

# May 2017 Newsletter

# PEIA Pathways

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## Importance of Flexibility

By Debbie Turner

Countless studies have shown how beneficial exercise is for our body and overall well-being, but less attention is paid to flexibility. Flexibility is the third pillar of fitness, next to cardiovascular conditioning and strength training. Flexibility can help your body reach its optimum fitness level and definitely plays a role in injury prevention. It can contribute to staving off conditions like arthritis and other illnesses.

Common behaviors, like hunching over a computer all day, can shorten some muscles. These actions, coupled with the natural loss of muscle elasticity that can occur with aging, can cause injuries. Flexible muscles make everyday activities easier on your body and may decrease your risk of certain injuries. Stretching stiff muscles beyond their limit may result in a strain or tear. This can happen when we reach for something on a high shelf or quickly grabbing for something that has fallen.

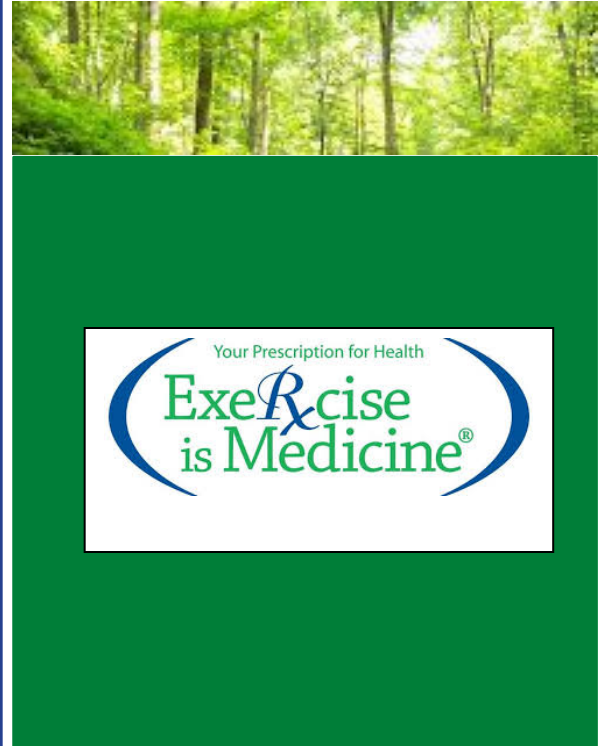
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RESTWELL. EATWELL. FEELWELL.



# RUN/WALK YOUR First 5k Race

By: Charity Duvert



Walking or running as exercise is very beneficial to your overall well-being. The benefits include:

- Weight loss
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Reduced stress
- Increased energy
- Better self-esteem

Participating in a 5k with other people may be very exciting for some people. On the other hand, it might be quite challenging for others. Whether you just want to have fun or to see what you can do, being able to walk or run five kilometers (3.2 miles) without quitting is not an easy task for many people. Crossing that finish line can be exhilarating and one of the most rewarding accomplishments for those who have never considered themselves “athletic.”



If you are considering signing up for or competing in your first 5K race, there are a few things to consider:

**Find your motivation:** If you are too afraid of failing at your first attempt, consider standing on the sidelines of a race and watch the participants. You will notice people from many walks of life – the same gender as you, older or younger than you, or even heavier in weight. You may realize that some of these people may not seem to be running fast, yet they soldier on and are determined to get to the finish line.

**Set a goal:** Decide why you want to participate in an event. Is it to prove to yourself or someone else what you are capable of accomplishing? Do you want to complete a certain distance without quitting, or to just walk or run it in a certain amount of time? Either way, figure out what your motivation is and go for it.

**Team up:** Find some extra motivation by signing up for the race with a partner who can encourage you to keep going. Sign up and pay the entry fee so that backing out costs you. **Continued on Page 11...**



# Managing Time

By: Janelle Humphrey-Rowan, ND Naturopath



**A**lthough summer brings with it “longer” days, one thing that always seems to be lacking is time. Time management can lead to more productivity, less stress, and better health. Using time efficiently and effectively can help us make more memories. Here are some tips to help tackle this issue:

**Set priorities:** Don’t let an overwhelming “to do” list halt your progress. Realize that you can only accomplish so much in a day. Decide what is important, and limit your efforts to that goal.

**Organize your day:** You may not be able to plan every minute. There are always interruptions and unplanned demands on your time, but it is recommended to create a definite plan for the day based on your priorities. Avoid the pitfall of always letting “immediate demands” control your life.

**Tackle tough jobs first:** Handle the most important tasks first, while your energy levels are high. Leave busy work or running around for later in the day.

**Keep a calendar:** A calendar or planner can aid in showing how much you can actually accomplish in a day, week, or month. You may be surprised by how much you really get done when you can “see” it on your calendar. Assess your productive vs. unproductive time and use it to limit or eliminate “time wasting” activities.

**Use your free time wisely:** For example, while waiting for your child at practice, get in some exercise by walking around the field or court. While waiting in a doctor’s office, evaluate your calendar, check your e-mail, or grade papers.

**Don’t be a perfectionist:** Is perfection always attainable? Do your best in a reasonable amount of time, then move on to other important tasks. If you find time, you can always come back later and polish the task.

**Learn to say “No.”:** This tip is more particular to life outside of work. It is easy to get pulled in many different directions with loved ones, church, civic organizations, and clubs. If you find yourself becoming overwhelmed, assess what is most important and limit or eliminate the rest.

## How to make it work:

**Discipline:** It takes discipline to implement any kind of change. To make it easier for changes to stick, always start with baby steps. Pick one of the tips as your goal and work on it first. Then, add another once you become comfortable with the first.

**Support:** Don’t make changes alone! Make friends, loved ones, and co-workers aware of your plan so they can join you or help hold you accountable for making the change.

**Define success:** Identify your goal. Consider--What will the outcome be? How will making this change benefit me or others? Then, clarify how you will determine or know that you reached your goal.

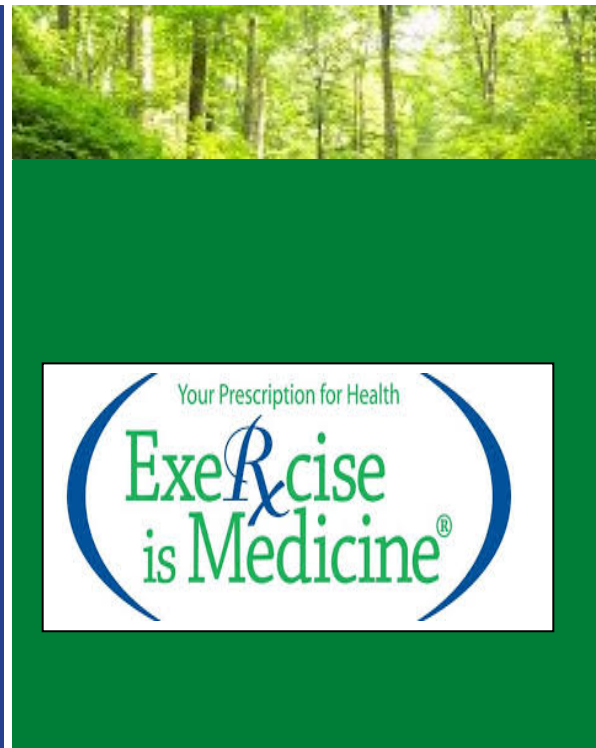
**Schedule time for yourself:** Take a moment for yourself. Discover something you enjoy and schedule it into your day. Make this time a reward for accomplishing your goal.

## Resources:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/time.html>  
<http://www.psychologytoday.com>

# Creativity for Relieving Stress

By: Salina Lyter



**S**tress can squash your creativity. However, you can reverse this effect! Research reveals that engagement of the creative process actually reduces stress. In an article written by Owen Poindexter, he refers to a study by Harvard professor, Teresa Amabile, examined individuals involved in large projects who kept diaries that “examines states of mind during their most productive phases.” “We want to look at what makes people happy, creative and productive at work,” Amabile said in a presentation about the project. Amabile’s diary studies show, “When people are feeling most deeply and happily engaged in their work, they’re more likely to be productive.”

Poindexter further states, “The focus, emotional expression and perspective that come through creative acts disrupt mental patterns of stress and anguish, and help people lead more fulfilling lives.”

The creative process induces positive feelings. Brian Seaward, author of *Managing Stress* exclaims that creativity has two processes and, “by no coincidence match the right and left hemispheres of the human brain,” and is, “wonderfully profound.” The American psychologist, Abraham Maslow concluded that the creative process and the path to self-actualization were one and the same, and called it the “art of being happily lost in the present moment.” This declaration correlates to other stress reduction techniques. For example, the principle of meditation. When you clear the mind and intensely focuses on something you create, there is no room to think of anything else. Ultimately, stress reduction occurs. This factor also enhances the outcomes from research in the effectiveness of art therapy.

Jean Hurtle states in an article that, “A healing journey brings us away from judgmental thoughts and opens the doors to realizing our true potential.” Often, stress levels arise from negative self-talk and personal perception of life events or stressors. Through analysis of thinking behaviors, patterns, and situational interpretations one can develop awareness of mental chatter and adjust reactions. Discovering a creative outlet is essential to calm and quiet the mind, improve focus, and enhance positive feelings. Nurture your natural creative talents and boldly explore new territory. Overall, creativity is healing, calming, and promotes overall health and well-being.

## References:

- Hurtle, Jean. (2015). How creative activities can help to reduce stress. Retrieved April 21, 2017 from <http://clearyourstress.com/deal-with-stress/creative-activities-can-help-reduce-stress/>.
- Poindexter, Owen. (2015). How creativity can help reduce stress. Retrieved April 21, 2017 from: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/health-wellness/2015/04/24/how-creativity-can-help-reduce-stress/EJta3lapaaFzY6wfv5UK/story.html>.
- Seaward, Brian L. (2009). *Managing stress*. Boulder, CO. Jones and Bartlett Publishers.



# Workout Recovery

By: Corey Clendenin



**F**or those new to exercise, one of the biggest reasons that a routine may fail, is extreme soreness. Many people begin a workout schedule without taking into account the aspect of recovery.

After an intense round of exercise, the body recovers over the next 24 hours. Soreness can last for days and include a run-down feeling, achiness, and trouble sleeping. Doing the right things after exercise will not only aid in recovery, but make you feel better, increase energy, and help reach a health goal. Remember, you are in charge of your health. Take ownership of all aspects. Consider this list of ways to help you recover after exercise:

**Structured Rest:** (This isn't just taking a day off or time away from exercise.) Structured rest for a few days every 8-12 weeks has great benefits for your body. To "rest" try reducing the resistance or intensity of your workout. You could go for a walk/hike instead of your normal jog/run. In this situation, "rest" is actually active recovery, the body is still moving and active but just not as intense as normal.

**Sleep:** Make sure quality sleep is achieved on a normal basis. Sleep deprivation will start to affect your workouts as well as the recovery process. The body does most of its repairs and recovery at night when it is at rest. Don't deprive your muscles of the chance to recover. Invest in a good mattress, the right pillow, and make your room a good sleeping environment. This will also help improve mood and energy for the following day.

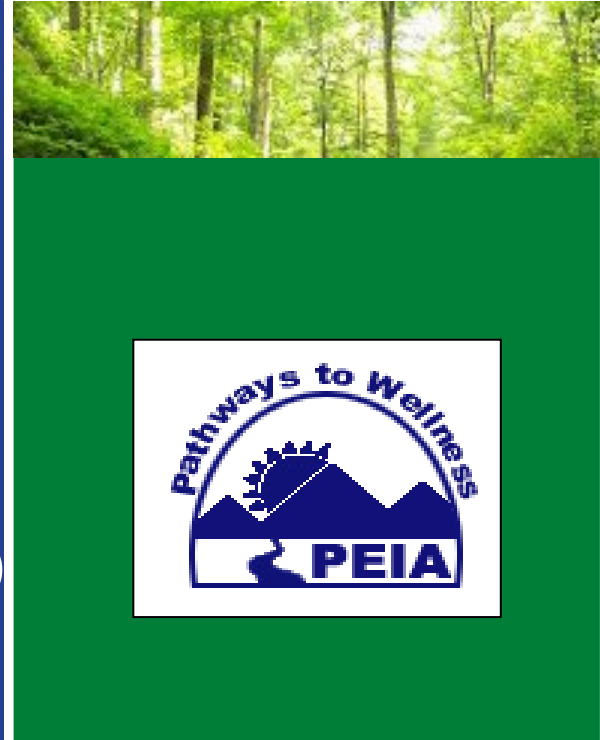
**Hydrate:** During and after exercise is a perfect time to replenish lost fluids. Water is the best hydration resource. Avoid sports drinks due with a high sugar content. The more you sweat, the more water you need to consume.

**Proper nutrition:** One of the hardest workout components for many people is eating properly. Fueling the body with the right foods is important not just for recovery, but for overall health. Avoid heavily restricted diet programs, as they are often unsustainable. It is hard to "out train" a bad diet, and it is hard to "out eat" a bad training program.

**Stretching:** Stretching after exercise is a big key in dealing with soreness, proper recovery, and flexibility. Take the extra 5-10 minutes after a workout and stretch out the body. During your "rest" week, take a few extra minutes to fully stretch out the body.

# Rethink Your Drink for Sleep

By: Beth Metzger



**R**ethinking your drink is one of the smallest changes you can make in your diet. However, it can lead to big gains or losses. Making the switch to water from sugar sweetened or artificially sweetened beverages provides your body with one key element that is used in most body processes. Consuming soda throughout the day not only increases your health risks for developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease, but it may be effecting the quality and quantity of sleep you get each night.

Waking up from a restful night sleep is something many people dream of doing. As much as we strive to get the recommended 8 hours of sleep, for many this is an unattainable goal. According to the National Sleep Foundation, people who drink a lot of sugary, caffeinated drinks tend to sleep for five or fewer hours a night. This is less than ideal for any age group and can also lead to those people “needing” that pick up again the following day. The National Sleep Foundation provides three good reasons as to why soda doesn’t help you snooze the night away.

## The caffeine can keep you up:

Starting with the most obvious culprit, caffeine is a well-known stimulant that blocks chemicals in the brain that make you feel sleepy, temporarily helping you to feel more alert.

It's safe in moderation, but can stay in your bloodstream for about six hours. If you have a soda with dinner, you may still feel the effects at bedtime.

## It may worsen nighttime heartburn symptoms:

The carbonation in soft drinks can lead to bloating and stomach pressure that contributes to heartburn, or GERD. And GERD has a tendency to flare up at night and make you more likely to suffer from sleep problems like insomnia, daytime sleepiness, and restless legs syndrome.

## It's a contributor to obesity:

Sugar-sweetened drinks like soda are the number one source of sugar in the American diet, making up nearly half of the added sugars that Americans consume. A 20-ounce bottle of regular cola packs about 240 calories from sugar. Yet, paradoxically, even without containing any calories, diet soda can contribute to weight gain, too. That's bad news for sleep quality, since obesity raises the risk of sleep apnea and more sleep loss, creating a vicious cycle.

Replacing the sugary beverages with water can help you get the night's rest you have been dreaming of as well as reduce health risks. PEIA Pathways to Wellness has just the challenge to get you started with H2O Go! The H2O Go challenge aims at helping you meet the recommended amount of water you need each day while eliminating sweetened drinks. Contact your regional Health Promotion Consultant for details and scheduling.

## Resources:

National Sleep Foundation. (2017, April 19). *Why Soda Impacts Your Sleep*  
Retrieved from: National Sleep Foundation: <https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/why-soda-impacts-your-zzzs>



# Benefits of Exercising OUTSIDE

By Angela Watkins



**T**he Great outdoors can inspire you to stay active in the fresh air and beautiful scenery. While going to a gym has many benefits, spring and summer is the perfect time to refresh your workout.

There are many benefits that come with exercising outdoors. Your mind focuses differently when taking in the scenery rather than staring at a mirror or gym wall. Researchers from Glasgow University found that walking, running, biking, and other outdoor activities done in green space lowered stress and provided a free daily dose of Vitamin D from the sun.

All exercise counts, but people could do more if they planned exercise as a part of their daily routine. It is generally recommended that the average adult get two hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity cardiovascular exercise every week and two or more sessions of strength training. Walking lunges, squats and step-ups onto a park bench will work your lower body, while pull-ups on the monkey bars, and tricep dips can work your upper body. Bring your dynaband along and incorporate those exercises into your routine. A half-hour spent on a brisk walk or jog can aid in becoming healthier.

It can be easy to skip workouts. However, a 2011 survey found that exercising outdoors is a reinforcing behavior. It states that outdoor exercisers, "declared a greater intent to repeat the activity at a later date," than gym-goers. Daily exercise can be a challenge. However, when your workout has the opportunity to boost your mood and your health, the choice becomes a little easier.

## Resources:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com>, [www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/)



# Exercise of the Month

## Mini WORKOUT

By: Marjan Washington



### Instructions:

This workout is an example of how to exercise without equipment. All of the exercises have been featured in prior newsletters and are to be done with/without weights or bands—your preference! The idea is to choose a few simple exercises and do one set of each. Reduce the number of exercise repetitions in the set by one, and repeat. In this example, you will do 10 repetitions of each exercise in the first set. Next, you will do 9 repetitions of each exercise. The third set will be 8 repetitions of each exercise, etc. until you do each exercise one time. It is an easy way to increase your heart rate when you do not have access to a gym or equipment.

### MINI WORKOUT

10 Jumping Jacks  
10 Push Ups  
10 Squats  
10 Crunches

9 Jumping Jacks  
9 Push Ups  
9 Squats  
9 Crunches

8 Jumping Jacks  
8 Push Ups  
8 Squats  
8 Crunches

7 Jumping Jacks  
7 Push Ups  
7 Squats  
7 Crunches

6 Jumping Jacks  
6 Push Ups  
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4 Jumping Jacks  
4 Push Ups  
4 Squats  
4 Crunches

3 Jumping Jacks  
3 Push Ups  
3 Squats  
3 Crunches

2 Jumping Jacks  
2 Push Ups  
2 Squats  
2 Crunches

1 Jumping Jacks  
1 Push Ups  
1 Squats  
1 Crunches



# Spring into Wellness

By: Grace Matthews



**T**he cooler months have passed and now the warmer, sunny spring days are upon us. What a great time to “spring” into getting healthy! The season can not only brighten your mood with warm weather and blooming flowers, but gives you the opportunity to lighten your body and clean your mind. Here are some tips for enjoying the spring:

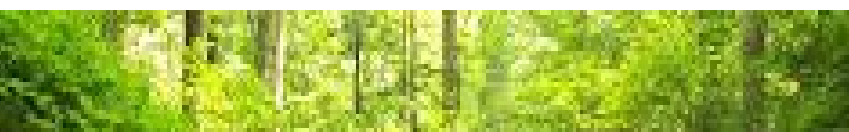
**Get sunlight** –Your body needs Vitamin D and the sun is an excellent source. You only need a few minutes of sunlight each day but make sure you protect yourself from harmful rays and wear sunscreen.

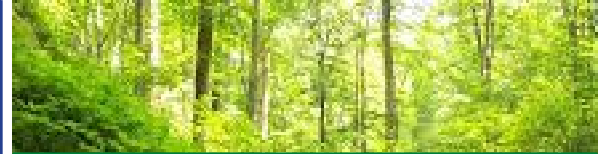
**Go outside** - Spend more time outside enjoying the nice weather. Taking a few minutes to enjoy the surroundings can help us to reflect, relax, and relieve stress that we have in our everyday life. Take walks with your family and friends. Move your running routine from the gym to the outdoors. Try something new like biking or hiking. Outdoor exercise is a great way to improve your cardiovascular system and not to mention, burn calories too.

**Eat produce** - Springtime brings more fresh fruits and vegetables to the grocery stores. Try new recipes with fresh fruits and vegetables and make your meals more colorful. What better time to start incorporating more colors than now? Don't forget to check out your local growers and farmers markets for fruits and vegetables this spring.

**Stay hydrated** – It is important to always stay hydrated! The warmer temperatures can cause dehydration, so make sure that you are drinking plenty of water. It is recommended that men drink 104 ounces (thirteen 8 ounce glasses), and women drink 64 ounces (eight 8 ounce glasses), per day.

Take advantage of the springtime and all the health benefits it can bring!





# Region Summaries

**1** **Region 1 - (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler, Doddridge, Marion, Harrison, Pleasants, and Gilmer):** In the northern part of the state fitness classes continue at John Manchin Senior Center, East Fairmont Middle School, and the Harrison County State Building. John Marshall High School completed a PiYo fitness class series. Hancock County DHHR participated in the musculoskeletal presentation on the back and “Deep Relaxation” program. Brooke County Library hosted the knee and carpal tunnel presentations. They will be doing the back presentation in May. The Dynaband challenge wrapped up at the Marion County DEP, Health Department, Public Library and Ohio County DHHR. The City of Fairmont Sanitary Sewer Board kicked off the Back on Path Challenge while it wrapped up at the Marion County Board of Education. Doddridge County Schools will be participating in the “Deep Relaxation” presentation in May. The City of Clarksburg will be doing the carpal tunnel and knee presentations. We are currently scheduling programs, individual health coaching, and Work It Out assessments to help support Healthy Tomorrows goals and conducting presentations on various musculoskeletal issues.

**2** **Region - (Monongalia, Taylor, Barbour, Preston, and Lewis):** While many sites continue to consider the Personal Lifestyle Coaching offered to everyone, the employees of Brookhaven Elementary enjoy each other’s company by participating in an after-school group walking activity. On the other side of the county, the staff at Mountain View Elementary are taking advantage of the warm weather by also participating in a walking program.

**3** **Region - (Upshur, Tucker, Hardy, Grant, Pendleton, and Randolph):** Franklin Elementary wrapped up their Zumba class with great attendance. Pendleton DHHR is getting Back on Path with a walking challenge. Grant County DHHR continues their H2OGO challenge, as is Eastern Community College in Hardy County. Beverly Elementary finished up the Country Health fitness class and H2OGO challenge.

They are now ready to begin the Back on Path walking challenge and WIO fitness assessments. Randolph County DHHR completed the 6 month follow-up with Work It Out assessments. Individual health coaching continue throughout the region.

**4** **Region - (Monroe, Mercer, McDowell, Wyoming, Raleigh, and Summers):** Region 4, Work It Out Fitness Assessments wrapped up with Mercer DHHR, Welch Hospital in McDowell County, Wyoming East High School in Wyoming County and Crescent Elementary School in Raleigh County. Mercer County School’s has had several follow up health coaching sessions. Raleigh Board of Education completed their Work It Out assessments along with a Dyna band demonstration. Raleigh DHHR is continuing to be active by taking on the pledge to be more hydrated with our H2O Go program. Stratton Elementary School in Raleigh County is finishing their Zumba class. Stratton Elementary School will be continuing their Back on Path walking program.

**5** **Region - (Greenbrier, Nicholas, Webster, Pocahontas, Fayette, and Braxton):** Region 5 is getting active and staying hydrated! Frankford Elementary, Braxton County Board of Education, Flatwoods Elementary, Braxton County High School, Sutton Elementary, Braxton County Middle, Frametown Elementary, Little Birch Elementary and Ronceverte Elementary are all pledging to stay hydrated and reduce their sweetened beverages with H2O Go. Getting Back on Path with the walking challenge is Greenbrier DOH, Rainelle Elementary, Braxton County High School, Braxton County Middle, Flatwoods Elementary, Little Birch Elementary, Sutton Elementary and Braxton County Board of Education. Greenbrier DOH and Braxton County Board of Education will be Working It Out this month as well.

**6** Region - (Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Mineral, and Hampshire): Region 6 has been keeping busy as the warmer months approach. DHHR in Martinsburg finished an onsite yoga class. Hedgesville Elementary is still enjoying Zumba. Keyser High School had good participation with the Work It Out fitness assessment program. Keyser High School began a walking challenge this month. The WV School for the Deaf and Blind had their Work It Out 6 month follow up assessment with every participant showing improvement. James Rumsey and Burlington Primary schools are scheduled for the Work It Out fitness assessment program in the next few weeks.

**7** Region - (Kanawha (non-school sites), Boone, Logan, Lincoln, and Calhoun): With the onset of spring and renewed energy, Region 7 has pep in their step!

Several Walking challenges kicked off in Kanawha County, including Workforce WV and the Bureau for Medical Services. The Higher Education Policy Commission celebrated National Stress-Awareness Month by offering the stress management presentations, "Stress Effect" and "Deep Relaxation." These presentations develop awareness regarding the physiological effects of stress and allow discovery of new tools to effectively manage stress. WorkForce WV also launched a DynaBand challenge. Several fitness classes emerged with the season as well including yoga at the Supreme Court and Office of Judges, along with Zumba at Bureau of Child Support Enforcement. Spring looks good on you, Region 7! Sow those seeds!

**8** Region 8- (Mingo, Mason, Wayne, Cabell, and Putnam): Mountain View Elementary School began a Yoga class and H2O Go program. West Teays Elementary

School began the H2O program with over 30 participants. In Mason County, Beale Elementary continued a Zumba fitness class. In Cabell County, Cabell County Library will begin a Zumba class May 1st. Huntington High School had wonderful participation in a yoga class the Back On Path Program. Milton Elementary school will begin a Boot camp class soon. Culloden Elementary has completed their Boot camp fitness class and are now beginning the Move It program. Wayne County DHHR will also begin a fitness class in May.

**9** Region 9 - (Clay, Ritchie, Wood, Wirt, Jackson, Roane, and Kanawha County Schools): Region 9 had a great start to the spring. PEIA sponsored fitness classes had a great turn out with Zumba being held at Hayes Middle and Central Elementary. Yoga will also be starting up at East Bank Middle. After the WIO program last month at Malden Elementary, Cedar Grove Middle and Cedar Grove Elementary, the walking program and H2O Go programs have been conducted this month at all three locations. Overall region 9 has had a great busy spring.

## Importance of Flexibility (Continued from Page 1)...

An added benefit of stretching is that it may improve your circulation, increasing blood flow to your muscles. Having good circulation can help protect you against a host of illnesses, from diabetes to kidney disease. Greater flexibility has been linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. A 2009 study in the American Journal of Physiology indicated that people age 40 and older who performed well on a sit-and-reach test (a seated forward bend that measures flexibility) had less stiffness in their arterial walls, an indicator of the risk for stroke and heart attack. Who would have thought that the more flexible we are, the better cardiovascular health we could have?? Flexibility is just one test that is assessed during Pathways to Wellness WIO (Work It Out) fitness assessments. Contact your local HPC to find out how flexible you are and what you can do to improve it. Look for easy stretches for your upper and lower body and for your back in next month's issues.

## Run/Walk your first 5K Race (Continued from Page 2)...

**Believe in yourself:** Completing a 5K requires mental and physical power. Remember that you are your biggest fan, and there is power in self-talk. Encourage yourself to finish the race and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't achieve the time you wanted or you don't run the entire time. Focus on the finish line, and remember that there is always another race! Anything is better than nothing!

**Focus on yourself:** You might be afraid of not finishing the race or being the slowest runner/walker. However, don't think too much about all the people ahead of you. Everyone is there to fight their own battle and accomplish their own goals - focus only on yours.

**Be safe:** To avoid injury, listen to your body and slow down if necessary. The excitement of an event causes some participants to "start" at a pace that is too fast. You may alternate walking and running if you can't run all the way. Increase your running distance slowly. Remember to warm up and cool down, and don't forget to stretch after a race! Stay hydrated and wear the right shoes. Most of all, have fun! You will be so glad when you cross the finish line.

**Go, Champ, Go!!!**

