



WELLBEING MATTERS

Shawnee Mission School District Staff Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

October 2019

Hiking for Mental Health

How are you welcoming the fall season? With autumn in full swing, there's no better time to get outside and immerse yourself in the cool weather, warm colors and fresh air. In addition to providing a peaceful escape from city life, hiking offers a variety of health benefits such as boosting cardiovascular fitness, strengthening the core and improving balance.



Hiking has also been proven to improve your mental health in the following ways:

- Clears your mind. Hiking in a countryside environment offers increased mental benefits over walking through built-up areas.
- Boosts your brain. Research shows that people who spend more time in nature are more creative when it comes to problem solving tasks.
- Improves your outlook. Hiking in nature reduces the likelihood that one will over-think negative emotions and experiences.

Before you bundle up for winter, carve out time to take advantage of our Kansas City parks and their abundance of lush hiking trails.

[Click on this link for a blog post from BlueKC with location and description of some of the Kansas City area's best hiking trails.](#)

Headspace App: Free for Educators

Headspace is a mindfulness app that can help you learn to meditate and live mindfully. It has hundreds of themed exercises and sessions on everything from stress and sleep to focus and anxiety. There are bite-sized guided meditations for busy schedules and SOS exercises in case of sudden meltdowns. Headspace also provides guidance and support to educators to foster mindfulness in their classrooms.

Headspace is offering free access to all K-12 teachers, school administrators and support staff. Go to the link for more information. <https://www.headspace.com/educators>



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Additional Newsletters

[Wellbeing Insights](#)

[Work Well Live Well](#)



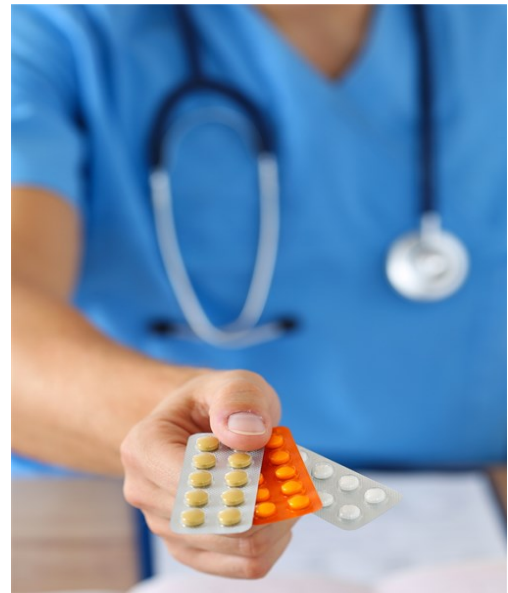
Find us at "SMSD Health and Wellbeing Program"



DEADLINE REMINDER

October 31, 2019 is the deadline to complete the activities to be eligible for the wellbeing incentive on your 2020 medical plan.

Need more info? [Click here.](#)



Be Mindful about Medications

Whether taken long term for chronic conditions or temporarily to alleviate symptoms, managing the medications you take is vital. It's important to make sure you understand the reasons, benefits, and side effects of any medicine you consume. The steps below can help ensure you understand the medications you are currently taking and determine whether it's time to evaluate them with your medical provider.

Understanding Your Current Medications

Make a list of all the medications you currently take, regardless of how you obtained them. Herbal and home remedies, diet supplements, and vitamins can all have strong effects on the body and should be included. Next, record the reason why you need to take the medication beside each one on your list. Are there any gaps in your knowledge? If so, note them.

Now, take your list and write down any questions or concerns you might have about each medication. Once finished with your list, put a copy in your purse or wallet to take with you the next time you meet with your medical provider.

Issues Taking Your Medication as Directed?

If taking your medication as directed is difficult for you, try thinking about what factors may be causing this challenge. Are you unsure why your medication is important? Do you struggle to remember to take your medication at the same time every day? Are you having a hard time paying for them or dealing with side effects? Your provider can work with you to find solutions to the problems you're facing.

Do You Feel Like Your Medication Isn't Working?

If you feel like a medication you're taking is not effective, reach out to your doctor to talk about alternative options. Note that some medications do take some time before full effects are noticeable. Likewise, if you're experiencing unwanted or unpleasant side effects, do not stop taking your medication before discussing the issue with your provider.

Medications Too Expensive?

Medications only work if you take them the way they were prescribed to you. If you find your medications are too expensive, don't try to skip doses to save money, as this can impact effectiveness. Talk to your provider to see if there are lower-cost options you can explore.

Have a question about your medication? Log on to the Marathon eHealth Portal (my.marathon-health.com) to contact a Marathon Health clinician via secure messaging. In person, on the phone, or online – we are here to help!

PriorityOne Health Center

8200 W 71st St., Suite 135, Shawnee Mission, KS 66204
913-549-9970

Mon/Wed/Fri: 7am-4pm

Tues/Thur: 9am-6pm

bit.ly/PriorityOneHC

Appointments

To schedule an appointment, call
PriorityOne Health Center at
913-549-9970 or book online at
my.marathon-health.com



Any type of personal or major crisis is disruptive and stressful by nature. Abnormal situations tend to throw us off emotionally. You may feel shock, apathy, fear, helplessness, guilt, anger, disappointment or a combination of feelings.

When life throws you a curveball, allow yourself to talk about how you feel, be angry or grieve however you need to. Here are some other do's and don'ts for coping with the unexpected:

DO	DON'T
<p>Make time to be with people who support you or have been through the same thing</p> <p>Spend time alone when you need it</p> <p>Sleep, rest and do routine things when possible</p>	<p>Bottle up your feelings</p> <p>Avoid thinking about what happened</p> <p>Hide your distress</p>

It's ok to need a little encouragement and support to express how you're feeling. Through your free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit, you can schedule **confidential counseling sessions**. They are no cost to you and can be scheduled with a therapist that fits your needs. Plus you can connect in-person, via phone or text, audio and video messaging. You can even include your family members if needed! If you've been thinking about talking to someone, call the EAP Support line or visit the EAP site to get scheduled.

Don't forget there are other tools EAP offers to help you cope with the unexpected:

- Family resources
- Legal and financial consultations
- Child/elder care locators
- Health assessments
- Personal/professional development tools

www.ndbh.com

Company code: SMSD



800-624-5544

Want to learn more about helping others in crisis? Sign up to attend this month's free webinars on [Talking to Children About Scary Events](#) and [Managing Crisis in the Workplace](#) by clicking the link or visiting our homepage. [Register for webinars by clicking here.](#)

Be Well B-I-N-G-O

From your SMSD Fitness Center!



Start date: Monday, October 21st (through November 25th)

How do I play?:

Each Monday, there will be a new Bingo card. You can pick one up at the Fitness Center, or find it on the [Staff Wellbeing](#) page of the district website. Complete and cross off as many healthy activities/behaviors as you can to make 2 or more “Bingos” (horizontal, vertical, diagonal). Only cards with 2+ bingos will be accepted.

Turning in your card:

The deadline for each week’s card will be the following Tuesday. For example, the first week’s card is for Oct. 21st- 27th, and it is due Tuesday, Oct. 29th. You can submit your card by email, or in-person at the Fitness Center.

Who can play?

Any and all district employees, their spouses, and dependents!

How do I win a prize?

Each Tuesday, we will draw one Bingo card from the pot of those turned in by that week’s deadline. Prizes will vary weekly, and can either be picked up at the Fitness Center, or delivered to your building.

Questions? Email fitnesscenter@smsd.org or call 913-993-6493

Want to join the fitness center? Visit our [website](#) to find out what **easy** steps you have to take to become a member! We have **cardio and strength machines, group fitness classes, and educated staff** to help you with your wellness goals.



SHAWNEE MISSION
SCHOOL DISTRICT
FITNESS CENTER

Delta Dental Mobile App

IT'S EASY TO USE YOUR DENTAL BENEFITS

The Delta Dental mobile app makes using your plan simple. Here's how:

USE THE APP TO:

Find a dentist - when logged in to the app, the dentist search will automatically search for dentists in your network.

Estimate your out-of-pocket costs before your appointment* - know before you go with the Dental Care Cost Estimator. This feature allows you to estimate costs based on your dental plan, your dentist, and specific procedures.

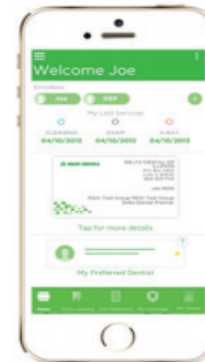
Schedule a dentist appointment** - easily schedule your next dentist appointment through the app.

Check your Annual Maximum & Eligibility - see your remaining annual maximum for the year, or double check when you're eligible for your next covered exam.

Use your mobile ID card at your next appointment - never forget your card or fumble through your wallet again.

Check your claims after your dentist appointments - after your appointment, you'll be able to see how your benefits paid and what, if any, you may owe.

Use the toothbrush timer to keep up on your oral health routine until your next appointment - this fun 2 minute brush-a-long tells you where to brush and how much time to spend in each part of your mouth.



* The Dental Care Cost Estimator provides an estimate and does not guarantee the exact fees for dental procedures, what your dental benefits plan will cover or your out-of-pocket costs. Estimates should not be construed as financial or medical advice. For more detailed information on your actual dental care costs, please consult your dentist and call Delta Dental of Kansas at 800.234.3375.

** Availability may vary by geographic area and individual dentist participation. Appointment scheduling is powered by our partners at Brighter™.



Questions? 800.234.3375

Delta Dental of Kansas | DeltaDentalKS.com

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SMSD BENEFITS RESOURCE LIST

Blue Cross Blue Shield of KC	Medical	www.bluekc.com	(816) 395-2270
UMB Bank	Health Savings Account	https://hsa.umb.com/	(866) 520-4472
Delta Dental of Kansas	Dental	www.deltadentalks.com	(800) 234-3375
Vision Service Plan (VSP)	Vision	www.vsp.com	(800) 877-7195
Flex Made Easy	Flexible Reimbursement	www.flexmadeeasy.com	(855) 615-3679
Sun-Life Financial	Short Term Disability	www.slserviceresources.com	(800) 451-4531
Standard Life Insurance Co.	Voluntary Life Insurance	www.standard.com	(800) 378-4668
Benefits Direct	Supplemental Cancer Plan	www.benefits-direct.com	(877) 523-0176
New Directions	EAP	www.ndbh.com	(800) 624-5544
PriorityOne Health Center		www.my.marathon-health.com	(913) 549-9970

The SMSD Benefits Office is open Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. to serve the employees of SMSD. If you have questions or concerns about your employee benefits, please call 913-993-6454.

If you would like more details on any information in this newsletter, please contact: Tammie McCoy, Wellbeing Coordinator, 913-993-6494, tammiemccoy@smsd.org