

Finding My Daily Balance

What would make you take notice of your personal health? For Terris Neuman, it was the deaths of both his mother and father at the age of 51 due to myocardial infarctions—heart attacks! When Terris, the husband of Lawton Chiles Academy’s principal, Sharon Neuman, turned 44 years of age, he realized that unless he changed his lifestyle, he could be following his parents quickly to the grave. Sharon shared his concerns. “I wanted to be supportive of his efforts, and I was looking for a way to balance my life.”

Over the last 15 years, Sharon and Terris have gradually become more active and conscious of their food choices. Sharon admits that their transition to good health wasn’t fun at first. “It was one more thing I had on my ‘to do list’ and that added more stress to my already jam-packed day,” she said. Now, if she doesn’t get to work out on a daily basis, she misses it and feels sluggish. “As a principal, you can have some pretty tough days; however, after a long day, I get to go outside and play! This helps to bring balance to my day.”

The Neuman’s after-work ‘happy hour’ includes a 7-mile bike ride and swimming 10 laps in the pool or walking. “Biking is my favorite way to burn-off stress,” Sharon said. When the weekends roll around, they may change the scenery, but they are still on the move. “We have personal kayaks and stand-up paddle boards that we take to area beaches. It is so relaxing, and we have so much fun together!”

With all of this exercising, one may think that Sharon and Terris may eat what they please, but that is not the case. “We eat a lot of chicken and fish—and we fill up on vegetables and fruit.” Sharon noticed gradual changes in her weight when she gave up cokes and other sugary foods. “I have lost almost 25 pounds since adopting this new lifestyle, but that does not compare to ‘how great’ I feel inside!”

Wanting to share her deeply instilled passion for good health, Sharon has influenced not only her immediate family, but also her Lawton Chiles Academy family. Her son, Nathan, said his parents had a huge impact on his lifestyle changes. “I really have a lot of respect for my parents. Their take on health and wellness has been one of the greatest lessons that they have taught me. They lead by example and I’m very fortunate to have them as parents,” he said.

After serving on the district-wide Student Wellness Policy committee, Sharon learned that she could have a voice in her school’s cafeteria food choices. She banned daily pizza, and opted for healthy salads. Cafeteria Manager, Georgia Hoult, welcomed healthier options. “Our fresh bar features specialties from around the world, including Greek watermelon, French green beans, Italian pasta, German potato and Polynesian fruit salads.” Georgia boasts that all fruits and vegetables are fresh—not canned, and salad dressings are low in fat.

To help employees manage stress and improve their well-being, Sharon offers her school for fitness classes on a regular basis. For more than six years, Pilates classes have been provided once weekly through the Wellness Program. This makes it convenient for her staff to participate in after school activities, and helps build an educational culture that puts an emphasis on continuous improvement and optimal personal health.

What would make YOU take notice of your personal health? Take a moment to evaluate your lifestyle habits. Did you know that your PCSB Wellness Program can provide personal or group nutrition and fitness coaching at no cost? If we each focus on making one small change at a time, together we can create a culture of healthy people. For assistance, contact your Wellness Team at 648-3057.



Spotlight of the month shines on Sharon Neuman

What’s inside

Creating a Healthy Work Environment	2	Dear Editor	3
Support Services & Facilities	2	ABCs of Diabetes	4
Custodial Services	2	School Food Service	4
Sleepy Hill Elementary	3	Cancer Screenings	4

Creating a Healthy Work Environment

Schools play an important role in encouraging positive health behaviors in the lives of their students. Although parents are the primary caregivers, there is truth in the old proverb that “it takes a village to raise a child.” In 1992, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention began funding states to implement Coordinated School Health (CSH), an infrastructure that supports the whole child concept. The CSH Model identifies eight components required to successfully educate a child, which includes (1) Comprehensive School Health Education, (2) Physical Education, (3) School Health Services, (4) Nutrition Services, (5) Counseling, Psychological and Social Services, (6) Healthy School Environment, (7) Employee Health Promotion and, (8) Family and Community Involvement. The State of Florida was awarded funding in the first year of the program and has been funded continuously since that time. The Polk County School Board strives to meet the criteria to fulfill its mission to ensure rigorous, relevant learning experiences that result in high achievement for our students. This month, the PCSB Employee Wellness Program recognizes a few of the many PCSB employees who have made personal changes and have been integral in inspiring others to do the same. We hope you enjoy their stories. Please feel free to share yours with us.



Support Services & Facilities

Fred Murphy, Assistant Superintendent of Support Services & Facilities recognizes the importance of a child’s ride to school. Consequently, his staff of almost 1,000 bus drivers and bus attendants plays a huge part in the lives of Polk County’s 94,000 students. “Students must be delivered on time and in a positive frame of mind so that they can learn. Late buses because of sick employees hamper that goal,” he said. “It takes all of us to ensure a positive learning environment for our students. We have to be there doing our best every day!”



Mr. Murphy believes a healthy workforce reduces operational costs, especially in jobs where a substitute is required. He also believes that productivity is greater when employees feel well and are at work. “We provide in-

centives for perfect attendance to our bus drivers and bus attendants. We also encourage participation in the annual health fair,” he said.

Calling himself a product of the health fairs, Fred mentions how the 2003 health fair changed his life. “Through the services of our health fair, my health issues were identified. I was able to improve my lifestyle with the assistance of my doctor and Wellness staff.” Since then, Fred and his administrative team are instrumental in encouraging all employees to participate in annual screening events. “Health fairs provide valuable opportunities for employees to interact with various health professionals,” he claims. “For many, this may be the only interaction they have with these experts. Early detection does make a difference!”

Custodial Services

Doug Dodgson, Director of Custodial Services, believes promoting a healthy workforce has many benefits. “Employee morale is higher among healthy workers,” he said. “Absences are reduced, and there are fewer burdens placed on co-workers to cover for ill or absent workers.” Doug strongly believes that healthy people generally have more energy.

To accomplish this goal, Custodial Services includes the PCSB Wellness Program in its Annual Safety Training to cover exercise, stretching, back care and healthy nutrition tips. In addition, custodial staff and grounds crews participate in on-going safety trainings to stay on top of proper procedures and practices, like lifting and stooping techniques. “This helps to ensure fewer workplace injuries, less stress and increased efficiency,” Doug claims. He also believes that students, faculty and staff are impacted by a healthy Custodial and Grounds workforce. “Clean, safe and well-maintained classrooms and campuses provide a more conducive learning environment,” he said.



Doug admits takes advantage of the discounts offered to PCSB employees at Lifestyles Fitness Center. “I encourage everyone to get involved with the Wellness Program, and have referred many workers to the PCSB ABCs of Diabetes to help with diabetes. I believe that participating in Wellness activities helps to improve health awareness, increase one’s ability to perform effectively, and ultimately experience greater enjoyment in life.”

Sleepy Hill Elementary

“When faculty and staff are healthy, they are more content and better able to serve students,” says Julie Grice, Principal of Sleepy Hill Elementary in Lakeland. “Wellness helps to reduce absenteeism, which promotes consistency for the children, enhances student/teacher relationships and results in higher student achievement.”

According to Ms. Grice, healthy employees have more positive attitudes towards students and each other. Measures to help reduce stress and make healthier choices are welcomed and encouraged. When her employees are faced with challenges, Ms. Grice advises them to utilize the services of the PCSB Employee Assistance Program through Horizon Health. To target prevention education for all school-based employees, Ms. Grice seeks the assistance of the Wellness Team.

“We have had many Wellness professional development sessions with our employees based on their needs and interests.” Topics have included blood pressure education, stress management, fitness, nutrition and others, providing health literacy and in-service points towards teachers’ certifications. Last year, Sleepy Hill Elementary employees took on the *Walking Works Challenge* provided by the Wellness Program and had fun determining who walked the most. “Wellness provides a constant reminder to employees to model healthy attitudes and habits for their students, who are likely to have ‘pep in their step,’ as a result,” said Grice.

**Cure people’s ills and make them healthy for a day.
Teach them to stay well and keep them healthy for a lifetime.
Chinese Proverb**

Dear Wellness Team:

Thank you for what you do to create a healthy school environment. When the workforce is healthy, everyone feels better about themselves and shows up for work! At Pinewood Elementary, we established a workout group four years ago with the help of the Wellness Program. This group is still alive and well. Since I am the hostess, I try to help everyone stay inspired. We had Wellness staff talk with us about tobacco cessation and resistance training. We were even given resistance bands to keep our muscles strong, and materials to help us recall the exercises.

The Polk Schools Wellness Program has had quite an impact on me. I am a former smoker but ultimately decided to give it up seven years ago. Thanks to the Wellness Program for their continuous encouragement to take care of my health, I was able to use many of their suggestions to help me to become a healthier person. I feel much better now and hardly ever get sick. I have previously had breast cancer and am now cancer-free!

Wellness initiatives have had an impact on our school staff. The flu shots that the Wellness Program offers have been another PLUS for us! Many school employees have developed new health practices and now participate in Walking Works, fitness classes, health fairs and many other events promoted through the Wellness Program.

Many of the staff have lost weight through the creation of a “Mission Slim-Possible” contest. Participants paid \$10 to begin this 11-week contest that ends on 11/11/11. The school nurse weighs each person confidentially every week and a teacher reports the weekly winning teams, based on the percentages of body weight loss. The program guidelines include “no sabotaging” and “celebrating the good news.” There are teams of four, each with a “catchy” name like Celery Stalkers, Sugar Skippers, and Thunder Thighs. “Mission Slim-Possible” provides encouragement, boosts morale, increases health awareness and most of all, it is great fun for the whole staff!

Students are part of the healthy school environment too. Pinewood students have accepted and enjoyed some of the changes in the menus of the district. Polk County Schools Food Services has increased the use of whole grains—pasta, noodles and rolls—in its daily menus. This department cut back on desserts to only once per week and increased local farm fresh fruits and veggies throughout the week.

National School Lunch Week will be celebrated in October; *Let’s Grow Healthy* is the theme. Students will be encouraged to eat more fruits and vegetables that are grown locally. Schools will be featuring various vegetables, and students will have the opportunity to taste cucumbers, mangoes, fresh Florida oranges, green beans, bell peppers, squash and broccoli. Students can sample various raw vegetables with a low-fat ranch dip, which they very much enjoy. When students eat healthier, they feel better and become better learners.

The Wellness Team pulls everyone together to create a healthy culture. I personally appreciate the suggestions and advice that the Wellness Program affords our School Board employees. It has been most beneficial for me and my health.

--Esther Hackenberger, Food Service Manager, Pinewood Elementary, Eagle Lake





ABCs of Diabetes

The *ABCs of Diabetes* is a proactive course through the Wellness Program that provides educations, screenings, and discounts for diabetes supplies and prescriptions. Here are a few of the benefits ABCs of Diabetes participants enjoy:

Benefits:

- Free eye and foot exams
- Free lipid, HbA1c, kidney function, and blood pressure screenings—two times each year
- Free glucose monitor

Reduced Rx Copayments:

- Generic tier copay \$4* retail or mail order
 - Preferred tier copay \$37.50* mail order
 - Non-preferred tier copay \$62.50* mail order
- *90-day supply

**Save \$600
per year!**

Education/Winter Haven:

- Medical Issues in Diabetes 10/06/11
- Nutrition & Exercise 10/13/11
- Advanced Diet Planning 10/20/11
- Hypertension & Heart Disease 10/27/11

Classes will be held in the main building of the Mark Wilcox Center, 611 Post Avenue SW, Winter Haven 33880. All classes start at 4:30 PM, and registration is required.

Diabetes Screening:

The next diabetes screening will be held November 12, 2011 at Phillips, Salomon & Parrish, 4337 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland. Appointments are required.

Please email allison.sullins@polk-fl.net or call Allison Sullins, RD, LD/N at 648-3057 for more information or to schedule a diabetes screening appointment.

School Food Service

Marcia Smith, Director of School Food Service (SFS) believes her staff members—over 800 school nutrition employees—play a very important role in the academic achievement of Polk’s 94,000 students. “A healthy work force is important because our number one priority is feeding our students nutritious meals in a safe environment by competent and caring employees,” Marcia said.

To keep school nutrition employees healthy, Marcia works closely with the Wellness Team. “Every year we have a mini health fair for our SFS employees. The Wellness Program has been instrumental in providing us a venue that has been a model for other school nutrition programs across the nation.” With the help of health care vendors providing valuable information, screenings and motivational speakers, SFS employees learn timely and pertinent health information. “Over 800 school nutrition employees attend and participants’ feedback is always very positive. In addition, we have had several tobacco cessation classes and hope to schedule more in the near future,” she said.

Marcia believes school nutrition employees must set a healthy example for students. “There are probably days when they may be the only ones who actually interact with a student, and it is important to be there every day for the students.”

Marcia is truly a positive role model. “I enjoy walking with my co-workers because some days it is the only opportunity I have to talk with them.” This occurs early in the morning before work or during lunch break. “The Wellness Program has impacted my health and the health of my staff because it has made us more cognizant of what is important for a healthy lifestyle,” she said.

A company that invests in its workforce, invests in its future.

~Anonymous

Cancer Screenings Can SAVE Your Life!

On-site cancer and osteoporosis screenings are provided to you by the Polk County School Board (PCSB) Wellness Program in conjunction with Lakeland Regional Cancer Center (LRCC). This **FREE** benefit is available to all employees and spouses who have PCSB Blue Cross/Blue Shield health insurance. For an appointment, please contact the Cancer Screening Coordinator at each location at least two weeks prior to the screening date. There are no age restrictions for cancer and osteoporosis screenings on the LRCC screening bus.

10/3	DUNDEE RIDGE MID	10/19	DR. N.E.ROBERTS EL	11/14	CRYSTAL LAKE MID
10/4	DUNDEE RIDGE MID	10/21	KATHLEEN SR	11/15	NORTH LAKELAND EL
10/5	SLEEPY HILL MID	10/31	LKLD HIGHLANDS MID	11/16	MULBERRY MID
10/7	STAMBAUGH MID	11/1	LENA VISTA EL	11/17	WENDELL WATSON EL
10/10	LAKELAND SR	11/2	AUBURNDALE CENTRAL	11/18	LAKE GIBSON SR
10/11	LAKELAND SR	11/4	PHILIP O’BRIEN EL	11/28	TENOROC SR
10/12	BARTOW SR	11/3	INWOOD EL	11/29	GAUSE ACAD
10/14	BARTOW SR	11/7	ALTA VISTA EL	11/30	HIGHLANDS GROVE EL
10/17	LAWTON CHILES	11/8	JEWETT MID ACAD		
10/18	BOSWELL EL	11/9	PURCELL EL		

Get On The Bus!