

BEE WELL

Thomas County Wellness Newsletter

November 2024

Vol. 53



IN THIS ISSUE

Cafeteria Conversations

Be Well SHBP

Live Better Superfood: Sweet Potato

Employee Assistance Program
Resources

"It is very important that you are able to be a good friend, the best teammate, the best son or daughter and be the kindest person in the room ... Be a force for good so that you can affect other people's lives."

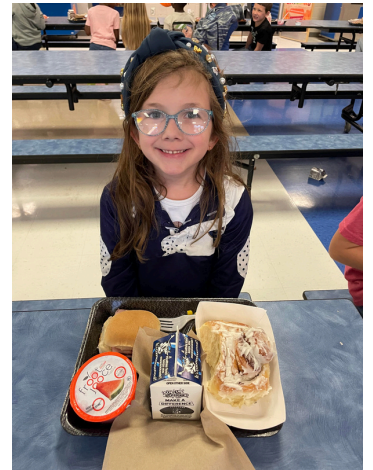
- Jonathan Pascual

*terminal cancer patient who just competed in the Ironman
World Championship*

CAFETERIA CONVERSATIONS

National School Lunch Week 2024

We celebrated National School Lunch Week October 15th-18th. National School Lunch Week was created in 1962 by President John F. Kennedy to promote the importance of a healthy school lunch. Hungry students have a harder time succeeding in school. Did you know that here at Thomas County Schools, our school nutrition department serves over 4500 lunches to students every day? School Nutrition is here to help provide the nutrients students need to succeed inside and outside of the classroom. Below are pictures of students in Thomas County enjoying lunch during National School Lunch Week.



Cafeteria Award of Excellence

For the 2nd year in a row, Thomas County Central High School has been awarded a Cafeteria Award of Excellence from the Georgia Department of Education School Nutrition Division. This award recognizes the work of local school nutrition professionals for their exceptional attention to serving quality school meals and providing excellent customer service while maintaining program integrity. Award requirements include meeting menu standards, service of Georgia Grown products, student meal participation, school nutrition promotion, and health inspection scores. Congratulations to the school nutrition staff at TCCHS!



BE WELL SHBP

November Wellness Challenge

Be Well SHBP members,
November's focus is on Gratitude and Thanks. As the holiday season approaches, it's a wonderful time to focus on health and wellness amidst all the festivities. Taking moments to recharge, prioritize nourishing meals, and engage in joyful activities can help keep energy and spirits high. Remember to listen to your body, find balance, and make space for self-care, so you can fully enjoy this special time of year with friends and loved ones. Making gratitude a daily habit can lead to significant health benefits, including increased energy, stronger immunity, and improved stress management. Studies show that those who practice gratitude regularly feel more optimistic, which boosts their overall well-being. Simple ways to cultivate gratitude include keeping a daily journal, reframing challenges positively, and expressing thanks to others, all of which can enhance happiness and relationships.

Check out [Unwinding by Sharecare](#) for more mood-boosting resources including meditations and habit change courses!

This month, join the [Finding Gratitude/Giving Thanks Challenge](#) and reflect on at least one thing—big or small— you are grateful for each day. Earn 40 points for this month's challenge:

- [Log in](#) to your Sharecare account or register at <https://bewellshbp.com/>.
- Find "Challenges" under the Achieve icon
- Click "[Join Challenge](#)"

Track 21 days of gratitude in November to complete the [Finding Gratitude/Giving Thanks Challenge](#)!

November SHBP Wellness Challenge Description:

"A daily gratitude practice can help you become a happier, healthier person. Your Challenge: Reflect on at least one thing—big or small— you are grateful for each day. You can write it down in a journal, say it out loud, or sit in quiet reflection. Then, keep it up for at least 21 day to earn 40 points."

Practice
GRATITUDE

thankful
grateful



LIVE BETTER
SUPERFOOD OF THE MONTH

Sweet Potato

LIVE BETTER WELLNESS WEDNESDAY NEWSLETTER • NOVEMBER 2024



Scan the QR code
to learn more about the
superfood of the month!

Sweet Potato

Loaded with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, sweet potatoes are a super nutritious member of the vegetable group on MyPlate. One medium sweet potato has over 100% of your daily recommended Vitamin A intake. In the form of beta-carotene, this vitamin is essential for healthy vision and immune system function. Sweet potatoes are also rich in Vitamin C. They're also full of fiber which promotes gut health, digestion, and feelings of fullness. This veggie even contains potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure.

Try sweet potatoes roasted, baked, or even added to desserts! Sweet potatoes are in the grocery store year round, so add them to your diet any time of the year.

NUTRITION FACTS

per 1 sweet potato, 5" long (130g)

Calories	112
Total Fat	0g
Saturated Fat	0g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	72mg
Carbohydrates	26g
Dietary Fiber	4g
Total Sugars	5g
Protein	2g

Sweet Potato & Black Bean Veggie Burgers

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ¼ c sweet potato, baked & mashed
- 1 (15-ounce) can reduced sodium black beans, rinsed & drained
- 1 c quinoa, cooked & drained
- ½ c raw old fashioned oats, finely chopped
- ½ c onion, finely diced
- 1 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground pepper
- ½ tsp hot sauce, optional

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray a rimmed baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray.
- In a large mixing bowl, stir together sweet potato, black beans, quinoa, oats, onion, chili powder, garlic powder, salt, pepper, and hot sauce, if using. Use a potato masher to mash beans and combine ingredients well.
- Spray a 1/2-cup measuring cup well with non-stick cooking spray. Pack measuring cup full of bean mixture. Tap cup to release bean mixture and gently set on the prepared pan. Press lightly with your hands to create a patty that is about 4" wide by 3/4" high. Repeat with remaining mixture.
- Bake for 35 minutes, turning once half-way through baking time.

This dish meets the Live Better nutritional guidelines for an entree. Serving size: 1 burger Yield: 6 servings
Calories: 210; Total Fat: 2g; Saturated Fat: 0g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium: 330mg; Total Carbohydrate: 41g; Dietary Fiber: 9g; Sugars: 5g; Protein: 9g; Potassium: 517mg; Calcium: 61mg



Employee Assistance Program

Monthly Tip



Did you know that laughing actually creates changes in the body that act as stress busters?

Laughter has been shown to:

- Increase levels of endorphins.
- Settle stress responses.
- Eliminate muscle tension.
- Promote positive thinking which can combat stress and illnesses through production of neuropeptides.
- Ease pain.
- Provide a way to cope with difficult situations.
- Strengthen bonds between people when laughter is shared.
- Improve mood.

There are many ways to start to add more humor into your life.

- Increase your exposure to humor. Think about the kind of humor that appeals to you most. You might hang up a cartoon or image that makes you chuckle. Choose a comedy over a drama series. Watch silly videos, follow funny social media accounts, or listen to witty podcasts.
- Laugh at your situation when you can. This can add levity in the moment and reduce stress responses.
- Spend time with others that make you laugh. Seek out people that act as a mood booster.
- Look for the humor in everyday moments. Find one thing every day to laugh about and you will most likely find humor in unexpected places.

If you're struggling to find joy in your life, reach out to your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Mayo Clinic. Stress Relief from Laughter? It's No Joke. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>

A photograph of a smooth, light-colored stone with a simple smiley face drawn on it, surrounded by a ring of small white daisies with yellow centers, all set against a dark wooden background.

Laughter Helps

ONLINE SEMINAR

Laughter is a universal language that transcends boundaries and connects people on a profound level. Learn about the power of humor in life.

November 2024

LET US HELP

Visit the website below starting November 19th

WEBSITE: www.EAPhelpink.com

TOLL-FREE: 1.866.279.5177