



brighterbites®

TEACHER WELLNESS:

FOUR WAYS SELF-CARE CAN SUPPORT A BRIGHTER YOU!

Food: Fuel for Your Success

Nourish your body with the food it wants and needs so that you can flourish on a daily basis.

- There are small steps of change you can take to make food shopping and meal preparation less daunting and more manageable and budget-friendly.
 - <https://www.myplate.gov/app/shopsimple/desktop>
 - Make a Plan
 - Shop Smart
 - Prepare Healthy Meals
 - <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/smart-shopping/creating-a-grocery-list>
 - When buying fresh produce, fruits and vegetables that are in season tend to sell at lower prices.
 - Create a “master” list of frequently purchased items. That way, you can quickly check off what you need on your next shopping trip.
 - Before heading to the grocery store, check your fridge, freezer, and pantry for items already on hand.
 - Stock up on popular pantry staples.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/eat-well/grocery-shopping.html>
 - Organize your grocery shopping list by store section for quick and easy shopping.
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/cooking-skills/shopping/shop-smart-and-save>
 - Store-brand products may be more affordable.
 - Keep recipes, grocery lists, receipts and coupons in one place to make planning easier.
- Start the day off right! Healthy breakfast recipes for busy teachers like yourself
 - <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/snack-and-meal-ideas/6-tips-for-better-breakfasts>
 - Quick breakfast ideas
 - 45-Second Scrambled Eggs: Put eggs and a splash of milk in a bowl, whisk it up and put it in a microwave for 30 seconds. Stir and put back in for another 10 seconds.

- 30-second Smoothie: Blend low-fat milk, frozen strawberries and a banana for a quick smoothie to enjoy with a bran muffin.
 - Classic Cereal Gets an Upgrade: Cut up some fresh fruit and add to an unsweetened breakfast cereal.
 - Instant Oatmeal: Look for varieties without added sugar and just add boiling water. Stir in dried cranberries and almonds.
 - The night before, make a breakfast plan as you clean up from dinner. Set the table and prepare your cooking utensils the night before.
- Eating lunch helps to refuel you for productive afternoons
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/healthy-work-lunch-habits-infographic>
 - Among the 85% of employed Americans who typically eat lunch at work:
 - More than 8 in 10, 82%, say having healthy food options at work is important to them.
 - However,
 - More than half, 56%, struggle to eat a healthy lunch at work.
 - More than 1 in 3, 35%, say that on a stressful day at work, their lunch is less healthy than a typical day.
 - <https://adc-us.com/blog/why-lunch-breaks-are-crucial-to-employee-productivity/>
 - People who take lunch breaks to eat lunch, hydrate, and go on a walk will be able to reset their focus before heading back to work.
 - Eating lunch away from the classroom allows for teachers to practice mindfulness while eating.
 - Keeping phone use to a minimum while eating can result in less stress and fatigue.
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/mental-health-and-wellbeing/mindful-eating-infographic>
 - Savor the flavor of your food
 - <https://www.weareteachers.com/teacher-lunches/>
 - Pack It and Go! Packed teacher lunch ideas you will want to try
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/add-color/healthy-snacking>
 - Delicious foods to satisfy your sweet tooth cravings
 - Canned fruit
 - Thin slice of angel food cake
 - Thin slice of homemade banana-nut bread
 - Baked apple
 - Raisins, dates, figs and other unsweetened dried fruits

- Frozen banana
- Frozen grapes
- Fresh fruit salad

Exercise: Move to Boost your Wellness

Exercise not only changes your body; it changes your mind, your attitude, and your mood.

- <https://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/exercise-depression>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/endorphins#what-they-are>
- <https://adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/related-illnesses/other-related-conditions/stress/physical-activity-reduces-st>
 - What are endorphins?
 - Endorphins are neurotransmitters that are released by the brain to alleviate pain (e.g., think spraining an ankle) and promote pleasure (e.g., think feelings of happiness after working out or the concept of runner's high).
 - What are benefits to physical activity and endorphins?
 - Reduce stress, anxiety, levels of tension, and feelings of depression
 - Boost self-esteem
 - Elevate and stabilize mood
 - Improve sleep
- <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-infographic>
 - Move More, Sit Less! How much physical activity do you need?
 - It is recommended that adults get 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity 5 days a week.
- <https://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/features/the-unworkout-7-ways-get-fit-have-fun>
- <https://www.thenationshealth.org/content/47/5/17>
 - New to working out? Don't love going to the gym? Welcome to the concept of the unworkout. Here are creative ways to get your body moving!
 - Take a walk in the park or around the block. Take a hike on local trails.
 - Pick up gardening. If you don't have a yard, consider checking out your local community garden.
 - Go swimming.
 - Play tennis, volleyball, badminton, croquet, or golf.
 - Try belly dancing, hula, clogging, or tap dancing.
 - Check out geocaching.
 - Go horseback riding.
 - Try inline skating.
 - Volunteer.

- Build houses for Habitat for Humanity.
 - Pack produce and canned goods at your local food bank.
 - Join in a community trash pickup.
 - If you have children, play backyard games like tag, hopscotch, and capture the flag.
- Participating in physical activity outside in the fresh air and sunshine is an effective way to boost your mood and de-stress.
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise/low-impact-cardio>
 - Quick low-impact cardio exercises
- <https://www.pastemagazine.com/health/fitness/the-10-best-fitness-youtube-channels/>
 - Free YouTube Workout Videos
- <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/getting-active/get-into-working-out>
 - Unsure of where to start?
 - Make it yours
 - Stay supported
 - Break it up
 - Build it in
 - Give it time
 - Keep it going

Sleep: Wake Up Well-Rested

“There is renewal in rest.” – Lailah Gifty Akita, Ghanaian Author

- https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/how_much_sleep.html
 - Are you catching enough shut-eye each night? The CDC recommends adults aged 18-60 years old to get 7 or more hours of sleep each night.
- <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/sleep/how-sleep-affects-health-infographic>
 - There are numerous ways sleep benefits your wellness.
 - Healing and repair of cells, tissues, and blood vessels
 - Stronger immune system
 - More creativity and productivity
 - Improved mood and energy
 - Better brain function including alertness, decision making, focus, learning, memory, reasoning, and problem solving
 - Better ability to build muscle
 - Quicker reflexes
 - Less risk of chronic disease
- <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/sleep/sleep-well-infographic>
- <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/sleep/how-to-sleep-better-infographic>
 - Here are ways to support a better night's sleep:
 - Tech detox
 - Charge your device as far away from your bed as possible.
 - Dim your screen or use a red filter app at night. The bright blue light of most devices can mess with your circadian rhythm and melatonin production.
 - If you've got a scrolling habit you need to kick, try an app-blocking app that makes it impossible to get lost in after-hours emails, social media or gaming.
 - Be active during the day! Add physical activity into your daily routine.
 - Establish a nighttime routine and implement a bedtime alarm.
 - Create a morning routine that you enjoy waking up to.

Stress: Benefits of Not Burning Out

“Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths.” – Etty Hillesum, Dutch Writer

- 2017 Educator Quality of Life Survey
 - <https://www.aft.org/2017-educator-quality-life-survey>
 - Nearly two-thirds, or 61 percent, of educators find work "always" or "often" stressful, twice the rate of other workers.
- 2021 State of the U.S. Teacher Survey
 - https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1108-1.html
 - A much higher proportion of teachers reported frequent job-related stress and symptoms of depression than the general adult population.
 - Mode of instruction and health were the highest-ranked stressors for teachers.
- The Benefit of Not Burning Out
 - <https://www.weareteachers.com/teacher-stress/>
 - <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/infographic-avoiding-burnout.htm>
 - Burnout can cause low productivity, high absenteeism, and even health problems, such as depression.
 - <https://www.healthline.com/health/tips-for-identifying-and-preventing-burnout#takeaway>
 - Burnout is preventable and avoidable.
 - Eating a balanced diet, regular exercise, and getting a good night’s sleep may prevent this stressed state.
 - Make self-care part of your daily routine. Try going for a walk, talking to a friend, or watching an enjoyable program on television. Small self-care gestures like these can stop stress from turning into something more serious, like burnout.
- Stress management tips
 - <https://adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/related-illnesses/other-related-conditions/stress/physical-activity-reduces-st>
 - <https://adaa.org/tips>
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management>
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/fight-stress-with-healthy-habits-infographic>
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/mental-health-and-wellbeing/loving-kindness-meditation-infographic>
- YouTube and Podcast Resources
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend?language=en

- How to make stress your friend by Kelly McGonigal
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Otqq66zwa7g>
 - Change your mindset, change the game by Dr. Alia Crum
 - <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2014/04/14/299179468/mind-over-milkshake-how-your-thoughts-fool-your-stomach>
 - <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-milkshake-study/id1480751239?i=1000518008996>
 - A Milkshake Experiment
 - <https://www.developgoodhabits.com/ted-talks-stress/>
- Good mood foods
 - <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/mental-health-and-wellbeing/food-and-mood>
 - Fruits and Vegetables
 - Omega-3 Fatty Acids
 - Chocolate
- New to meditation? Try these tools to see if meditation can work for you at home or in the classroom
 - <https://www.mindful.org/free-mindfulness-apps-worthy-of-your-attention/>
 - <https://www.klassroom.com/blog/mindfulness-apps-for-teachers/>
 - <https://www.gonoodle.com/>

Financial Wellness

- <https://lincs.ed.gov/state-resources/federal-initiatives/teaching-skills-matter-adult-education/financial-literacy>
 - What is Financial Literacy?
 - Financial literacy skills mean having the confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to make financial decisions that promote financial self-sufficiency, stability, and well-being. These skills include the ability to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information, resources, and services and to make informed decisions about financial obligations, budgeting, credit, debt, and planning for the future.
- <https://www.projectschoowellness.com/wellness-basics-financial-health/>
 - What are some examples of financially healthy habits?
 - Learn how to create and stick to a budget
 - Understand the difference between needs and wants and commit to living within your means
 - Check-in and track your spending on a regular basis
 - Start planning for the future now
- https://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/learn/budgeting/evaluating_your_finances
 - How can I evaluate my own finances?
 - Create a monthly budget
 - Add up your income
 - Estimate your expenses
 - Figure out the difference
 - Track it
 - Build an emergency fund
 - Manage debt load
- <https://www.apa.org/news/podcasts/speaking-of-psychology/financial-stress>
- <https://www.verywellmind.com/understanding-and-preventing-financial-stress-3144546>
- <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/coping-with-financial-stress.htm>
 - I am stressed thinking or talking about my finances. How can I cope with financial stress?
 - Reach out for support and talk to someone
 - Get professional advice
 - Open up to your family
 - Take inventory of your finances
 - Make a plan and stick to it
 - Create a monthly budget and prioritize your spending
 - Understand the debt cycle
 - Manage your overall stress levels