraging words to yourself can build self-esteem and increase confidence.

Challenge:

Try turning negative self-talk into positive self-talk, instead of saying "I have never done that before," try saying "This is an opportunity for me to learn something new." Or instead of saying, "I am never going to get better at this," try saying, "I can give it another try."

Week 3**Nutrition: Vitamin D****Fact:**

Vitamin D is essential for absorbing calcium which is needed for strong bones, teeth, and muscles.

Challenge:

Try spending 10-30 minutes in the sun a few times a week. You can also eat fish or drink fortified orange juice and milk to increase vitamin D levels.

Week 4**Physical Activity: Playing Sports****Did you know?**

Playing sports has more benefits than making you a better athlete. It can also build your confidence, teach teamwork, problem-solving skills, and improve your academics.

Week 5**Nutrition: Healthy Snacking****Did you know?**

Snacking helps sustain energy levels throughout the day and it can also prevent low blood sugar levels. To achieve these benefits from snacking, making sure your snacks are nutrient dense is important.

Challenge:

Try incorporating a healthy snack into your day each day, some healthy snack ideas include string cheese, apple with peanut butter, a homemade fruit smoothie, deli roll up, or hummus with vegetables.

Week 6**Physical Activity: Walking****Did you know?**

Walking is an easy way to get more physical activity into your daily routine, it can also strengthen your bones and muscles while being easy on your joints!

Challenge:

Try adding a 15–30-minute walk to your routine each day, this could even be just walking around the house.

Week 7**Social and Emotional Wellness: Journaling****Did you know?**

Journaling can help manage your emotions and reduce stress.

Challenge:

Try taking 5 minutes to write down your thoughts from the day or what happened in your day.

Week 8

Nutrition: Digestion

Fact: Having a good digestive system is important. These foods support good digestion: whole grains, leafy greens, lean protein (chicken, turkey, fish, tofu), berries, and avocado.

Challenge: Incorporate at least one leafy green or whole grain in your diet each day to promote digestion.

Week 9

Nutrition: My Plate

Fact: MyPlate is a visual representation to show what portions of your plate should include foods from different food groups. Half the plate should be fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plate should be grains (preferably whole grains), $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plate should be protein, and lastly 1 cup of dairy, such as milk, to the side of your plate.

Challenge: Look up the MyPlate image and compare your meal to it.

Week 10

Physical Activity: Warming Up

Fact: Warming up before starting physical activity is important for increasing blood flow and getting oxygen to muscles which can prevent injuries.

Challenge: Take 5 minutes to warm your body up before you start physical activity. Warmups can include high knees, butt kicks, Frankenstein, squats, pushups, etc.

Week 11

Social and Emotional Wellness: Smiling

Did you know? When we are happy our faces can naturally produce a smile, and research shows smiling can help lead to happiness.

Challenge: Turn to the person next to you and give them a big smile!

Week 12

Physical Activity: Safety and Injury Prevention

Fact: Safety is very important when performing physical activity. To make sure you are protected, wear sunscreen when you are in the sun, wear shin guards, mouth guards, and helmets depending on the activity, and stay hydrated – especially in the heat.

Week 13**Nutrition: Healthy Fats****Fact:**

An easy way to understand different types of fats is to avoid trans fats, limit saturated fats, and consume unsaturated fats. Saturated fats (those we limit) include red meat, butter, cheese, ice cream, and coconut oil. Unsaturated fats (healthy fats) include avocado, nuts, vegetable oils, seeds, and fish.

Week 14**Nutrition: Gut Microbiome****Fact:**

There are lots of good bacteria in your gut that make up your microbiome, it is important to keep this healthy and regulated to best help your immune system. To keep your gut healthy, exercise, eat a well-rounded diet, include prebiotics and probiotics into your diet, and drink lots of water.

Challenge:

Try to incorporate a prebiotic or probiotic into your diet each day. Prebiotics include whole grains, bananas, greens, onion, garlic and probiotics include yogurt, fermented vegetables, and apple cider vinegar.

Week 15**Physical Activity: Outdoor Fitness****Did you know?**

Physical activity is a great way to get in vitamin D and fresh air.

Challenge:

Try doing an activity outside this weekend, some ideas are frisbee, hopscotch, kickball, four-square, basketball, jogging, walking, capture the flag.

Week 16**Social and Emotional Wellness: Gratitude****Did you know?**

Expressing gratitude can increase happiness, encourage positive emotions, increase positive experience, and help build strong relationships.

Challenge:

Think of one thing you are grateful for each day.

Week 17**Nutrition: Mindful Eating****Did you know?**

Mindful eating helps us to enjoy our food to the fullest while listening to our body's fullness and hunger cues.

Challenge:

During your next meal, pay attention to what you are eating, and enjoy eating it, slow down while you are eating, and pay attention to when you are full.

Week 18**Nutrition: Food Labels****Fact:**

Most foods sold in the United States are required to have a food label, this is where you can find the ingredients, nutrition content, and serving size.

Challenge:

Next time you're at the grocery store look at the different food labels and see what you find surprising!

Week 19**Social and Emotional Wellness: Giving Compliments****Did you know?**

Compliments can help build communication skills, strengthen relationships, motivate people, and boost self-esteem.

Challenge:

Turn to someone next to you and give them a compliment.

Week 20**Physical Activity: Indoor Fitness****Fact:**

When the weather outside is not ideal for activities, it is still important to get your body moving.

Challenge:

Next time that it is too rainy, cold, or hot to go outside, try these indoor activities to get your blood pumping: jumping jacks, follow the leader, yoga, dancing to music, or an indoor workout video.

Week 21**Nutrition: Sodium****Fact:**

Your body needs some sodium in the diet to carry out regular functions, but too much can be bad for your heart. It is recommended that you eat less than 2,300 milligrams per day. For reference, 15 chips contain about 170 mg sodium, 1 cup of canned soup has around 830 mg sodium, and 1 tbsp of ketchup has 154 mg sodium.

Challenge:

Try replicating your favorite out to eat meal at home, this way you control how much sodium goes into it.

Week 22**Social and Emotional Wellness: Arts and Crafts****Did you know?**

Arts and crafts allow us to express ourselves in a different way than we are used to. They can be good for allowing others to see how we view the world.

Challenge:

Create something this week!

Week 23**Physical Activity: Balance and Stability****Fact:**

Balance is the ability to control your body without movement whereas stability is the ability to control your body during movement. They are both important for preventing injury increasing athleticism. Balance and stability work can improve coordination, posture, and strength.

Challenge:

Incorporate a stability exercise into your daily exercise routine.

Week 24**Physical Activity: Stand Up!****Did you know?**

Standing up can improve energy levels, focus, and allows blood to flow evenly throughout your body. You can boost your energy levels and mood by replacing sitting with standing.

Challenge:

Add some more movement into your day by standing up every hour that you are awake each day.

Week 25**Nutrition: Plant-based Protein****Did you know?**

There are lots of plant foods that are good sources of protein. Eating more plant-based protein can reduce the risk of diseases. Sources of plant-based protein include beans, grains, soy, nuts, and seeds.

Challenge:

Next time you are at the grocery store, try to find one good source of plant-based protein.

Week 26**Physical Activity: Stretching**

Fact: Stretching can improve exercise, decrease the risk of getting hurt, and increases blood flow in your muscles. It keeps your muscles strong, flexible, and healthy for exercise and daily living.

Challenge: Start stretching for about 5-10 minutes a day! Especially after exercise.

Week 27**Social and Emotional Wellness: Sleep**

Fact: Good sleep is important for our health. Sleep allows our body and brain to rest and to help us remain healthy and productive. Tips to improve your sleep are going to sleep and waking up at the same time every day, sleeping in a quiet and dark room, and not looking at a phone, TV, or other electronic device before going to bed.

Challenge: Improve your sleep by going to bed at the same time every night this week.

Week 28**Nutrition: Drinking Water**

Did you know? Water is essential, we cannot live without it! Our cells, body tissues, and organs need water to function. You can stay hydrated by drinking water and eating foods that contain water, like fruits and vegetables! Cucumbers, tomatoes, watermelon, and peaches are some examples of foods that have high amounts of water.

Week 29**Social and Emotional Wellness: Acts of Kindness**

About: Acts of kindness can be big or small, and they have the potential to brighten someone's day. Acts of kindness you can do at school include smiling at someone in the hall, leaving a kind note, or sitting with someone new at lunchtime. Little acts of kindness can go a long way.

Challenge: Leave a kind note for a friend or a stranger this week.

Week 30**Nutrition: Vitamins**

Fact: Vitamins are micronutrients that boost your immune system, support normal growth, and help cells and organs do their jobs. You can get all the vitamins that you need by eating a variety of foods like fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.

Challenge: Name a fruit that is a source of vitamin C.

Week 31**Nutrition: Eating Breakfast**

Fact: Eating a healthy breakfast in the morning gives you energy and fuels your brain to take on the day. Set yourself up for success with a delicious breakfast every morning!

Challenge: Using MyPlate, draw a nutritious breakfast! Remember half the plate should be fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plate should be grains (preferably whole grains), $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plate should be protein, and dairy on the side of the plate.

Week 32**Social and Emotional Wellness: Breathing Exercises**

Fact: Focusing on how you breathe can help you feel calmer and more relaxed. When we breathe slowly and controlled, it can decrease stress and improve decision making.

Challenge: Next time you feel nervous or tense, take a moment to try a breathing exercise. Take a slow, deep breath in as you count to three, pause, then blow the air out and repeat five times.

Week 33**Nutrition: Whole Grains vs Refined Grains**

Fact: A whole grain is made up of the entire grain, it includes 3 parts; the bran, germ, and endosperm. A whole grain contains vitamins, iron, and fiber. A refined grain goes through a process that removes the bran and germ. In that process most of the fiber is removed. It is recommended that we eat foods with whole grains because they have more health benefits!

Challenge: Next time you are at a grocery store, look at two different breads and see if they have whole grains or not. *Hint* Look for the word “whole” or “whole grain” on the ingredient list.

Week 34**Social and Emotional Wellness: Reading****Fact:**

Reading is great for your imagination and creativity. Reading does not only have to be for school, but it is also for your own enjoyment too! Whether it's a non-fiction, or science fiction book, reading can expand your vocabulary and improve your brain function.

Challenge:

Wind down your day by reading 10 pages of a book before you go to sleep.

Week 35**Physical Activity: Dancing****Did you know?**

Dancing is an amazing form of exercise! Whether you have dance classes or are dancing in your room to your favorite song, it is a great way to stay active. Dancing can keep your muscles healthy and build endurance.

Challenge:

Next time you are with your family or friends, choose your favorite songs and have a dance party!

Week 36**Nutrition: Minerals****Fact:**

Minerals are micronutrients that are important for keeping our bodies healthy. Some minerals that you may have heard of are sodium, calcium, and potassium. Each of these minerals has a different function. For example, calcium helps our body grow strong bones and teeth, while sodium controls the fluid balance in our body.

Week 37**Social and Emotional Wellness: Positive Affirmations****Fact:**

Positive affirmations are kind and encouraging words to tell yourself and others. You can use positive affirmations to build confidence and get rid of negative thoughts. Some examples of positive affirmations are "I am smart", "I am kind", "I am strong", and "I will make today a great day".

Challenge:

When you wake up in the morning, look in the mirror and say at least one positive affirmation to yourself.

Week 38**Nutrition: Lean Protein****Fact:**

Meats are high in protein, but may also be high in saturated fat, which should be eaten less often. That's why it is important for most of our protein choices to come from lean proteins. Some examples of lean protein are chicken breast, turkey, and lean ground meats.

Week 39

Social and Emotional Wellness: Brain Breaks

Facts:

Have you ever felt frustrated after working on homework for too long? Next time, try giving yourself a brain break. Brain breaks can help relieve stress, anxiety, and frustration when trying to complete a task. Some examples of brain breaks are going for a short walk, doing jumping jacks, or even breathing exercises.

Challenge:

Give yourself a short brain break every 30 minutes during your next task.

Week 40

Nutrition: Fiber

Fact:

Fiber is a carbohydrate found in plant foods that our body cannot digest. It can come from fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Fiber has many benefits; it keeps us full and promotes a healthy digestive system. You can find how much fiber a food has on the nutrition facts label!

Challenge:

Next time you are at the grocery store, try to find a food that has more than 5 grams of fiber in one serving.

Week 41

Social and Emotional Wellness: Reducing Screen Time

Fact:

Electronics are helpful for school and entertainment, but it is important to log off and take a break from screen time. Time away from a screen can increase the amount of time you have to play and spend with family and friends!

Challenge:

Instead of watching TV, YouTube, or TikTok, find time to play outside, do arts and craft, or spend quality time with friends and family.

Week 42

Nutrition: Smoothies

Fact:

Smoothies are a great way to get in all the fruits and vegetables you need for the day. There are so many fun recipes and varieties you can try! They are packed with nutrients and high in fiber.

Week 43

Physical Activity: Action Based Learning

Fact:

Action based learning can change the way you learn by incorporating movement. There is a connection between your body and brain that shows that when you move more, you learn more!

Challenge:

Talk with your teacher and classmates to find fun ways to try action-based learning.

Week 44**Nutrition: Eat the Rainbow!****Fact:**

Eating the rainbow means eating healthy foods that are colorful! Fruits and vegetables come in so many beautiful colors and are packed with nutrients.

Challenge:

Write a list of fruits and vegetables with each of these colors: Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Next, find out what nutrients are in these colorful fruits and vegetables.

Week 45**Nutrition: Eating with the Seasons****Did you know?**

Fruits and vegetables are harvested and thrive during specific seasons. For example, the best time to eat strawberries and blueberries is during the spring and summer. The best time to eat apples and squash is during the fall! Eating fruits and vegetables in season is also a great way to buy produce grown in your area to support your local farmers.

Week 46**Social and Emotional Wellness: Volunteering****Fact:**

Volunteering means giving your time and effort for acts of community service. Volunteering is a wonderful way to give back to your community, make friends, and become a leader! Connecting with your community can provide you with friendships and more opportunities!

Challenge:

If you have ever volunteered, share your experience with your class!