

Wellness Matters

All benefitted and benefit-eligible municipal employees, retirees, and benefit-eligible family members in East Longmeadow, Hampden, HWRSD, Longmeadow, LPVEC and Wilbraham may participate in any of the programs and classes listed. Other employees, family members and friends are also invited to participate, however will not be eligible for incentives.

Coordinator's Corner

Let's recap this past school year—we had 10 yoga classes and over 20 Pilates classes! Some were even in-person!! We offered 7 *Wellness Concepts* live webinars and were invited to 8 HNE live webinars with experts in numerous fields. You completed challenges to improve your gut and brain health, increase your activity and decrease your stress. Even though the pandemic took some things away, we were able to change things up and add great programming, including our *Learn to Live* mental health offering, which has the best participation from a Trust that *L2L* has seen in their book of business!!!! Yay YOU for taking care of your mental health.

It is with a heavy heart that I announce my resignation at the end of this month. I have thoroughly enjoyed being the guide on your wellness journey for the past 9 years. It is now time for me to devote my energy to other endeavors. I wish all of you progress in your efforts to continue to better your health on all fronts! I, and all of the SVRHT Board, ask for your patience as the transition unfolds to welcome a new coordinator.

All my best to you~
~Lyn

For more information on anything in this newsletter, please contact me at lyn@scantichealth.org or lyn.fioravanti@eastlongmeadowma.gov.
You are invited to “like” us on FB for info on various health topics: <https://www.facebook.com/scanticvalleywellness/>

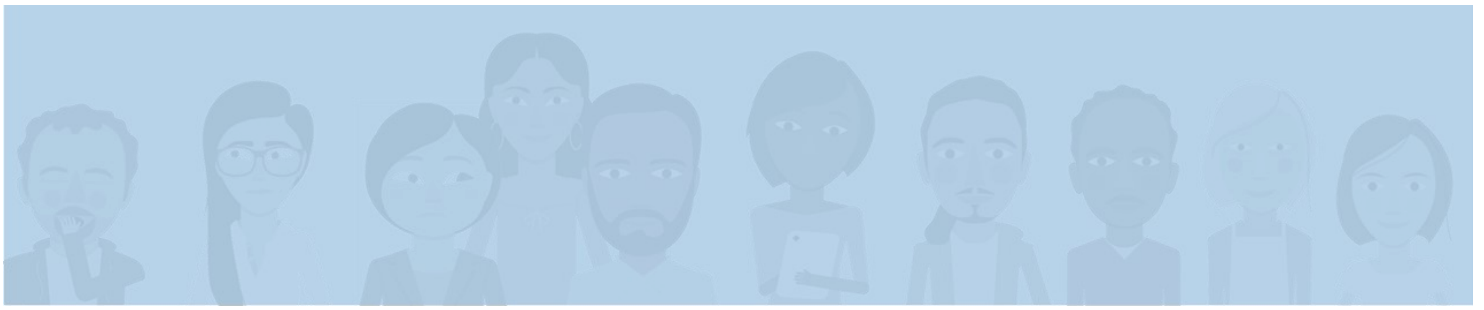
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This year's *Wellness Works!* program consisted mostly of virtual offerings due to, well, you know. Even so, 78 HNE members, 41 BCBS members, 4 Tufts members and 21 non-members completed at least one activity towards earning points/raffle ticket. Thank you for your continued participation. Besides the gift cards and raffles, it really is about making subtle changes in your lifestyle that you can adopt long-term to improve your health and well-being. Kudos to all of you who have participated for the past 8 years!!!





Summer 2022 Webinar Series

Boost your emotional health this summer by joining us for live 30-minute webinars lead by our clinical team.

June

Building a Resilient Mindset: Learn about the mind-body connection, how to improve your emotional resilience, and how to incorporate present awareness and mindfulness into your everyday life.

Wednesday, June 15th: 1-1:30pm CST/2-2:30pm EST

Resisting the Pressure to be Perfect: We'll explain perfectionism, what the pressure does to us, ways to think differently about high standards, and how to face fears of imperfection.

Friday, June 24th: 11-11:30am CST/12-12:30pm EST

Habits: Building the Good, Breaking the Bad: We'll share tips on how to take your next big step toward a better life, whether that's creating new habits or working on cutting out an unhealthy habit.

Tues, June 28th: 9-9:30am CST/10-10:30am EST

July

Getting Unstuck: The Science of Moving Forward: Do you often feel stuck or powerless in times of uncertainty? We'll help you assess your own challenges and share powerful strategies to help you thrive despite the unknown and learn practical ways to restore your wellbeing.

Tuesday, July 19th: 10-10:30am CST/11-11:30am EST

Retrain Your Brain: The Case for Gratitude: Research shows that strengthening your gratitude muscle can lower stress and improve mood...and building this muscle actually feels good! We will share ways you can strengthen your gratitude muscle and retrain your brain with practical ideas for every day.

Thursday, July 28th: 3:30-4pm CST/4:30-5pm EST

August

Staying Refreshed and Preventing Burnout: Do you ever feel like no matter how hard you try, you're still not thriving? If so, you're not alone (*recent studies show 40% of us are feeling burnt out*) and there is hope. Join us as we share the powerful impact of discovering and living by your values. You'll receive practical insights about how to get past barriers that leave many of us feeling unfulfilled and drained

Friday, August 5th: 9-9:30am CST/10-10:30am EST

Getting Unstuck: The Science of Moving Forward: Do you often feel stuck or powerless in times of uncertainty? We'll help you assess your own challenges and share powerful strategies to help you thrive despite the unknown and learn practical ways to restore your wellbeing.

Tuesday, August 9th: 12-12:30pm CST/1-1:30pm EST

Capturing Your Time Thieves: Tools for Time Management: Struggling to get it all done each day and feeling overwhelmed? We'll explain how we get off track, alternative approaches for success and practical tools for everyday life.

Thursday, August 18th: 3-3:30pm CST/4-4:30pm EST

Essential Words for the Future: Resiliency and Adaptability

In a review of hundreds of academic and organizational research articles related to the post-pandemic, resiliency and adaptability were the most frequently mentioned words associated with the future of work.

Resiliency refers to the ability to adjust to inherent life challenges, resulting in a healthy, productive, and happy self (Dolan & Brykman, 2022). It is often described as the opposite of the pole of stress. During the pandemic, resiliency was tested with unexpected challenges that required adaptation in when, where, and how work was done, as well as how to engage employees, customers, and suppliers.

Adaptability is the ability to learn flexibility and efficiently apply that knowledge across situations. Some think the term adaptability is a skill, but it's a meta-skill. It refers to the ability to learn and consciously apply knowledge as needed. Decades of research show that adaptability is the critical success factor during transformational and systemic change periods. Being adaptable allows us to learn faster and orients us towards opportunities ahead, not just the challenges. Unfortunately, adaptability isn't a natural skill but can be nurtured by individuals and organizations.

While resiliency and adaptability are related, they are different in several ways. Resilience describes how well we respond to a challenge. Conversely, adaptability moves us from enduring the challenge to thriving beyond it. Thriving requires evolving and changing in a positive and often new direction. It is the opposite of defaulting to what has worked in the past. Studies have shown that adaptability is linked to (Brassey et al., 2020):

- >Positive coping skills
- >A growth mindset
- >Higher levels of performance
- >Creativity
- >Psychological and physical well-being

Some of the ways we can adapt and grow are to focus on these five areas of personal development:

Consider well-being as a foundation. Research shows that both leaders and employees have experienced anxiety and burnout symptoms at unprecedented rates (Moss, 2021). Based on recent APA studies, we can expect that the incidence of burnout symptoms will continue to rise. By investing in our well-being, we will be better prepared for whatever comes our way.

Take time to explore your purpose. In stressful and challenging times, we often fall into attending to urgent tasks instead of what is essential. The link between well-being and purpose is vital. Decades of research show that when we believe we are living in alignment with our purpose at work, we report much higher levels of well-being than those who say they are not.

Experience the world with a beginner's mind. In stressful times, the tendency is to fall into default patterns of reacting and acting. The default patterns may protect us in the moment, but ultimately they are likely to hinder our ability to adapt and respond in ways that a new environment requires. Also, these default patterns are mindsets and beliefs that often unconsciously influence how we perceive the world and lead us to be less flexible and adaptable.

Develop strong interpersonal connections. During periods of uncertainty and stress, research shows that deep and diverse connections are fundamental elements feeding our well-being and learning (Mathieu et al., 2019). Some of the simple things we can do are:

- >Place our full attention on the person in front of us.
- >Show up as your authentic self and be willing to share your fears, concerns, and even your mistakes.
- >Show empathy, but don't stop there. Take the time to understand the other person's perspective so you can respond to others in a more nuanced and specific way.

Embrace learning and reframe "failures." In a constant, stressful environment, we cannot be expected to respond and act in ways that have successful outcomes in every situation. While failure is emotionally challenging, we can learn to reframe failure and missteps as a learning opportunity. Dissecting problems and decisions with a learning mindset changes our focus and will help create an environment that allows everyone involved to feel more comfortable and honest. This type of environment builds an open, curious, and growth mindset (Zhou & Lin, 2016)

By viewing adaptability as a skill, we can continue to grow in this challenging environment, not simply to survive but to thrive.

Taken from <https://www.getlevelhead.com/blog/workplacechanges3>, retrieved 5/25/22.

After a long winter, it's tempting to run outside and dive into summer fun. But the summer months bring plenty of health and safety hazards. From heatstroke and dehydration to sports injuries, we'll cover what you need to know to have a safe and fun season. You'll receive a range of safety tips, followed by a look at the wellness benefits of vacation, then an assortment of grilling safety tips and recipes, and finally an overview of safe summer exercises.

Enjoying time off is extremely beneficial to health and well-being. Stepping away from work and daily life gives us a chance to relax, decompress, and recharge. Whether you're traveling solo or with loved ones, exploring a new place broadens your perspective and creates invaluable memories. Downtime is good for many facets of wellness, including stress, sleep, creativity, emotional health, and productivity.

Here are some ideas for vacations centered on wellness:

- **Animal therapy vacation.** Spending time with animals is good for the brain (and, some would say, the soul). Many vacation destinations offer a chance to interact with animals under compassionate care. Maybe you'd like to work with animals on an organic farm, or take horseback riding lessons?
- **Beach vacation.** It's not just a cliché: Sea air is good for you. Whether it's the ocean breeze, the calming sound, or the mere proximity to the water, vacationing by the beach can boost your physical and mental health.
- **Spa vacation.** When it comes to wellness, the spa needs no introduction. What if, instead of a once-in-a-while one-hour indulgence, you built your entire vacation around the spa? Many resorts are designed for just that.
- **Natural springs vacation.** Combining natural beauty with many of the creature comforts of the spa, natural hot springs are a powerful method of rest and relaxation. Many prominent natural springs have resorts and facilities build around them to facilitate an all-inclusive vacation.
- **Yoga retreat.** Ever wish your yoga classes were a little longer, or you could practice more frequently? Consider a yoga retreat. Under the guidance of a seasoned practitioner, spend days refining your practice and challenging yourself to reach new heights, all while staying centered in your body.
- **Mountain vacation.** It's hard to beat the combination of serenity and awesome power evoked by the mountains. The range of activities is as varied as the mountains themselves. You can hike, climb, ski, camp, rappel, forage, meditate, bird-watch...the peak's the limit!

Digital detox vacation. Few things offer such immediate and noticeable wellness benefits as a break from screens, and vacation is the perfect time to do it. Give yourself a week of no notifications, no mindless scrolling, and no social media absorption.

Taken from *Wellable* Weekly Wellness Newsletter.

Upcoming Class Opportunities

East Longmeadow Recreation Department (benefit-eligible employees get 40% off)

Summer Adult Beginner Tennis Lessons Session 1: Tuesdays, 6/21 - 7/19, 6:30 - 8pm Session 2: Tuesdays, 7/26 - 8/23, 6:30 - 8:00 PM, \$110 residents. \$125 non-residents. East Longmeadow High School.

Adult Learn & Play Pickleball Fridays, 6/24 - 7/29, 6:00 - 7:45 PM, \$110 residents; \$125 non-residents. East Longmeadow High School.

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**Pilates Classes: Mixed Level Mat Pilates Classes** start **Tuesday, June 28** for 5 weeks. There are openings in the **4:30 PM in-studio class** and in the **5:30 PM in-studio class/Zoom class**. Please contact Arice to register & if you have questions [arice@coreandmore.net](mailto:arice@coreandmore.net). She is now accepting cash and checks; Venmo payments are limited. Core and More Pilates Studio, 2141 Boston Road, Wilbraham. \$55 for 5 weeks of any session\* All mat class participants will have access to a video library for at home practice in addition to weekly sessions. You can mix & match in-person and Zoom classes.

\*Those who attend all classes in a session (1 missed class is acceptable) will receive a \$10 Amazon gift card!

**Big Y Living Well Eating Smart: Virtual Events:** <https://www.bigy.com/LivingWell/GetSocial> As always, their 3 dietitians are available for FREE nutrition coaching sessions and you can register there as well.