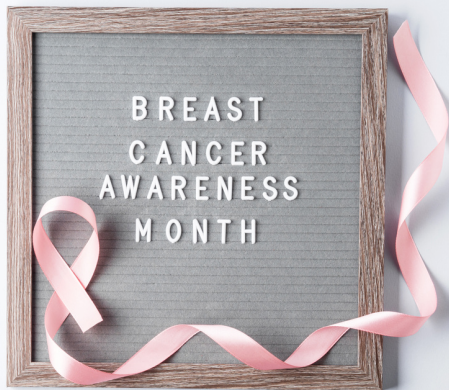


BEE WELL

Thomas County Wellness Newsletter

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"Listen! the wind is rising, and the air is wild with leaves, we have had our summer evenings, now for October eves!"

—Humbert Wolfe

SCHOOL NUTRITION

National School Lunch Week

To recognize the National School Lunch Program, serving nearly 30 million children each day, Thomas County School Nutrition will celebrate National School Lunch Week from October 17-21, 2022. The fun and creative campaign theme, "Peace, Love & School Lunch," highlights the importance of a healthy school lunch to a student's success both in and out of the classroom.

School lunches offer students fruits and vegetables, whole grains and milk, and meet federal nutrition standards limiting fat, calories and sodium. While school meals are great every day, National School Lunch Week helps school nutrition departments educate parents and students about all the wonderful benefits of our lunch program.

Research shows children are getting their healthiest meals at school. National School Lunch Week will highlight the nutritious foods available daily at all Thomas County schools and include a few special menu items for the week too! From Groovy Grapes to Hippiie's Favorite Hamburger Helper to Peace, Love, & a Low Country Boil, National School Lunch Week is going to be TOTALLY TUBULAR! To get in on the excitement in the classroom, check out some activity sheets [here](#).

"SPINACH TO WIN IT!"



Farm to school is a movement that connects all parts of the food system to all parts of the school day. Farm to school creates an educational opportunity for students to identify where their food comes from, learn why that's important and apply knowledge from all subject areas in an engaging way.

During Georgia Organics' ninth annual October Farm to School Month, we will be celebrating along with their theme "SPINACH TO WIN IT!" Each school will offer a new spinach menu item during our National School Lunch Week celebrations and we are so excited to share them with you.

To continue the learning in the classroom, teachers can register [here](#) for free access to lesson plans, activities, recipes, and much more. You can even subscribe to their [YouTube](#) channel to view playlists that accompany their Farm to School work. We hope you will join us for what is sure to be a fun time!

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

The Harvest of the Month for October is Squash, and between the summer and winter varieties, squash is grown in Georgia all year round.

Squash is one of the most versatile types of produce. There are two main categories: summer squash, which is harvested when immature, and winter squash, which spends more time on the vine and typically has a rigid exterior.

While it is often treated as a vegetable, squash is actually a type of fruit, as it comes from a flower and contains seeds. You can enjoy these seeds, as well as the flesh and, in many cases, the skin. With most types of winter squash, however, you may prefer to scoop out the flesh and discard what's left. No matter how you eat it, this tasty treat is chock-full of fiber and antioxidants.

To learn more about squash, check out these facts and to preview class activities, click here.

There are so many great ways to enjoy winter squash but a great fall breakfast is this Pumpkin Bar recipe and for an easy dinner idea, check out this Vegetarian Pumpkin Chili.



CAFETERIA CONVERSATIONS

Taste Tests at TCMS

A taste test is an event that offers students small samples of foods during school to give students exposure to new foods and gauge interest in menu items. A taste test can accomplish all of the following:

- Provides students the opportunity to try a variety of foods, introducing them to foods that are locally grown and in season.
- Facilitates a change in food choices, thus allowing new and local foods that are accepted by students to be integrated into school meals.
- Involves students and staff in changing school food.
- Creates positive food environments.
- Is a fun and memorable experience.

We are so excited to be hosting two Culinary Specialists from GaDOE's School Nutrition Program at TCMS in October to conduct taste tests with our students. Look for a Blueberry Caprese Salad and Tri-Color Bake and let us know if you think they should be added to our recipe catalog!



**What food
or type
of food
would
you like
to try?**

MONTHLY OBSERVANCES

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness about the impact of breast cancer. Breast cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the breast. Cancer grows when a cell's DNA is damaged, but why or how that DNA becomes damaged is still unknown. It could be genetic or environmental, or in most cases, a combination of the two. But most patients will never know exactly what caused their cancer. However, there are certain established risk factors that are associated with breast cancer. To read more about risk factors and to find educational resources on many topics related to breast cancer, you can visit the National Breast Cancer Organization [here](#).



It's Health Literacy Month!

IHA | **HEALTH LITERACY MONTH**
Building Awareness Through Action

How are you taking action to build awareness about health literacy? Share with the community today!

#healthliteracymonth

healthliteracymonth.org

Health Literacy Month

For more than 20 years, October has been recognized as Health Literacy Month. Health Literacy Month is a time of international observance when hospitals, health centers, literacy programs, libraries, social service agencies, businesses, professional associations, government agencies, consumer alliances, and many other groups work collaboratively to integrate and expand the mission of health literacy. Through these efforts, the Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA) hopes to build a world where our collective efforts will lead to health equity, where all people can attain positive health outcomes. Visit healthliteracymonth.org to learn more about how to shift from awareness to action today! #healthliteracymonth

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Every woman has the right to live her life safely and free of violence. Yet one in four women in the United States experiences intimate partner violence, including domestic abuse, verbal and emotional abuse, and stalking. Women experience violence in many ways, and whatever form it takes, violence against women can have serious long-term physical and emotional effects. If you've experienced violence or abuse, it is never your fault, and you can get help. October was declared National Domestic Violence Month as a time to spread awareness and highlight efforts to prevent and address domestic violence. For resources related to domestic or intimate partner violence, visit the Office on Women's Health [here](#).

National Youth Sports Week

The National Council on Youth Sports is celebrating National Youth Sports Week this year from October 24-29 – a time to showcase how communities can promote healthy lifestyles for children and families through sports. Knowing that youth sports are a great way for young people to get active and learn important life skills, the National Youth Sports Strategy wants to help increase youth sports participation by focusing on fun over competition, advocating for safe and accessible sports programs and facilities, and promoting important messages about the benefits of youth sports.



BE WELL - SHBP

October Step Challenge

After the heat of the summer, spending time outside when the weather is cooler can be a welcoming relief. It is a great time to get your steps in and be rewarded for doing so!

If you are enrolled in the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) through either Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield or UnitedHealthcare Commercial (non-Medicare Advantage) Plan Options, you and your covered spouse can enroll in the October Steps challenge and earn 120 points upon completion. (Points can be redeemed for your choice of reward). Walking provides many health benefits: it can help you lose weight, get fit, boost your mood, and more!

To join this month's challenge, follow these steps:

- Log in to your [Be Well SHBP](#) account and make sure you have completed your RealAge® Test for 2022. (If you need to create an account, click [here](#)).
- Click on the "Achieve" navigational link and then proceed to the [Challenges](#) section. Switch to the "Available" view to see what is available to join.
- Register for the October Step Challenge. During the month of October, track at least 21 days of 7,000 or more steps to successfully complete the challenge.

To enter your physical activity OTHER than steps use this "[Steps Conversion Chart](#)" and then manually enter your steps.



WELLNESS CHALLENGE

Congratulations Step It Up Challenge winners!

Ms. White was our overall winner, logging over 1,000,000 steps during the six week challenge. In addition to a gift card, Active Soles Running Company provided her with a running belt and some cool shades to run in!

And since all those steps can work up quite an appetite, our team winners at TCCHS received a Chick-fil-A gift card to enjoy! As a group, they averaged just under 10,000 steps a day!

Congratulations to our winners and thank you everyone who participated in our first Bee Well challenge of the year!