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BROWARD
County Public Schools

Wellness Newsletter

July 2019

Live. Life. Well.

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Community Volunteerism

Volunteerism: Health Benefits and Common Activities

Many people volunteer throughout the year, usually by donating money or canned foods, preparing or serving food, or through a work activity like cleaning a park on Earth Day. If you hope to make volunteerism a bigger priority in your life, here are a few things to keep in mind:

Volunteer in Your Community

Use a suggestion from your newsletters or come up with your own great idea and volunteer in your community. If you don't want to volunteer on your own, invite family or friends along and have fun while you make the world a better place.



Volunteerism Offers Big Health Benefits

Helping others really is the gift that keeps on giving.

Studies have shown people who volunteer have a longer lifespan, improved heart health, lower cholesterol, and reduced anxiety and depression as compared to people that do not volunteer. Get active in your community to enhance your overall wellbeing.

Go Where You're Needed

The most common volunteer activities are:

1. Fundraising or selling items to raise money;
2. Tutoring or teaching; and
3. Collecting, preparing or distribution food.

If you are looking to get involved and these areas are already well-served in your community, consider other places you could focus your time instead. Mental health facilities, hospitals, recovery shelters and retirement homes are all great places for qualified volunteers to help out.

Help Is Not Just for the Holidays

72% of volunteers work with only one organization each year. What does this mean?

- To look at the positive, it means there are many people who do long, sustained work with a volunteer organization each year.
- On the other hand, it also reflects the one-and-done volunteers out there, those who donate time or resources once each year (likely around the holidays). If that sounds familiar, anything helps. However, try to consider organizations you could join or different ways to work volunteer time into your weekly or monthly routine.

Volunteering in Your Community

VOLUNTEER

6 Ways to Support Your Community

Volunteer work and supporting your local community go hand-in-hand. Here are six ways you can showcase your civic spirit:

1

Donate Resources:

Donate clothes and household goods, books, food or anything else that will help those in need.

2

Donate Your Time:

Walk dogs at an animal shelter, read stories or spend time at a retirement home. Find alternative ways to help others that works within your schedule.

3

Volunteer at a Food Pantry:

Visit www.foodpantries.org to find a pantry near you.

4

Head to the YMCA:

Here you can volunteer to help children or adults, teach a course or coach a sports team. Check your local YMCA's website to get started.

5

Care for the Homeless:

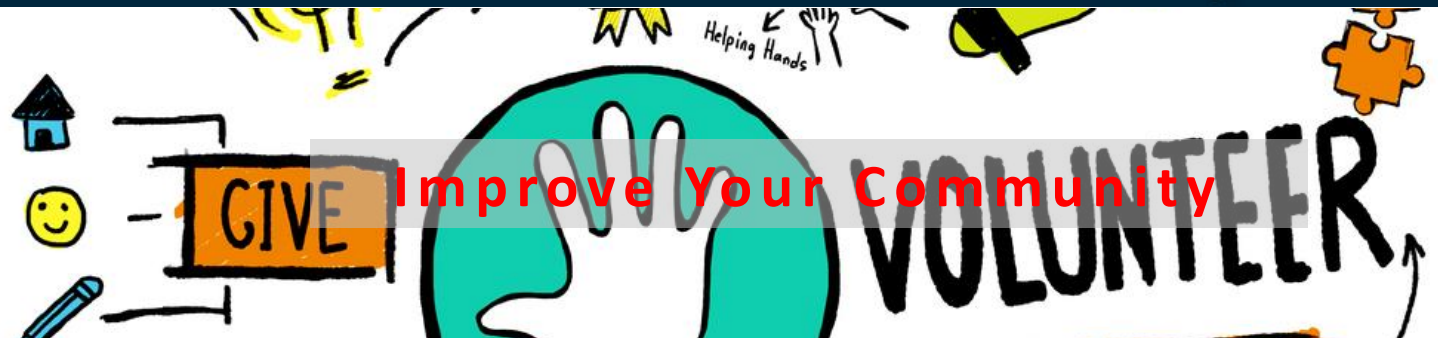
Clothes (particularly winter gear and socks), linens and food are always needed.

6

Support Local Events:

Keep an eye out for flyers, news reports or advertisements for community events, especially those that raise funds for charities. This is an opportunity to support local artists with your patronage, donate time as an usher, or hang posters to help spread the word.





Other Ways to Volunteer

Disaster Relief

Did you know that 93% of American Red Cross disaster workers are volunteers? If you have a flexible schedule and the skill set to assist with emergency situations, consider assisting with disaster relief. Visit www.redcross.org/volunteer/become-a-volunteer.html to learn more.



Online Volunteering

For people who work off hours, travel often or simply don't have the time to make it to a volunteer site on a regular basis, online volunteering might be the right option. Visit www.onlinevolunteering.org, a service of the United Nations Volunteers program, to review opportunities tailored to a number of different skill sets: Translation, teaching and training, art and design, leadership and strategy, and more.



Organize Your Own Event

Starting your own initiative sounds daunting, but it doesn't need to be an enormous project. You could approach the YMCA or a community center about teaching a class you think would be useful, offer to host a children's event at your local library or raise awareness about (and drive donations toward) a cause important to you.



Additional Resources

Visit www.foodpantries.org or www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank to find food banks near you. Visit www.greatnonprofits.org or www.volunteermatch.org to locate charities near you.



July Recipe

Double Almond Bites

Chewy, chocolatey, nutty goodness.

INGREDIENTS

- 16 whole natural almonds
- ½ cup unsalted almond butter
- 1/3 cup powdered sugar
- 1/3 cup high-fiber cereal, such as Fiber One Shreds, finely crushed in a baggie
- ¼ cup butterscotch chips, chopped
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat a medium-sized skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Add almonds and cook four minutes or until they begin to lightly brown. Stir frequently.
3. Remove almonds from heat and set aside on a paper towel.
4. Combine the almond butter, sugar, cereal, chips, cinnamon and vanilla in a bowl and stir until blended.
5. Shape into 16 balls about 1-inch in diameter (approx. 1 Tbsp each).
6. Place on a dinner plate dust, the balls with cocoa powder using a fine mesh sieve, then gently roll the balls to coat the remaining sides.
7. Cover and refrigerate at least two hours for peak flavor and texture. May be stored in an airtight container for up to two days.

Total Time (Cook & Prep):

2hrs 30 minutes

Servings: 8



NUTRITION INFO

(per serving)

168 calories

12g fat

0 mg cholesterol

6 mg sodium

15 g carbohydrates

3 g fiber

4 g protein



Some Volunteering Ideas for the Summer

- Invite someone new to an event you will be attending soon—a book club
- When you attend an event, look around for someone who is sitting by themselves and sit next to them and introduce yourself to them
- Commit to do one act of kindness/service
- Clean the yard of an elderly neighbor
- Sew teddy bears to donate to a local children's hospital
- Read books aloud to younger children at the local library
- Collect personal items and baby necessities for a local women's shelter
- Volunteer at a local food bank to help put together food baskets
- Donate time to babysit for a couple that needs a date night
- Help a younger sibling clean their room

Sneaking More Vegetables into Meals

We all know we need to be eating more veggies. Some of us love them and eat them at every meal, but there are those of us who can't stomach the thought of chomping on something green that looks like a tree.

If you're the primary cook in your family, and pasta sauce and French fries are the only veggies going down at your home, you may want to get a bit sneakier. We've come up with some pretty cool ways to help you add vegetables into meals without anyone knowing. You get to be creative and it doesn't take much work. Saving time and eating healthy is a winning combination

Get Shredded:

Grab a box grater or the grating attachment on your food processor to shred zucchini, beets, carrots or parsnips to add to all sorts of recipes. You can also add a vegetable serving to your favorite whole grain muffins and quick breads by mixing shredded zucchini into your batter before baking. You can sauté shredded carrots, summer squash or butternut squash for about five minutes before adding them to pasta sauce for a quick, veggie-filled meal. Even your pickiest of eaters may not notice.

Get Mushy:

Replace half the ground meat in recipes like burgers, meatloaf and meatballs with cooked chopped mushrooms. Finely chop your choice of mushrooms using a knife or a food processor, then sauté in a little olive oil until soft, about three minutes or so. Once the mushrooms are cool, gently mix them with your lean ground chicken, turkey or beef. Cook thoroughly and follow the recipe as is. Voila! Another meal full of vegetables for the family.

Get Cheesy:

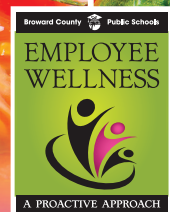
Cooked and pureed orange vegetables like butternut squash, sweet potatoes and carrots can be blended, unnoticed into cheesy dishes we all love like macaroni and cheese, lasagna, or baked enchiladas. You end up using less cheese, which results in cutting some of the saturated fat and sodium. You can also add the sweeter-tasting veggies to a blender with some low-sodium broth and puree them into a smooth soup that most children (and adults) will love.

Be Smooth:

Grab that blender and put it to work. When you're making your favorite fruit smoothie, add in a frozen banana and some spinach, carrots, squash or just about any vegetable (cooked is easier to blend). The frozen banana makes for a sweet, thick, and creamy smoothie and it adds a strong banana flavor that helps hide the flavor of the veggies. Want a more colorful smoothie? Try adding beets, avocado or sweet potato to change the tint. You'll be surprised at how bright – and healthy -- your breakfast will be.



Source: American Heart Association
<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/add-color/sneaking-more-vegetables-into-meals>





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