Focus Newsletter
March 16, 2009

Staff Invited to Show Team Spirit on Wellness Walk

By Anya Armes Weber

Show your team spirit this Friday by joining the CHFS March Madness Walk.

The Cabinet Wellness Committee has invited all staff to participate in the walk.

Staff from offices across the state has organized walks for wellness on Friday, March 20.

By wearing the colors or gear promoting your favorite Kentucky college basketball team, you can support your school while taking a walk for your health.

You can vote for your favorite team online, too. Log on to this Intranet site and take a simple five-question survey. Click "Respond to Survey" on the upper left side of the page to begin.

Many offices will be scheduling group walks that you can join, or you can walk on your own this Friday during work hours. Even if you don't take the survey, you can join the walk.

The CHFS March Madness Walk is part of the Cabinet's Journey to Wellness.

Visit the CHFS Wellness Web site to learn more about how your healthy decisions can improve your well-being. Check out the Virgin HealthMiles Web site to learn how you can take the March Madness challenge a step further by making physical activity a daily priority.

E-mail Kris Hayslett or Noel Harilson for more information about the March Madness walk or other Cabinet wellness activities.

Statewide Forums Planned

The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH), in collaboration with local health departments, will host 11 Maternal and Child Health community forums to gather input from state and local government, education, health care, private industry and other interested individuals.

Participants will discuss the economic and societal impact of health, including the oral, physical and mental health of mothers and children. Health officials are seeking input on local initiatives, gaps and ways that local communities can partner with government and the private sector to implement strategies to increase the health status of mothers and children.

People interested in attending a forum may register at https://apps.chfs.ky.gov/GenRegistration/ClassConf.aspx?AGY=6. The statewide events will take place at the following times and locations:

- Louisville: 5:30 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, Hotel Louisville Downtown
- Maysville: 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 26, Mason County Health Department

- Elizabethtown: 1 to 4 p.m., Monday, April 6, Lincoln Trail District Health Department
- Somerset: 1 to 4 p.m., Wednesday, April 8, Lake Cumberland District Health Department
- Lexington: 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., Thursday, April 30, Northeast Christian Church
- Hazard: 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, May 5, Primary Care Centers of Eastern Kentucky
- Burlington: 1 to 4 p.m., Thursday, May 7, Boone County Main Library
- Paducah: 9 a.m. to noon, Monday, May 11, Luther F. Carson Four Rivers Center
- Ashland: 1 to 4 p.m., Thursday, May 14, First Christian Church
- Owensboro: 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, May 19, River Park Center
- Bowling Green: 9 a.m. to noon, Thursday, May 21, First Christian Church

Every five years, state health departments must conduct a statewide needs assessment to include in their Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant Applications. A goal of the assessment is to strengthen partnerships and collaborative efforts at federal, state and local levels. DPH will use the information gathered to determine what health issues are important throughout the state and set priorities for program activities.

For more information or if sign language interpreter services will be needed, contact the Division of Maternal and Child Health at (502) 564-4830.

Living Well: Counting Calories

Do you count calories to maintain healthy eating habits? Counting calories remains popular for Americans because they can relate to the simple tracking of numbers rather than trying to comprehend the sometimes confusing effects foods have on the body. Calories are an important role in maintaining a healthy weight, but food selection also plays a key role in how we look and feel. The month of March has been designated as National Nutrition Month, so this is a great time to learn a new pattern of eating and become healthier.

Calorie counting is a great method for trying to maintain a healthy weight because you can calculate how much is going into your body and how much activity is needed to burn it off. The formula is good, but by following these additional tips, we can skip the use of numbers and math.

Eat smaller portions. This may be a basic concept, but it should be said that if you eat larger portions you will consume more calories. The current portion sizes offered at restaurants have distorted our view of a portion. Try eating from a smaller plate to reduce the amount of food you eat. Research shows people given larger portions of food tend to eat more, resulting in additional calories and an expanding waistline.

Select foods that use more calories. Certain foods require more energy than others to digest and metabolize. Specialists refer to this as the thermic effect of food. The difference is small, but for people who work at desks or who are pressed for time, these choices can save you the equivalent of walking for four minutes. These foods are those high in fiber and protein - are also foods that are considered healthy for you.

Become a picky eater. Americans consume almost one-quarter of their calories from sweets, desserts, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages, with another 5 percent coming from salty snacks

and fruit-flavored drinks. Nutrient-rich foods like fruits and vegetables only account for 10 percent of daily caloric intake. Increasing intake of nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables will not only shed those extra pounds, but also will play a key role in fighting diseases like heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

Whether you like to count calories or think that one of the tips above might help, always remember to make your calories count toward building a healthier lifestyle. Visit some of these sites to learn more about nutrition guidelines.

http://www.mypyramid.gov/
http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/
http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/index.html
http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/ped_3.asp?sitearea=PED
http://www.diabetes.org/home.jsp
http://www.heart.org/

Fiscal War: The Value of Short-term Goals

By Beth Fisher

I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm really looking forward to retirement… in 24 years. Actually, when I think about the distance between myself and the proverbial gold watch, it seems more like a daydream than something that will actually happen one day. The problem is, when something is so far down the road it feels more like a myth than something you can actually prepare for.

Now, I'm not saying that you should ignore long-term planning. If you're reading this and you haven't at least started putting something away for retirement either through a company pension, employer 401K or private investment option, you should do that. Besides, if you're like me and you're in the relatively early stages of your career, these are things you can do and not have to think about that often. But what about other things like paying for child care, school tuition, unforeseen medical costs, that trip around the world? It can all seem overwhelming, but you might find savings a lot more manageable if you break it into chunks.

Start by setting modest goals like putting a small amount of money into savings from each paycheck for six months. Once you've accomplished this, move on to something more ambitious, such as saving up a certain sum of money by a deadline of your choosing. You can expand from there, setting goals to learn the ins and outs of financial planning and saving along the way. By the time your co-workers are planning your bon voyage, your net worth might be more than you'd ever imagined – or planned – for it to be.

Besides, isn't it nice to think that once we reach the end of our careers we'll still have the ability to surprise ourselves? Maybe that should be the ultimate goal.

Focus Money Saving Tip of the Week: Pay bills in full each month to avoid paying interest on credit cards. Also, if you've made a credit card purchase under an interest-free agreement set to

last a certain period of time, make sure you know the deadline. It's not hard to get confused or forget if something is interest free for six months, 12 or longer. Make sure you know the terms of the agreement before swiping your card!

Focus Health News: Diabetes Rates on the Rise

From the National Institutes of Health

More than one in 10 adults older than 20 has diabetes. But about 40 percent of them don't know they have the disease, according to a large national survey. In addition, nearly one in three adults has pre-diabetes.

Diabetes is the most common cause of blindness, kidney failure and amputations in adults. It's also a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. People with diabetes have unusually high levels of a sugar called glucose in the blood. When blood glucose gets too high, it can damage your tissues and organs.

Researchers have collected data on diabetes for several decades as part of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. For this survey, people were given a two-hour oral glucose tolerance test during two time periods—from 1988 to 1994 and again from 2005 to 2006. This test is more sensitive in detecting diabetes and pre-diabetes than a more common and less expensive test called fasting plasma glucose.

By comparing data from the two time periods, scientists found that the percentage of people with diabetes rose from about 5 percent in 1988-1994 to nearly 8 percent a decade later. By 2006 more than 40 percent of adults had either diabetes or pre-diabetes.

"It's important to know if you have diabetes or pre-diabetes, because there's so much you can do to preserve your health," said Joanne Gallivan, director of the National Institute of Health's National Diabetes Education Program. "Talk to your health care professional about your risk."

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Make your meetings work for you by following these tips from the Web site effectivemeetings.com.

- Send a reminder message 30 minutes before the meeting. State that it will begin and end on time.
- If your meeting does start late, end it on time anyway. Your participants' schedules don't revolve around your meeting.
- Have an agenda. If you don't have handouts, jot the agenda items on a white board or review them aloud.
- Avoid issues that aren't relevant to the whole group. This is a time waster. Table these issues until you can talk directly to the right people.

- If you need to follow up, plan the next meeting before you adjourn. At least let attendees check their schedules to settle on an acceptable time. Or set up a recurring meeting schedule through your office's electronic calendar program.