



It's November and that means it is time for the Florida PTA Convention, Healthy Lifestyles Month, and National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness week...to name a few.

Healthy lifestyles month is a good time to put up the poster found in your Big Box of Possibilities. It will help reiterate that "a balanced diet and daily exercise are good choices for a strong body and a strong mind".

You and your members can learn more at PTA.org/GoodChoices. Maybe now is a good time to partner with a local gym, nutritionist or massage therapist. They can come in and offer helpful hints to reduce stress, discuss nutrition, or offer discount membership options.

This year the State convention was being held the 14th – 15th in Orlando. This was the business meeting of the Florida PTA and all local units should've attempted to have a representative attend. Platform items include the use of hands free device and texting while driving, Teen driving and combining the State Convention and Leadership Conference. There will be a Council Caucus, workshops and a scholarship fund dinner.

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness week is November 15th – 21st. We are working with the school district and the Palm Beach County Commissioners to help raise awareness and promote ending hunger and homelessness in our community. Please consider having an event or program for your members to bring a greater awareness to the issues of hunger and homelessness.

November is also

...a time to focus on the Character Counts trait of...R-E-S-P-E-C-T (that makes me want to sing, but I won't)

...about recognizing Veterans Day (11th)!

...when you can earn the Florida PTA Silver Early Bird Award (11/15/2009 - if your unit is eligible)

...a time to encourage students to participate in the Reflections program!

...about celebrating Thanksgiving (26th)!

Thank you for being such great volunteers and advocating on behalf of children. It is often a thankless "job", but one that is all ways worth it in the end.

Please don't ever hesitate to call upon the county council should you have questions, comments, or concerns...we are here to help you and your PTA succeed!

Kay Stagra, Palm Beach County Council PTA/PTSA President

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A message from the PBCC Wellness Chair

Hi Everyone,

It is so great to be on the Palm Beach County Council of PTA as the new Wellness Chair this year. I will be attending all of the District Wellness Promotion Task Force Meetings and will be able to report back to you all the new initiatives happening around wellness here through out the school district!



The first order of the day was Meredith Pegg. She works with the Blood Centers of South Florida who oversee the collection of blood in Palm Beach County. They service hospitals from the Florida Keys to Palm Beach County. In Palm Beach County, they provide blood to all Trauma Centers – making blood donation very important. Every pint of blood donated may save the life of a person or your own if you are having surgery. To thank blood donors, they provide them their blood type and cholesterol results upon request. Please donate blood at least one time this school year.

We were delighted to have at the meeting Lorie Simmons, Area Director of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention ~ Florida Southeast Chapter. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is the leading national not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research and education, and to reaching out to people with mental disorders and those impacted by suicide. Suicide is currently the third leading cause of death among youth ages 10 to 18, with adolescent depression being the leading cause. AFSP focuses mostly on suicide prevention education, survivor support, and raising money for research. They are not a crisis intervention organization.

The AFSP was fortunate to partner with the New York State Office of Mental Health to develop “More Than Sad”, a movie that helps educate high school students about depression, since the majority of suicides are caused by untreated or inadequately treated depression. The movie dealt with different teens and the many faces of depression including low energy, anxiety, sadness, irritability, anger, etc. Through therapy and in some cases medication prescribed by a doctor, teens were able to get the help they desperately needed.

Also joining the meeting was Janice Campbell, Nutrition Outreach Coordinator for the Palm Beach County Health Department’s *Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)* nutrition program. *WIC* is a federally funded nutrition program that provides services for women, infants, and children of low to moderate income. The program provides nutrition education, counseling, and breastfeeding support. Checks and vouchers are issued to the clients to purchase healthy foods and to cover the expenses of required referrals for health and social services. This year, as of September 2009, the Palm Beach County *WIC* program serviced **29,334** women, infants, and children.

They also changed their food packaging as big changes have occurred in the major health and nutrition risks faced by the WIC's target population: diets lacking in whole grains, fruits and vegetables, short duration of breastfeeding, and an increase in overweight and obesity rates. Based upon recommendations from the *Institute of Medicine*, the new WIC food packages will help reinforce nutrition education messages: "*Eat more fruits and vegetables*", "*Lower saturated fat*", "*Increase whole grains and fiber*", "*Drink less sweetened beverages and juice*", and "*Babies are meant to be breastfed*". The new WIC food packages add foods to appeal to a culturally diverse population by providing a variety of whole grain choices, soy milk, wide choice of fruits and vegetables for ethnic diversity, and canned salmon. WIC plays a significant role in the Palm Beach County economy:

Next up at the meeting was Jamie McCarthy, Nutrition Educator for the School Food Service Department. The School Food Service Department (SFS) oversees four federally operated programs: the *National School Lunch Program*, the *School Breakfast Program*, the *After school Snack Program*, and the *Summer Feeding School Program*. We find that many families and children participating in the WIC program often transition into the school meal programs. Today, for a complete meal, school lunches must provide no more than 30% of calories from total fat, less than 10% of calories from saturated fat, and one third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances for specific nutrients.



Palm Beach County has also established Gold Standards for the district: transitioning from whole milk to low-fat and fat-free dairy products, elimination of French fries and fryers from new building plans, increases in the selection of whole wheat and whole grain bread products, offer fresh produce daily, offer a vegetarian entrée daily, and fortify existing 100% juices with vitamin D and calcium. The reduced price for a complete breakfast is \$0.30 and the reduced price for a complete lunch is \$0.40. In addition, there are Free and Reduced Meal Applications available at <https://mealapps.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/>.

Three years ago, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent to assist AYP schools, the *100% Accessible Breakfast Program* was started. The program makes breakfast accessible to every student in the school regardless of their income level. There is also a *100% Accessible Breakfast Program* menu so that the breakfast can be portable and students can eat their meals anywhere in the schools (in the cafeteria, the classroom or anywhere deemed acceptable by the administration).

Next speaker was Colleen Sherk, HealthCorps Coordinator at Atlantic Community High School. The HealthCorps program has been very successful in the five high schools where it is offered: Santaluces Community High, Wellington Community High, Palm Beach Garden Community High, Forest Hill Community High, and Atlantic Community High. Health Corps Coordinators go into the classrooms at the request of teachers and educate students about nutrition, mental resiliency, exercise, etc... Coordinators organize school events for students, staff, and the community such as health fairs and blood drives. The HealthCorps program also offers After-School clubs with many organized activities. Coordinators are encouraged to mentor students and staff on various aspects of wellness. Visit www.healthcorps.net for more information.

Next speaker was Brian Price, from the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO), Manager for the Bicycle Operations Unit. The Bicycle Safety Program is conducted by sheriff deputies who teach bicycle and pedestrian safety principles to elementary students through the Physical Education classes. Large trailers containing 15 bicycles are taken to elementary schools and students are taught how to wear their helmets, how to be safe when riding their bicycles and walking the roadways. Last school year, they went to **52** elementary schools and trained **14,000** students on helmet safety and pedestrian safety. They find that many students are not safe while riding to schools; they are not obeying the rules of the road, they do not wear their helmets or do not wear them properly. Eric Stern helps them coordinate the trainings in the schools.

The next speaker was Mary Medina of Commit 2B Fit®. She did a brief overview of obesity facts in children. Commit 2B Fit® was created primarily as an obesity prevention tool and it works by committing children to being physically active and making healthy nutrition choices. In the **2009-2010** school year, the program is offered in **37** schools around the District. **11,300** students have pledged to Commit 2B Fit® by choosing a healthier lifestyle.

The speaker after that was Chantal Gellermann a Nutrition Educator. She gave a brief *Farm to School Program* Update. In October 2008, due to concerns surrounding the declining health of our student population, the access to fresh produce, and the disappearance of small farms, The School District of Palm Beach County and RC Hatton Farms began collaborating to offer locally grown produce to all Palm Beach County schools as part of the *National School Lunch Program* creating the *Farm to School Program*. In the 2008-2009 school year, the total Farm to School vegetables supplied to our district was **1,881** cases of fresh corn cobbettes (equaling 150,480 servings) and **9,600** pounds of fresh green beans (equaling 59,534 servings).

There were several other speakers that day...too many to list but I wanted to give you all the main presentations of the morning.

Moms are always asking me how do you get the kids to eat greens?

Make a Green Smoothie...

- 1 Cup of Apple Juice or Orange Juice
- 1 Banana
- Some Berries (blueberry or strawberry is good)
- 1 Big Handful of Spinach or Kale
- A Little Ice and Water...

And blend...yummm...you do not even have to mention the greens, once the smoothie is done the greens just disappear!

Thanks,

Lynne Deutsch
Palm Beach County Council PTA Wellness Chair



Thanks-Giving Message

Jack Levine, Founder
4Generations Institute



As we celebrate Thanksgiving, let's remember that the holiday's name is a compound word - Thanks and Giving. Please take a few moments to consider these ideas for enhancing the celebration of Thanksgiving and the entire holiday season ahead.

First, each of us has much to be thankful for - our lives, families, friendships, and work. While there is no perfection in life, let's admit that the glass is more than half full for most of us most of the time. Thanking those whom we love, admire, depend upon, and have work relationships with is an important, but too infrequent an activity. Find the chance to say "Thank You" more than a few times in the next few weeks.

As for "Giving", please consider sharing these thoughts with others in your family, friends and colleagues as a gift.

1. Let's share our bounty with those with less. Consider the gift of one week's grocery bill donated to a community food bank, domestic violence or homeless shelter, foster parent association, the Salvation Army, or your United Way as a symbol of appreciation for what we have, and what others do for the less fortunate.
2. Express our gratitude in word and deed to those who care for others as a profession or as volunteers. Give compliment the good works of caregivers for our children and frail elders. Those caring individuals who clean the bottoms of babies and the bed-ridden, and help nurture and stimulate their minds, deserve the kindnesses of family members and neighbors all though the year, but especially at holiday time.
3. Respect our elected officials for their service. While we say we believe in representative democracy, who among us is brave enough to run for public office? We don't have to agree with all of their actions, but we should respect their service, and hold them accountable for their actions....or lack of action. Silence is the antithesis of effectiveness in a democracy.
4. Give time to a worthy cause. Our volunteer investments for the benefit of others builds community and creates a great example for our children. Spectatorism is relaxing, but our community's needs can be addressed, in part, by sharing our energy. Whether we choose to sing in a chorus, read to a toddler, mentor a youth, or visit a lonely elder, our time is a priceless gift which appreciates in value.
5. Conserve energy resources by consuming less fuel, reusing, and recycling. Native American culture considered our planet as a parent, worthy of respect and protection. Our throw away culture is feeding our landfills with trash, and our air and water absorb the residue of fuel-generated pollutants. Preserving our environment is self-preservation, as well as a life-saving gift to wildlife, plantlife, and our children's children

6. Slow down. Whether behind the steering wheel or in conversation with others, speed is not a good thing. Being in a perpetual hurry endangers our lives on the road, and cuts short our relationships with others. Give yourself a few extra minutes in transit to be a safe driver.....and listen a bit longer to the words in conversation with loved ones and co-workers. Actively listen and show others that positive attention is a gift worth giving.

7. Put technology in its place. We live in a high-tech, low-touch culture, governed by the beeps, buzzes, and blinking lights of technology. As time is compressed, stress grows. Immediate response raises expectations, reduces careful consideration, and makes us more prone to error. Take a breather from all the numbing numbers, and ask others to be considerate in public and private spaces by turning the "on" switch "off." Our children need to know that our eye contact and voices are focused on their needs, too. The cell phone, pager, and e-mail should not keep our loved ones on hold.

8. Advocate with assertion, not aggression. Free speech is not an invitation to be offensive. Responsible advocacy requires thoughtful purpose, practical solutions, and open conversation. Clear and consistent communication with allies and adversaries alike sets the stage for progress. Advocacy is the heart-felt expression of a wrong to be righted, with composure and grace. An advocate's power is in persuasive and persistent articulation, and the recruitment of others to the cause.

9. Health is a form of wealth. Making sure we eat right, exercise, and take time to rest and relax are the keys to clear thinking and long-term effectiveness. Our bodies cannot support us unless our minds resolve to take care and be careful. Being healthy examples to our children in nutrition and behavior sends positive signals for their attitude and future actions.

10. Take optimism pills every morning....the time-release kind. Negativity is contagious. Those who believe they will make a difference can achieve their goals. Pessimism is the mind's way of giving up before the first step is taken. Those who want to make change for the better in their lives, neighborhood, and the world around them, should stop whining and start winning. The power of one, multiplied and magnified, is the only correct formula for success.

Holidays remind us that bridges across the generations are built upon the stanchions of memory. Those among us who recall the glow of candlelight reflecting the faces at our grandparents' table understand how vital heritage is for finding ourselves. For those whose childhoods were less than ideal, we have the opportunity to assist others to have a more joyous future.

As we begin to plan for the holiday season, we have the obligation to realize that there are neighbors, young and elder, whose coming weeks are not brimming with joy. For whatever reason, in whatever circumstance, we well know that there are people in need who can be helped if we choose to do so.

In honor and remembrance a family member who was there for you when you needed them most, please thank those who illuminate our paths, exemplify kindness, teach justice, and nurture our futures. What a fitting tribute to the legacy of our ancestors.

Your work, the gifts you share, and the example you set for others is an inspiration. Please keep in touch.

Green Minute

Eric Gehring

Education Director, Arthur R Marshall Foundation

October 2009

Everglades News--

Environmental agency rejects Florida Crystals land as inland port site

Friday, October 09, 2009

State DEP said a transportation, warehousing and distribution complex the sugar company wants built on its land south of Lake Okeechobee would interfere with Everglades restoration.

Crystals is one of several major landowners vying to develop the distribution complex known as an inland port.

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/content/local_news/epaper/2009/10/09/1009inlandport.html

Fight over deal to buy U.S. Sugar land goes to Florida Supreme Court

The legal fight over Gov. Charlie Crist's half-billion-dollar Everglades restoration land deal now moves to Florida's highest court. In August, a Palm Beach County Circuit Court Judge ruled that the district should be able to borrow \$650 million to buy the 73,000 acres and cover other transactional costs to build reservoirs and treatment areas to restore water flows from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades.



The legal fight centers on the South Florida Water Management District's ability to borrow the money to pay for the land. The Miccosukee Tribe and sugar producer Florida Crystals are fighting the deal, arguing it costs taxpayers too much with no guaranteed results and that it takes money away from other stalled Everglades restoration projects.

http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/palm-beach/sfl-everglades-land-deal-p092509_0_1545437.story

Shovels Ready to Break Down the "Asphalt Dam" and Restore Everglades Water

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is awarding an \$81 million contract this week to a south Florida firm to replace some of the Tamiami Trail that has blocked waterflow in the River of Grass for 80 years, with a one-mile bridge the Corps is predicting will increase waterflow by 90 percent in the area. Another 10 miles of bridges are on the drawing board for the U.S. National Park Service.

<http://www.publicnewsservice.org/index.php?/content/article/10770-1>

Nature Makes Us Nicer People, New Study Says

A new study by the University of Rochester found that after looking at nature scenes, people feel closer to their community, are willing to give more money to a charitable cause, and care more about social outcomes than they are after looking at man-made scenes. The reason, the researchers state, is that communing with nature helps people also commune with their basic values. Seeing naturoscapes helps reduce stress, and even having a window in a hospital room helps people recover more quickly.

From experiments including 370 participants, the results show that after viewing urban settings or natural settings, people exposed to natural settings rated close relationships and community higher than they had before seeing the scenes, whereas after viewing urban settings, people placed more value on wealth and fame. Additionally, those who viewed nature scenes were more likely to give higher amounts of money to a good cause. The findings highlight the importance of creating green spaces in cities. Incorporating parks and other representations of nature into urban environments may help build a stronger sense of community among residents.

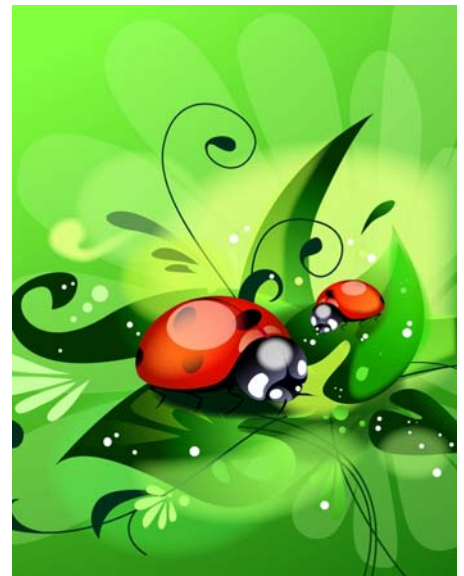
<http://www.treehugger.com/files/2009/10/nature-makes-us-nicer-people-new-study-says.php>



Florida 4-H Bug Club.

Have you ever found an unfamiliar bug and were curious to its identity? This site has an identification tool and a pictorial key to 100 common Florida bugs. It also has insect teaching materials for classroom teachers, as well as information about the annual 4-H Bug Collecting Contest.

http://entomology.ifas.ufl.edu/bug_club/index.shtml



Message from Karen Holme, ESE Chair

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Dear Parents of Students with Disabilities,

The following information is from the School District of Palm Beach County. It can be found on their website www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us by using the keyword "504" in the search box on the home page. Section 504 is a set of laws that protects all persons with disabilities, and parts of the law pertain to education. This set of laws applies to students who have a "504 plan" and those who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

You will find "A Parent and Teacher Guide to Section 504" which includes ten parent-friendly answers to common questions regarding students with disabilities and eligibility under Section 504. If you would like more details about 504, there are links to the District's manual and a vodcast where an explanation of recent amendments is presented.

If you need any assistance regarding exceptional students, you may contact me any time.

Sincerely,

Karen Holme

Palm Beach County Council PTA,

ESE Chair

561-718-1884

mamaholme@aol.com

EXCERPTS BELOW FROM THE DISTRICT'S 504 PAGE. BE SURE TO GO TO THE WEBSITE TO FIND THE ANSWERS TO THE COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

A Parent and Teacher Guide to Section 504:

Section 504 is part of a federal civil rights law known as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This law specifically prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees them a free and appropriate education (FAPE). Discrimination, as defined in Section 504, is the failure to provide students with disabilities the same opportunity to benefit from education programs, services, or activities as is provided to their non disabled peers. Therefore, schools cannot exclude students with disabilities from facilities, programs, benefits, activities, or services that are provided to students without disabilities. Schools must make sure that all students receive equal access to educational opportunities. Students with disabilities receiving exceptional student education (ESE) services, as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are protected under Section 504, but not all Section 504 students are eligible for ESE.

1. [How does the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 define a "person with disabilities"?](#)
2. [How are students identified as having a disability?](#)
3. [What is included in a Section 504 accommodations plan?](#)
4. [What is the role of parents?](#)
5. [What is the role of the teachers?](#)
6. [What should parents or teachers do if they become dissatisfied with the plan?](#)
7. [What procedural safeguards are provided by Section 504?](#)
8. [Are students with disabilities disciplined differently than their non disabled peers?](#)
9. [What are the major differences between IDEA and Section 504?](#)
10. [Who do I contact for information on Section 504?](#)

A Message from John C Sherman
Street Outreach and Project Safe Place Coordinator,
Children's Home Society of FL

Due to the fact that 1 in 8 teens will runaway, if you parent a teen you may experience this unfortunate reality. Over 3000 kids runaway every single day. 5000 runaways will die in the streets from assault, murder, disease, drugs and suicide according to 1-800-RUNAWAY.org. If your kid runs away, what should do?

National Safe Place recommends the following:

Don't panic think clearly: Could your teen be with a friend, relative, or divorced parent?

Record: Keep a record of everyone you contact. Clear your head by writing down your thoughts and feelings.

Look for clues: Check his/her room for signs of preparation. Check neighborhood hang-outs. Know who your teen's friends are and keep a list of their names and contact information.

Take Action: File a missing person's report with local police and ask them to enter information about your youth in the NCIC (National Crime Information Center) computer. Be sure to have an up to date photograph. Contact your local youth shelter for Palm Beach County, **SAFE HARBOR 561-868-4444**. They can connect you with other reputable services in your area.

Remain Calm: If your teen calls, show love and concern. If they are not ready to come home, be supportive and give them the local shelter number for Palm Beach County, 561-868-4444 or if they are outside Palm Beach County give them the National Runaway Switchboard number 1-800-RUNAWAY. Suggest they go to a Safe Place site if they are in Palm Beach County. Every Palm Beach Fire Rescue station is a Safe Place site. (More on Safe Place in next month's installment).

Remember that running is typically a teen's way of crying for help. The good news is that the vast majority of kids that runaway are home within 48 hours. The bad news is that kids that run once are at a much higher risk of running away again. Unresolved family conflicts are often the root of the problem. If these family problems go unchecked, you can be sure to experience a rough ride through adulthood.

Parents need to get counsel from a trusted source. Children's Home Society offers teen and family counseling for free. Master's level counselors are available 7 days a week. Call 561-868-4470 to set-up an appointment. Perhaps your church, synagogue or mosque is an option. There are many non-profit agencies and private counselors available in Palm Beach County. You do not have to go it alone.

Next month I plan to highlight a wonderful organization designed to keep young people safe and off the streets, National Safe Place. Until then, have an awesome month!