



## Get Ready to **Start!**

### **American Heart Association's Start! Fitness Challenge** **Wednesday, April 16 – Wednesday, May 28**

On Wednesday, April 16, the American Heart Association (AHA) is again encouraging employees across the United States to bring their sneakers to work and get walking with the Start! program:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3041198%20Program>

The AHA is promoting that for every one hour of regular exercise, you can gain two hours of life expectancy, even if you don't start until middle age! Cardiovascular disease is still the number one killer of both men and women in the United States. The AHA **Start!** Program encourages all Americans to get started on developing heart healthy habits through regular exercise and good nutrition.

### **HR Wellness Fitness Challenge**

HR Wellness, in conjunction with Start!, is challenging all FCPS employees to participate in a six week fitness challenge, starting April 16 and continuing until May 28, by pledging to walk or perform some form of aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes five days a week. Participants can choose to break up their 30 minute sessions into 2 -15 minute or 3 -10 minute intervals. Participants also pledge to include at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables in their daily meals. Studies have demonstrated that practicing both of these health behaviors can have a significant impact on lowering cardiac risk factors.

If you are unable to walk 30 minutes or more a day due to a physical challenge but would like to participate, you can join in by pledging to perform an exercise routine which coordinates with your physical abilities and your physician's advise. If you are already performing at least 30 minutes or more of aerobic exercise five days a week, you can challenge yourself to cross train or increase the time or frequency of your sessions.

### **HR Wellness Supports You With Motivation and Prizes!**

HR Wellness will support Start! participants by providing free pedometers, compliments of Care First, while supplies last. We will also email you weekly motivational tips on fitness, nutrition and stress management strategies along with heart healthy recipes. Registered participants will also be eligible to have their names placed in weekly prize drawings for health related items some of which are healthy cookbooks, Start! water bottles, exercise bands, yoga mats and more throughout the six week challenge.

At the end of the challenge, we will have a "grand prize" drawing from the names of all of the FCPS sites that participated in Start!.The Start! participants from the selected site will receive "goodie bags" filled with fitness items to help them continue their heart healthy activities. In addition, the Start! participants will be treated to a healthy breakfast, delivered to their site compliments of Kaiser Permanente.

## How To Get “Started!”

If you would like to take part in this fitness challenge and have your name entered into the weekly prize drawings, you will first need to register on My PLT. **The registration deadline is April 21.**

### How to register on My PLT for the challenge:

- Register for the challenge by going to My PLT <http://fcpsnet.fcps.edu/plt/MyPLT/index.html> and logging on.
- Then type **Start!** in the course offerings.
- Once on the Start registration site you will click on “**view sessions**” and register for the session that contains the first letter of your last name.
- **This is a self paced fitness challenge, so you can ignore the Gatehouse location, 8 a.m to 4 p.m. time slot and instructor’s names on the registration page. This information is there only as a set up function.**
- Once you have successfully completed your registration, you will receive a confirmation e-mail and HR Wellness will then send you your pedometer. It may take a few days to get the pedometer.
- If you have never logged onto My PLT before, simply go to <http://fcpsnet.fcps.edu/plt/MyPLT/index.html> for log on directions. Once logged on, follow the above instructions. You will receive a confirmation email once you have successfully registered and we will send you your pedometer.
- If you should have any questions about your registration or the challenge, send an e-mail to [fitnesschallenge@fcps.edu](mailto:fitnesschallenge@fcps.edu). **Please do not call the phone number listed on My PLT.**

## Keeping Track of Your Start! Miles and Calories

- Once you have registered on My PLT, you can choose to keep track of your Start! miles by going to the AHA website and signing up for your own free, online tracker which logs miles and calories burned to encourage you to stay on the right course during the challenge. <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3040839>
- This is an optional step.

The Start! fitness challenge is a great opportunity for FCPS employees to enhance their heart health. In addition it can be a great way to get some healthy competition going amongst co-workers or neighboring schools. See who can get the highest number of steps per week. It’s all in good health and just think of the years you will gain on your life! So grab a co-worker or two, find a pair of walking shoes and get ready to Start!

If you have any questions regarding this fitness challenge or need help logging on to My PLT, send an e-mail to [fitnesschallenge@fcps.edu](mailto:fitnesschallenge@fcps.edu)

**This fitness challenge is coordinated through HR Wellness in the FCPS Office of Benefits.**