

livewell

Winter 2014



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Beach Cities
Health District

A Public Agency

514 N. Prospect Ave., 3rd Floor, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310-374-3426 • bchd.org



COVERING THE BEACH CITIES

Programs for every stage of life

We are pleased to announce Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) is now an official enrollment site for Covered California – the state’s implementation of the Affordable Care Act. We have a long history of connecting Beach Cities residents with healthcare options.

As a testament to that, we’ve offered need-based and fee-based medical, dental and counseling services to residents, as well as a variety of other services, through our Center for Health Connection for more than a decade. This is in addition to administering more than 20 other community services spread across the lifespan, from infancy to older adulthood.

If Covered California’s online application seems overwhelming, BCHD’s four Certified Enrollment Counselors can pilot people one-on-one through the software and the options they qualify for. This service is free of charge for residents of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach.

I encourage anyone who wants or needs help navigating Covered California to schedule an appointment with our team. Please call (310) 374-3426, ext. 256 to set up an appointment during any business day.

In Service,

Susan Burden
Chief Executive Officer
Beach Cities Health District

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Developing healthy habits in children to last a lifetime through:

Youth Services



- Nutrition & Garden Education
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Physical Activity
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Fitness Classes



Adult Services

Creating a thriving, healthy adult population in the community through:

- Blue Zones Project®
- Covered California
- Public Health Initiatives
- Low-cost Gym Memberships
- Health Referrals for Underinsured/Uninsured
- Volunteer Opportunities



Older Adult Services



Helping aging adults maintain a high quality of life and live independently at home through:

- Care Management
- Peer Counseling
- MoveWell In-Home Exercise
- Errand Assistance
- Social/Conversational Support

Visit **bchd.org** to learn more about Beach Cities Health District’s programs and services.

Moai-tivating Social Connection



By Lauren Nakano, Blue Zones Project Director

In the villages of Okinawa, Japan, elementary school-aged children are grouped together by their elders with five to six of their peers ... for life. And life, for many Okinawans, can last a century or more.

Known as a "moai" ("moe-eye"), which roughly translates to a "meeting for a common purpose," the groups are designed to provide the social support and companionship necessary for participants to navigate life's challenges, and achieve health, longevity and long-lasting friendships.

And it works. The Japanese live longer than anyone on the planet, and Okinawans live longer than anyone else in Japan and boast the highest ratio of centenarians in the world.

According to Blue Zones Project® Founder and National Geographic Explorer Dan Buettner's extensive research in the region, Okinawans also live better – enjoying sound bodies and minds well into their later years. And moais are playing an integral role.

Due to this success, Beach Cities Health District's Blue Zones Project is currently creating moais more than 6,000 miles away in Redondo, Hermosa and Manhattan Beach. We're not grouping children for life, but we are bringing people together of all ages to form walking groups, healthy potlucks and reading clubs, among others. But one size doesn't fit all, and we encourage each moai's activity to be as diverse as the people in it.

Research shows that when people band with others who are healthy or working toward positive change, healthy behaviors increase, as well as the likelihood of maintaining these behaviors long-term. Additionally, there is a strong connection between social connectedness and longevity, as illustrated by the Okinawans and other Blue Zones® (long-living areas) around the globe.

So in the New Year, I challenge you to create, join or register your existing moai with Blue Zones Project. Aside from the health and social benefits, you'll receive discounts at participating Blue Zones Restaurants® and help the Beach Cities become a national model for well-being. And it may help you live longer, to boot.

Talk about moai-tivation.

For more information, visit bchd.org/bzp. To register an existing moai or to join a moai, contact Tiana Rideout, Blue Zones Project community health programs coordinator, at tiana.rideout@bchd.org or call (310) 374-3426, ext. 139.

What does a moai look like?



Walking



Potluck



Books



Coffee

Power 9®

Live longer by applying these principles from the people who have lived longest!



1. MOVE NATURALLY

Find ways to move more! You'll burn calories without thinking about it.



2. PURPOSE

Wake up with purpose each day to add up to 7 years to your life.

See *Volunteer Opportunities*, pg. 6



3. DOWN SHIFT

Reverse disease by finding a stress-relieving strategy that works for you.

See *MindUp Matters*, pg. 3



4. 80% RULE

Eat mindfully and stop when you are 80% full.



5. PLANT SLANT

Put less meat and more plants on your plate.



6. WINE @ FIVE

Enjoy a glass of wine with good friends each day.



7. RIGHT TRIBE

Surround yourself with people who support positive behaviors.

See *Healthier Living*, pg. 5



8. BELONG

Belong to a faith-based community, and attend services 4 times a month to add 4–14 years to your lifespan.



9. FAMILY FIRST

Invest time with family and add up to 6 years to your life.

See *Valentine's Day Connection*, pg. 4

(RIGHT) Hermosa Valley School teacher Erin Infusino leads her 6th grade class through MindUp relaxation techniques to sharpen their focus and reduce stress.

MindUp Matters



By Eric Garner
BCHD Communications Specialist

Neuroscience. Mindful awareness. Positive psychology. Social-emotional learning.

No, these aren't lessons being taught to clinical psychologists or even aspiring medical students. Rather, they're four components that form the backbone of a cutting-edge program – founded by The Goldie Hawn Foundation and led by Beach Cities Health District – being taught throughout Redondo and Hermosa Beach elementary and middle schools to help students better manage their emotions and stress.

Known as MindUp™, the program's evidence-based curriculum blends mindful awareness and relaxation techniques with the science behind how the brain works and reacts to stimuli – specifically stress, anger and anxiety, which research shows to be more prevalent among young people today – to help students regulate their emotions and grow socially.

Local teachers and counselors, with guidance from the Health District's certified MindUp trainer, help students hone their skills through focused breathing exercises, lessons on the neurochemistry of behavior as well as interactive group discussions on strategies to resolve peer-to-peer conflict.



As Beach Cities Health District Chief Medical Officer Dr. Lisa Santora points out, students not only make better decisions when they are cool, calm and collected, they also reap health and social benefits.

"Stress and anxiety reduction at a young age can help prevent future illnesses like depression, high blood pressure and substance abuse," said Santora. "Additionally, students who are relaxed, empathetic and mindful are more prepared to become lifelong learners and productive citizens – as well as less likely to encounter disciplinary issues at home and school."

Santora added that teachers commonly report decreases in behavioral problems following the implementation of MindUp. And she noted that kids with fewer of these issues experience greater educational and occupational success.

For one local elementary student, dealing with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), MindUp gave her the confidence and wherewithal to deal with teasing.

"I use breathing techniques to calm myself," she said, "so I act rationally instead of impulsively."

Another student, a 6th grader, uses the MindUp lessons to manage his anxiety.

"When I'm feeling depressed," he said through tears, "I know to focus on my breathing."

And that's why MindUp matters.

Make a Valentine's Day Connection at the Dinner Table



February

AdventureCamp



A Beach Cities Health District Program

February 17-21

9am-4pm Ages 4-12

School breaks should be full of fun, not spent at home on the couch. And there's no need to change your work schedule or daily routine. Treat your child to a week, or as little as a day, of AdventureCamp.



By Dr. Lisa Santora, BCHD Chief Medical Officer

A slew of Valentine's Day dates are right around the corner, but the most important reservation you make this month should be at the family dinner table. And, parents, you'll fall madly in love with the benefits.

By connecting over a well-rounded meal at least three times a week, you're not only strengthening your family bonds, chances are you're also improving your child's school performance and health.

According to The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, children who eat dinner with their families fewer than three times weekly score lower on tests than kids who eat family dinners three or more times. Furthermore, families who eat together also have a higher intake of essential nutrients.

Blue Zones Project® Founder and National Geographic Explorer Dan Buettner experienced the benefits of a "Family First" mentality while studying Blue Zones® – areas in the world where people live the longest. His research suggests strengthening family ties can tack on six years to your life expectancy.

Now that's a relationship worth pursuing.

Need help instituting family dinner nights? Below are some tips to get you started:

- **It's a date.** Scheduling regular times and days for family meals helps set a precedent and a routine.
- **Cook quickly, eat slowly.** While a nourishing meal can be prepared quickly, be sure to maximize your family's mealtime experience by taking time to laugh, talk and savor your food.
- **Shop and cook together.** Children will get more enjoyment from meals they help prepare. Spending time together in the kitchen is a great way for families to connect.
- **Stay off the grid.** Make family dinners a tech-free zone. This means turning off TVs, cellphones, iPods, etc.

CLASSES

5-LEVEL PLAY STRUCTURE

ROPES COURSE

BIRTHDAYS

A Healthier Approach to Chronic Conditions



By Kerianne Lawson,
Older Adult Services Director

Karen, 82, was diagnosed with spinal stenosis in 2007. Caused by an abnormal narrowing of the spine, the condition brings severe pain, numbness and, in some cases, a complete loss of motor control.

It's difficult to treat and even tougher to live with – physically and psychologically.

And like so many others living with chronic illness or disease in the Beach Cities, Karen is a widowed older adult still living independently – cooking, cleaning and looking after herself. But as the years progressed, she noticed her quality of life beginning to regress.

"Some days I couldn't get out of bed, let alone walk," said Karen, a long-time resident of Redondo Beach. "I love to go on walks and garden, but there were days the pain was just too much. An assisted living home is not an option for me; and I don't like to take medicine. So instead, I decided to try Beach Cities Health District's Healthier Living class."

Created by Stanford University researchers, Healthier Living is an evidence-based workshop held for two and a half hours, once a week, for six weeks, in a community setting.

The workshop is for people who, like Karen, suffer from chronic health problems, and it's taught by trained mediators, who often live with chronic sickness themselves.

Subjects covered include: 1) techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation, 2) appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility and endurance, 3) appropriate use of medications, 4) communicating effectively with family, friends and health professionals, 5) nutrition, 6) decision making, and, 7) how to evaluate new treatments.

And, as Karen is now quick to point out, participants who complete the program generally experience significant improvements in exercise, cognitive symptom management, communication with physicians, health distress, fatigue and social limitations.

"The class taught me to view my condition differently," said Karen. "For example, I

wasn't sleeping enough and I wasn't managing my symptoms correctly. But most importantly, the class mapped out exactly what I needed to do to feel better and live better.

"It was a different approach. And it worked."



For more information on Healthier Living or to take the course, please call (310) 374-3426, ext. 132, or visit www.bchd.org. All members of the public are welcome to attend, including caretakers and family members of those suffering from chronic health conditions.

Volunteer Opportunities

More than 600 people strong, our network of volunteers form the backbone of Beach Cities Health District. Diverse, motivated and talented, District volunteers have the opportunity to work in a variety of community-focused programs and play an integral role in improving the health and well-being of Beach Cities residents.

MoveWell Volunteers

MoveWell volunteers visit seniors and people with disabilities to help with simple in-home exercises.

Errand Volunteers

Help isolated older adults with errands for daily living, such as grocery shopping and pharmacy visits.

Conversation Companions

Help curb loneliness and isolation in the community by making routine in-home visits to residents in need of socialization.

Like to garden but don't have the space? Become a Garden Angel!

Join our LiveWell Kids obesity prevention program by volunteering in the school gardens.

Blue Zones Project

Help make a positive difference in the Beach Cities by joining Blue Zones Project. Volunteers are needed to help with community events and outreach.

Front Desk Volunteers

Personable and responsible volunteers are needed to staff our front desks and help with clerical duties.

For more information, visit bchd.org/volunteer or contact Volunteer Services at volunteers@bchd.org or 310-374-3426, ext. 246.

Trainers' Tips

Achieve your fitness resolution this year by following these simple tips, compliments of the trainers at Beach Cities Health District's Center for Health & Fitness.



Lauren

It's more efficient to lift with lighter weights and target specific muscle groups than to push yourself with heavier weights and improper form. Less is sometimes more!



Julie L.

Create an agreement with yourself. For example, allocate 1 hour every day for only fitness. This will allow you to have guilt-free exercise!



JoAnna

Take the thinking out of it: set a time for exercise, build it into your schedule and do it. It will quickly become a healthy habit!



Mike

Mix up your cardiovascular equipment to avoid repetitive joint use damage. Try incorporating 2-3 cardiovascular machines in a 30-60 minute session.



Julie H.

Be patient. Once you find a routine that you enjoy, stick with it. Additionally, talk to a trainer or nutritionist about a well-balanced diet.



Jason

Keep it fun: It's really hard to stick with anything you're not enjoying. Personalize your workouts and incorporate challenging exercises/movements that you ENJOY!

Put these tips to good use by downloading your **complimentary week** of membership at beachcitiesgym.com/weekpass



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Jim Wade, member since 2009
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* Minimum 1-year commitment required.



A Beach Cities Health District Program