



## Thrive This Fall: Self-Care Strategies for Educators and Families

### LOOKING AHEAD...

#### Become a Wellness Champion!

Promote wellness and serve as a resource for the RCAB Wellness Program and Health Plans at your worksite and earn up to \$150 into your HealthEquity HRA or HSA!

#### MoveSpring September Challenge: STEPtember

You are challenged to take at least 7,000 steps for 25 days. Participate solo or as a team!

#### Wellness Webinars

Learn how to move through life transitions with compassion, use CBT to improve focus and productivity, kick-start your financial journey, and protect your financial future.

#### The Recipe Corner

A warm and cozy faro salad, perfect for any holiday or dinner this fall.

*This newsletter will continue to include timely information on health and wellness but will also feature news, tips, and updates on a variety of benefits topics. If you would like to see a particular topic covered, send us your ideas at [benefits@rcab.org](mailto:benefits@rcab.org).*

As the school year kicks off, the excitement of new beginnings and setting new goals often comes with a whirlwind of responsibilities, routines, and expectations. For parents and teachers alike, this season can be both energizing and overwhelming. That's why it's essential to prioritize your own wellbeing. Wellbeing is foundational, not optional. When you feel balanced and supported, you're better equipped to support the children in your care.

Here are five practical wellness tips to help you stay grounded and energized this fall:

#### 1. Establish Gentle Routines

Routines provide structure, but they don't have to be rigid. Build in buffer time during mornings and evenings to reduce stress. For teachers, consider starting your day with a few minutes of prayer, quiet reflection, or deep breathing before students arrive. Parents can create calming rituals, like a short walk or journaling after drop-off.

#### 2. Protect Your Mental Space

Back-to-school often means a flood of emails, meetings, and to-do lists. Set boundaries around your time and energy. Schedule short breaks throughout your day to reset. Even five minutes of mindfulness or stretching can make a big difference.

#### 3. Fuel Your Body

Busy days can lead to skipped meals or quick snacks. Prioritize nourishing foods that sustain your energy. Keep healthy options on hand (like nuts, fruit, or yogurt) and stay hydrated. Teachers: consider prepping snacks for your desk. Parents: involve kids in packing balanced lunches.

#### 4. Connect and Communicate

You're not alone. Lean on your community, whether it's fellow teachers, other parents, or your loved ones. Share challenges, celebrate wins, and ask for help when needed. Connection is a powerful antidote to stress.

#### 5. Celebrate Small Wins

Recognize the effort you're putting in. Whether it's a smooth morning routine, a successful lesson, or a peaceful bedtime, take a moment to appreciate it. These small victories build resilience and joy.

Remember, your wellbeing matters. By caring for yourself, you create a ripple effect of calm, compassion, and strength that benefits everyone around you. Wishing you a healthy, balanced start to the school year!

## Update: The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Catholic Family and Medical Leave Program



Eligibility to file a claim for Catholic Family and Medical Leave (“CFML”) benefits for an employee’s own medical reason (serious health condition, including pregnancy/childbirth) began on **September 1, 2025**. Eligibility to file a claim for CFML benefits for family medical reasons (including bonding) begins on January 1, 2026. Employees who need leave for medical reasons and who were scheduled to work a minimum of 20 hours per week (and who were paid for a minimum of 20 hours/week) (or a minimum of 24 hours per week if a 10-month employee) and

12 months of continuous service with an employer that participates in the CFML program may contact the Benefits Department at [cfml@rcab.org](mailto:cfml@rcab.org) to inquire about filing claims for CFML benefits.

The CFML Program provides eligible employees up to 10 weeks of CFML benefits following a 2-week waiting period, at up to 80% of pay, for approved family and/or medical leave (in the aggregate) in a benefit year. The CFML program offers two levels of benefits: Baseline CFML (40% of an employee’s pay, funded by employer only) and Full CFML (additional 40% of employee’s pay, for a total of up to 80%, funded by voluntary employee payroll deductions of .57% of wages).

Detailed FAQs on the CFML Program are accessible [here](#) on the CFML page of the Benefits Department website at [catholicbenefits.org/cfml](http://catholicbenefits.org/cfml).

### Become a Wellness Champion!



The Benefits Department is looking for Wellness Champions!

A Wellness Champion is an employee who is passionate about promoting wellness and serves as a resource at their worksite for the RCAB Wellness Program and Health Plans.

Earn up to \$150 into your HealthEquity HRA/HSA based on satisfactory levels of engagement. Attend online meetings on the first Wednesday of every month from October to June. To sign up, register [here](#). For questions about the role of a Wellness Champion, please email [benefits@rcab.org](mailto:benefits@rcab.org).



The Center for Disease Control recommends you stay up to date with flu and COVID vaccinations. Vaccines offer strong protection, but that protection takes time to build. Vaccines do not provide full (100%) protection, so breakthroughs can happen. However, as more people get vaccinated, it is expected fewer people will come into contact with the virus.

Click [here](#) to schedule your flu or COVID vaccination today!



## Wellness Webinars

### Flourishing Through Life Transitions

Use access code **RCAB** to view the webinar.

[Friday, September 5: 1-1:30 p.m.](#)

[Wednesday, September 17: 3-3:30 p.m.](#)

Change happens. We may or may not expect it. We may or may not like it. Either way, it can leave us feeling uncertain and overwhelmed. Whether you're adjusting to an empty nest, grieving a loss, adapting to a job promotion, or stepping into a new life chapter - you're not alone in your feelings of uncertainty. In this webinar, the Learn to Live clinical team will provide powerful CBT tools to help you move through life transitions with more clarity and self-compassion.

### Squirrels and Shiny Objects:

#### Addressing Problems with Focus and ADHD

Use access code **RCAB** to view the webinar.

[Thursday, September 18: 11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.](#)

Do you find it hard to pay attention, stay organized, or avoid distractions? Whether or not you have ADHD, these problems can make daily life tough. But there is good news.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can help. Join this conversation with the Learn to Live clinical team to explore how CBT can help those living with lack of focus and productivity challenges.

*The following webinars are accessible to employees participating in the Voya 401(k) retirement plan.*

### Protection

[Tuesday, September 9: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.](#)

[Tuesday, September 23: 12 p.m. and 3 p.m.](#)

This session will review how to protect yourself today and protect your future. Protecting yourself today is about protecting your earnings and protecting your savings with health, disability and critical care insurance. And protecting your future is about planning ahead with life and long-term care insurance and having an estate plan.

### Starting Out in the Workforce

[Tuesday, September 23: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.](#)

This session is tailored for those just starting their careers, providing guidance to help you kick-start your financial journey.

## Webinar Recordings

View the recorded webinars from last month!



**PLAY NOW!**

[Setting Boundaries for Well-Being:  
The Art of Assertiveness](#)

[Raising Future-Ready Kids 3: Empowering  
Parents in a Social Media World](#)

Use access code **RCAB** to access recordings.

*MoveSpring*

**September Challenge: STEPtember**



Join us for our annual Step Challenge!

You are challenged to take at least 7,000 steps a day for 25 days. Aerobic exercise can reduce stress, boost your mood, improve cardiovascular health, and enhance cognitive function. Participate solo or as part of a team to motivate each other to stay active.

Employees and spouses enrolled in the RCAB Health Plans may click [here](#) or scan the QR code to join by September 7.



Earn \$50 into your HealthEquity HRA or HSA (subject to Plan Year maximums) when you complete this Challenge!



## THE RECIPE CORNER

### *Fall Faro Salad with Hot Honey Vinaigrette*

Recipe from [Dash of Mandi](#)

*This warm fall salad is loaded with cozy autumn flavors. It's the perfect side dish for any holiday or dinner this season packed with sheet pan roasted Brussels sprouts, squash, apples, walnuts and pomegranate.*



#### Ingredients

##### Salad

- 5 oz. shaved brussels sprouts
- 1 red apple, chopped
- 1 cup butternut squash, cut into small cubes
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup cooked farro
- 1/4 cup pomegranate seeds
- 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped

##### Hot Honey Vinaigrette

- 3 tbsp & 1 tsp hot honey
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 clove minced garlic
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp fresh thyme leaves, optional
- pinch of black pepper
- pinch of nutmeg

#### Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Spray a large baking sheet with non-stick spray or line with parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl combine shaved brussels sprouts, apple, butternut squash, salt, cinnamon and olive oil. Mix well then arrange on the prepared baking sheet in a single layer.
3. Bake for 15 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, make the hot honey vinaigrette by whisking all the ingredients in a bowl or jar. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
5. Assemble salad by adding the farro to a serving dish. Top with the roasted brussels sprouts, apple and butternut squash. Add the pomegranate seeds and chopped walnuts. Drizzle with the hot honey vinaigrette.
6. Serve warm and enjoy!

*In health,*

*Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Benefits Department*