



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

“YOUR BODY IS YOUR MOST PRICELESS POSSESSION. TAKE CARE OF IT !” — JACK LALANNE



What is health and wellness? The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Wellness has been described as an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. Wellness is more than being free from illness, it is a dynamic process of change and growth.

The human body, mind, and spirit comprise our health and wellness. To improve our wellbeing, we must address three key components: nutrition, disease prevention, and physical and emotional care. This Community Service Program aims to explore the various opportunities for awareness and advancement of each of these vital areas:

- Nutritious food is the first building block of good health. Wise food choices support a healthy body weight, meet nutrient needs, and lessen the risk for chronic disease.
- Continued wellbeing depends on disease prevention, including immunizations and efforts that reduce the development and severity of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, which are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States.
- Physical and emotional care encourages actions to keep the body and mind healthy throughout life, plus ways to support family, friends, and community members in their efforts.

2020-2022 HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

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CHALLENGE PROJECT: “PHYSICAL FUNDING” FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

According to the Mayo Clinic, “Exercise helps prevent and improve a number of health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes and arthritis. Research on depression, anxiety and exercise shows that the psychological and physical benefits of exercise can also help improve mood and reduce anxiety.”

With these facts in mind, plan a fundraising walk, run, bike, swim event, or a dance-a-thon, with benefits funding the mental health program of your club’s choice. By *actively* participating, members will improve their own health while helping others.



Direct any questions regarding projects that do not involve GFWC Affiliate Organizations to the Health and Wellness Community Service Program Chairman or GFWC Programs Department at Programs@GFWC.org.

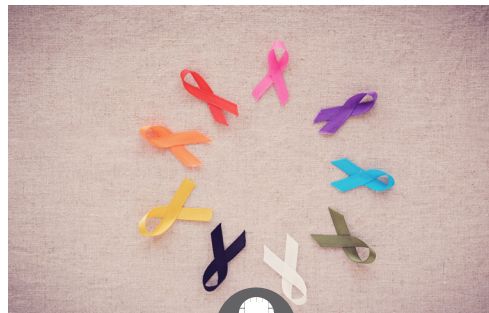
PROJECT IDEAS

Be inspired by this list of ideas of how GFWC clubs can support the Health and Wellness Community Service Program. Find further information about organizations named here under Resources.



BEST FOOT FORWARD

The GFWC Woman's Club of Madisonville (KY) joined community partners to develop an informational brochure illustrating three walking tours of the downtown area. They met regularly with healthcare, education, public library, and historical representatives during the development. After a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, brochures were placed in the surrounding businesses so visitors and the community could use them, thus helping to promote a healthy lifestyle.



KISS CANCER GOODBYE

GFWC Cosmopolitan Club of Petal (MS) supported the American Cancer Society through its Relay for Life community team. "Kiss Cancer Goodbye Bunko" and "Cup Cake Challenge" events raised funds for the team. Members provided silent auction items and centerpieces and prepared 200 units of Chicken-on-a-Stick that members raffled and sold while wearing Wonder Woman tee shirts. The club won second place for cancer facts displayed at the tent site.



COMFORT PILLOWS

GFWC Salem Woman's Service Club (OR) purchased supplies and secured donations from the community to make small Comfort Pillows for cancer patients. Members meet four times during the year to sew 384 Comfort Pillows that were donated to the Salem Hospital. The pillows were distributed to patients undergoing surgeries usually related to breast cancer. A note of encouragement with the club's contact information was included with each pillow.



VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

The GFWC Women's Club of Safford (AZ) held a dance on Valentine's Day for 120 physically and mentally handicapped children along with 33 chaperones. The goal was to enable the children to experience a school dance first-hand. Keepsake photos were taken for the children to remember the night, and they were also given a party favor of an emoji pillow or stuffed animal. The dance was a huge hit!



NUTRITION

- Share information with club and community members about making wise food choices. Two sources of trusted information include Health.gov, which is coordinated by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, and Nutrition.gov, a resource of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Host a community workshop and/or taste testing that provides healthy recipes and handouts on nutrition, such as those offered on Nutrition.gov or Medline Plus, a program of the U.S. National Library of Medicine.
- Celebrate National Nutrition Month in March with a healthy potluck dinner at your club's monthly meeting. Or, organize a community event, such as a "Recipe Makeover Contest," which transforms a favorite dish by cutting calories and increasing its nutritional value.
- Invite a local nutritionist to provide a club program on eating healthy.
- Hold a "Healthy Food Drive," requesting donors to contribute nutritious foods from Feeding America's Healthy Food Donation List. When choosing items, look for labels that note: low sodium, no added salt, no added sugar, unsweetened, or 100% fruit juice. Possible recipients include community food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens, or programs coordinated by schools, shelters, and children's organizations.
- Donate healthy food items and/or funds to a college campus food bank, such as one affiliated with the College & University Food Bank Alliance. Monetary donations to food banks are an excellent way to take advantage of their large-scale negotiating and wholesale buying power.
- Collect healthy foods at an established club or community event.
- Volunteer with Meals on Wheels to provide nutritional support to seniors.
- Provide healthy snacks for first responders, such as local police and firefighters, or to an after-school program.
- Establish a school garden, or expand an existing school garden, to emphasize nutrition with strategies established by Growing Minds, a program of the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project.
- Engage club and community members in a Plant a Row for the Hungry Campaign, a program sponsored by Garden Communicators International, to provide fresh and nutritious produce for local soup kitchens and food pantries.
- Ensure a year-round supply of fresh produce in the community by establishing or supporting a local farmers market. Promote the market on social media and coordinate special events, such as a seasonal taste testing or children's poster contest.

DISEASE PREVENTION

- Support and/or sponsor immunization programs at home and abroad. These programs remain one of the most successful and cost-effective public health interventions, improving health and providing the best chance for a meaningful life.
- Utilize promotional toolkits from Vaccines.gov and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to provide information about vaccines during National Immunization Awareness Month in August. Toolkits include graphics, videos, promotional newsletter and email content, and pre-written social media posts.
- Share information with club and community members on various topics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), such as disease and conditions, healthy living, traveler's health, emergency preparedness, and more. Learn key facts and prevention strategies for the "Disease of the Week," and take a quiz to test your knowledge of common and serious diseases for people of all ages. Clubs can also use the site for program ideas and as a resource for specific health information.
- Learn and share information on how oral health impacts the body's overall health by visiting Mouth Healthy, sponsored by the American Dental Association. Help children learn the importance of dental care with the website's coloring and activity sheets or by providing oral health tools such as toothbrushes and floss to schools and early learning centers.
- Share information about the early signs and symptoms of diabetes in children and adults.
- Celebrate American Heart Month in February by planning programs on women's heart health and posting support for National Wear Red Day® (on the first Friday), with information from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.
- Promote local breast and cervical cancer screenings and diagnostic services for low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women. Find a screening program in your state on the CDC website.



- Provide care items for cancer patients, such as warm blankets and socks, moisturizers and lip balm, water and hard candy, and diversions such as books, magazines, crossword puzzles, and more.
- Utilize free publications from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Office of Women's Health to share information on important health topics.
- Post and/or share information on the safe disposal of unwanted medications and the location of local medication disposal drop boxes.
- Learn about and share information on social media about the many National Health Observances such as Save Your Vision Month (March), and Childhood Cancer Awareness Month (September). To find a comprehensive list, visit Health.gov.

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL CARE

- Adopt a classroom and donate physical exercise "take a break" items such as jump ropes, activity dice, hula hoops, Koosh balls, and other recreation equipment.
- Start an exercise and/or walking group in your club and use an app such as Charity Miles to track your team's progress while also donating to a charitable cause.
- Partner with a local assisted living home to provide senior exercise equipment such as leg pedaling machines, resistance bands, and yoga mats, or to support their exercise program in other ways.
- Sign up to receive the monthly newsletter from the National Institutes of Health, News in Health, to share new research with club and community members through club newsletters, social media, and other means.
- Promote physical activity in the community with a Move Your Way Campaign using materials and information from Health.gov.
- Hit the mat with a workshop for club and community members on yoga and meditation, an alternative form of exercise to stay fit, healthy, and happy. Yoga improves balance, flexibility, endurance, and strength, while meditation releases stress and focuses the mind. Practiced together, they enhance the mind/body connection and provide confidence and a sense of wellbeing.
- Support Special Olympics and other athletic contests, therapeutic sports, and/or social programs and opportunities for the challenged and disabled.
- Learn about and share information from the Choose Love Movement, a nonprofit organization founded after the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, which teaches life skills and fosters a school culture that reduces violence. Now used across the U.S, the Choose Love Enrichment Program offers lessons in courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion to boost confidence, promote positive decision-making, and to create and enhance communication, connection, and relationships.
- Offer resources and/or promote programs that prevent bullying so children and youth are safeguarded and supported at school, in the community, and online. Set up an anti-bullying booth at a parenting fair, health fair, or other community event and distribute brochures, articles, and posters to attendees.
- Join the Campaign to Change Direction by pledging to learn the five signs that could mean that someone is in emotional pain and might need help: personality change, agitation, withdrawal, poor self-care, and hopelessness. Educate others with free posters and public service announcements from Change Direction, which works to change the culture surrounding mental illness. Help spread awareness by posting photos of club members on social media, hand up to pledge and stand with #ChangeMentalHealth.
- Inform club and community members about the many issues surrounding substance abuse with information from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which is a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. From opioids and meth to alcohol abuse, addiction changes the brain and alters decision making. The site offers brochures, information sheets, research reports, news about assistance programs, treatment locator services, and more.
- Work with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), by educating, advocating, and/or donating during Mental Health Awareness month in May, or anytime of the year. Consider sponsoring a NAMI volunteer to bring an education class to your community, such as NAMI Basics for parents and caregivers of youth with mental health symptoms.
- Learn and share the risk factors and signs and symptoms of someone in danger of suicide, as outlined by the National Institute of Mental Health. Consider holding a club or community program on the five action steps to help someone in emotional pain and/or distribute the number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK).



CONNECT WITH GFWC AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

- To address global hunger, create a Heifer International “farm.” At each monthly meeting, chose a farm animal and decorate featuring the animal (chicken, rabbits, etc.).
- Initiate “Operation Santa’s Cookies and Milk” to raise funds to help Heifer International’s Milk Project and provide a carton of nutritious milk to children.

MARCH OF DIMES

- Many moms arrive at the hospital to deliver a premature baby without any personal items. Create Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Mom Care Packages. March of Dimes provides a toolkit with guidance for what moms need at the hospital (www.marchofdimes.org/materials/Advocacy-Toolkit-Q3-2019-v2.pdf).

OPERATION SMILE

- Donate homemade or store-bought quilts, blankets, and afghans to comfort a child in a hospital after surgery.
- The Operation Smile Child Life Station is a place where children can relax and play before surgery. Consider donating new and gently-used stuffed animals, arts and crafts supplies, liquid bubbles, and other toys to help with screening and pre-surgical/post-surgical play therapy (www.operationssmile.org/content/community-fundraising-and-service-projects).

PCAA

- Promote **Healthy Families America** voluntary in-home family support program that helps families build a strong foundation for nurturing, lifelong relationships between caregiver and child.

ST. JUDE CHILDREN’S RESEARCH HOSPITAL

- To share information at club meetings or to learn more, please visit www.stjude.org/aboutus or www.stjude.org/waystogive or www.stjude.org/getinvolved. You may also visit www.stjude.org/volathome to find great activity ideas for your club to connect to the St. Jude mission.
- Rally friends, family, and community members and register for St. Jude Walk/Run to End Childhood Cancer. Visit www.stjude.org/walkrun to find an event near you.

UNF SHOT@LIFE CAMPAIGN

- Support Shot@Life with a “Pop a Shot” fundraiser, with shooting baskets for prizes.
- Support Walgreens “Get a Shot, Give a Shot” for flu vaccinations. Gather after for a fun lunch to celebrate how many vaccines you have provided (<https://shotatlife.org/partner/walgreens>).

UNICEF USA

- Hold a Halloween-themed cornhole tournament for UNICEF for a “hole” lotta fun.
- Share UNICEF USA Kid Power with Juniorettes as a project. They can participate as a group and/or engage their local schools and organizations such as Girl Scouts. Kids wear activity bands that measure their steps and physical movement for points to unlock funding from UNICEF partners to provide ready-to-use-therapeutic food (RUTF) to severely malnourished children around the globe (www.unicefkidpower.org/?_ga=2.26213757.1930969479.1592003084-1296862387.1592003084).



GFWC RESOURCES

Campaign to Change Direction www.changedirection.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
For information on Diseases and Conditions go to www.cdc.gov/DiseasesConditions
For cancer screening programs go to www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/screenings.htm

Charity Miles www.charitymiles.org

Choose Love Movement www.jesselewischooselove.org

College & University Food Bank Alliance www.cufba.org

Feeding America www.feedingamerica.org
For information on healthy donations go to www.hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/mp/files/tool_and_resources/files/healthy-food-donation-list.pdf

Growing Minds www.growing-minds.org
For information on school gardens go to www.growing-minds.org/school-gardens

Health.gov, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (www.health.gov)
For information on nutrition go to www.health.gov/our-work/food-nutrition
For information on National Health Observances go to www.health.gov/news/category/national-health-observances
For information on the Move Your Way Campaign go to www.health.gov/moveyourway

Mouth Healthy, American Dental Association www.mouthhealthy.org
For children's coloring and activity sheets go to www.mouthhealthy.org/en/resources/activity-sheets

Meals on Wheels www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org

Medline Plus, U.S. National Library of Medicine www.medlineplus.gov
For information on recipes go to www.medlineplus.gov/recipes

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) www.nami.org
For News in Health www.newshealth.nih.gov

National Institute of Mental Health www.nimh.nih.gov

Nutrition.gov, U.S. Department of Agriculture www.nutrition.gov
For information on recipes go to www.nutrition.gov/topics/shopping-cooking-and-food-safety/recipes

Plant a Row for the Hungry Campaign www.gardencomm.org/StartPARCampaign

Special Olympics www.specialolympics.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www.samhsa.gov

U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Office of Women's Health
For free publications on women's health go to www.orders.gpo.gov/fda-womens-health.aspx

Vaccines.gov, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www.vaccines.gov
For toolkits on vaccines go to www.vaccines.gov/resources/videos_and_tools/toolkits



AWARDS

GFWC recognizes State Federations for outstanding projects and clubs for creative projects in implementing effective Health and Wellness Community Service Program projects and partnership projects as follows:

- Certificate to one State Federation in each membership category
- \$50 award to one club in the nation for project creativity

Award winners will be determined by entries into the Award Program. Each State Federation may submit one State Award Entry and one Club Creativity Award Entry for the Health and Wellness Community Service Program projects. Clubs do not submit entries directly to GFWC.



Refer to the Awards section of the *Club Manual* for more information, including the Award Entry Cover Sheet guidelines.

RESOLUTIONS

Currently Under Review

