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## It's May: Go Outside & Play!

### commit to be fit

Join the Commit to Be Fit May Challenge. To participate, go outdoors and engage in physical activity. Anything that requires movement counts! Ex. walking, bike riding, backyard games, gardening, hiking, golf, etc. Check out the attached activity log to record your activities. For each day you complete an activity, you will receive one entry into our prize drawing (ex. 8 days = 8 entries). At the end of the month, visit [www.raapc2bf.com/may-challenge](http://www.raapc2bf.com/may-challenge) to enter our prize drawing. Entries must be received by June 5<sup>th</sup>. This fun challenge is open to everyone in Rappahannock County. Complete as an individual (18 years or older) OR as a family (all ages). Challenge runs from May 1<sup>st</sup> - May 31<sup>st</sup>.



# commit to be fit

SY 2022-2023 Report

Year 6: Reboot & Reimagine

Generously Funded by



PATH FOUNDATION

Sponsored by





## About Us

Commit to Be Fit is a grant funded, school supported program in a rural Virginia county that is geared towards creating a culture of wellness in three key areas:

cafeteria  classroom  
community

Realizing that academic performance is strongly correlated to healthy minds and bodies, wellness and healthy lifestyles have become an integral part of our educational culture at Rappahannock County Public Schools. **The Commit to Be Fit program is funded by the generosity of the PATH Foundation.**





## cafeteria

Year 6: Reboot & Reimagine- In the post-pandemic era, Commit to Be Fit focused on rebooting our premier school-based wellness programs, emphasizing staff and community wellness while continuing to enhance our wellness initiatives for students. **For our cafeteria prong, this included an emphasis on nutrition education for students in all grade levels, including a greater focus in our high school. Additionally, we collaborated with the JEDI team to provide more culturally diverse foods during taste testing activities.**

**RCES Harvest of the Month**



**Nutrition Education in the Classrooms**



**RCHS TryDay Fridays**



RCPS students had several taste testing opportunities throughout the school year. We were thrilled to have Ms. Liz Beling, Regional Farm to School Liaison, visit RCES to share the Harvest of the Month again this school year. Students learned fun tidbits while sampling the featured vegetable or fruit. Additionally, the team visited primary grade levels to promote healthy food choices for the young students, which included tasty treats. This year, multiple tastings were offered for all high school students during TryDay Fridays. Items included spaghetti squash with marinara, hummus with veggies, roasted sweet potato bar, Fry Bread, fruit infused waters, and more!

**RCES Kids' Afterschool Cooking Clubs**

Commit to Be Fit was excited to offer our Fresh Food Fiesta, an afterschool kids' cooking club, for grades K-7<sup>th</sup> this year! Students prepared an assortment of age appropriate items and had a blast learning how to cook. Recipes included English muffin pizzas, parfaits with fresh strawberries, pumpkin muffins, berry jam and more!





## Cafeteria Highlights

### Student Grown Vegetables

Brain cells weren't the only things growing in the RCES Action Based Learning Lab. The students grew their own lettuce in our hydroponic tower garden again this year! RCES students had an opportunity to sample the school-grown lettuce during Every Kid Healthy Week. Served with a dab of ranch, the lettuce was a hit! Multiple students even asked for seconds.

In the spring, ABL students enjoyed planting green bell peppers, cherry tomatoes, roma tomatoes, banana peppers, and jalapenos in the outdoor beds.

### POP (Power of Produce) Bucks Market Bags & Tokens

Commit to Be Fit was excited to offer the POP Bucks program during the 2022-2023 Farmers Market season. Thanks to a PATH Foundation grant, the POP Bucks program provides access to local food and supports our local farmers at the Rappahannock Farmer's Market. During the season, EVERY Rappahannock County Public Schools student had the opportunity to redeem a POP Bucks Market Bag, which included local produce, protein, bread, and more!

New this year, students were each given two \$5 tokens to shop at the participating vendors booths. This provided an opportunity for the children to browse the local foods and ask the farmers questions. This was a hit with both students and farmers!

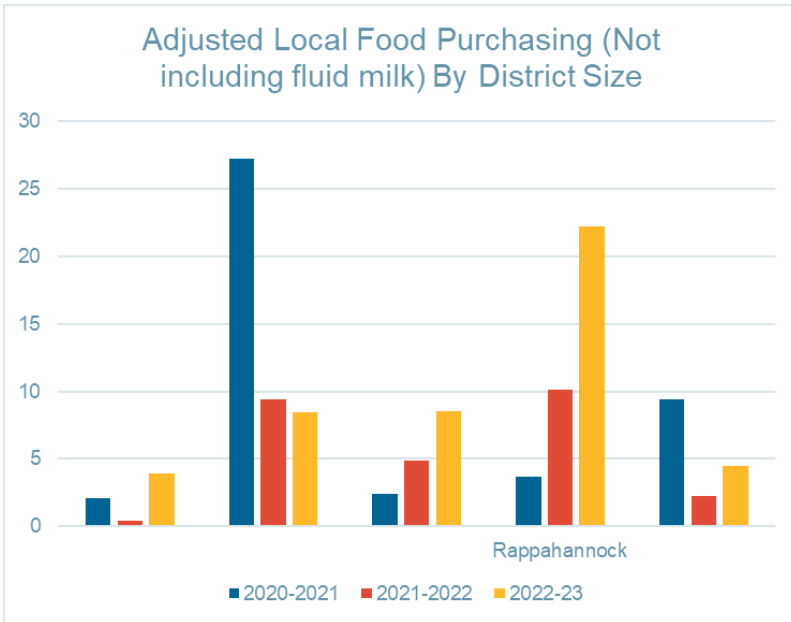




## Cafeteria Highlights

### Local Food Purchasing Increased

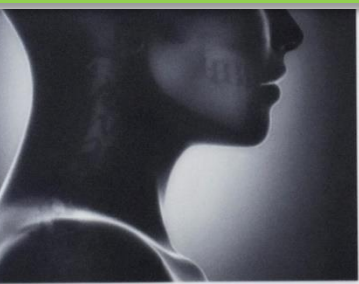
Commit to Be Fit remains committed to ensuring that locally sourced foods are served in the school cafeterias. Not only are these foods fresher for the students, it helps to support our local farmers. Since the year following the pandemic, we have continued to increase our local food purchases. **This year, we more than doubled the amount of local foods purchased in comparison to SY21-22.** The graph to the left (adjusted by district size) shows the amount purchased in comparison to other local schools.



### Staff Farmer's Market

Commit to Be Fit hosted its highly-anticipated Farmers Market for RCPS staff in November and May. Held in the Auxiliary Gym parking lot at the elementary school, local farmers set up beautiful displays of their market goods for the staff to select from during the event. All staff members were provided with a market bag and tickets to exchange for food as they shopped among the different farmers' tables. This year's assortment included vegetables, herbs, protein, bread, fruits, apple butter, honey, jams, jellies, and much, much more!





After Sitting Quietly

After 20 Minute Walk

Research compliments of Dr. Chuck Hillman University of Illinois



## classroom

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## Classroom Highlights

### Brain STAR Action Based Learning (ABL) Lab

Our Action Based Learning (ABL) Lab was filled with lots of laughter, smiles, and physical activity during SY22-23. Students continued to engage in purposeful movements designed to build stronger, healthier bodies and promote academic success in the classroom. Students rotated through a series of 10 stations which focus on key developmental movement foundations. This includes balance, proprioception, vestibular development, visual tracking, gross motor, fine motor, cardio, strength, rhythm and beat, and cross lateralization. Stations were switched regularly after the mastery of skills to provide new challenges.

*Pictured Right-* A student follows the footprint patterns, which promotes cross lateralization, or crossing the midline.



### 20 Minute Move and Review



The 20 Minute Move and Review (previously known as Reboot 20) returned in SY 22-23 to assist with remediation. RCES teachers were able to book timeslots in the ABL Lab for students to review content in our curriculum integration stations. This dedicated time was used to review provided content/curriculum along with purposeful movement. Movement anchors learning. Research shows that reviewing curriculum with movement strengthens the memory pathways.

*Pictured Above-* A student successfully read each sight word before moving to the next rung of the balance ladder.





### De-Stress Boards



### Yoga and Positive Affirmations



### Mindful Minute



Our classroom prong isn't solely about movement. We focus on **mental wellness** too for both students and staff. This year, C2BF created De-Stress Boards at RCHS. Located in a commons area, students and staff were encouraged to use the board as a resource to manage stress or just to take a mindful, quiet moment. At RCES, students had a chance to work on a separate de-stress board in the ABL Lab. Additionally, we worked promoted positive self-thoughts with positive affirmations and taught students calming exercises, such as a mindful minute of deep breathing.

### RCHS Neuronasium

The Neuronasium classroom was available for all high school classes to use throughout SY22-23. This alternative seating classroom, based on brain research, provides purposeful movement for students in order to increase attention and engagement. The Neuronasium is equipped with glider desks, standing desks, pedal desk (pictured), balance desks, wobble stools, and more!





### **RCHS Nutrition & Personal Fitness Elective Class**

At the high school, Commit to Be Fit offered the RCHS Nutrition & Personal Fitness elective for RCHS students again this year. Designed to teach and promote healthy lifestyle habits, students learned different aspects of wellness in addition to nutrition and physical activity. The students enjoyed creating multiple healthy meals and snacks, such as an acai bowl (pictured). Additionally, the class engage in active field trips, which included indoor climbing, aerial yoga, and bike riding.

## **TEACHER RESOURCES**

Click the images below to view brain breaks, curriculum integration games, and videos.

 **ES Brain Breaks**  
GRADES: PK-7

 **HS Brain Breaks**  
GRADES: 8-12

 **Games with SOL Integration**  
GRADES: PK-5

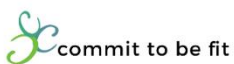
### **BRAIN BREAKS - VIDEOS**

**GRADES PK-3RD**  
Time: 1- 5 minutes Equipment: NONE

**GRADES 4TH-7TH**  
Time: 1- 5 minutes Equipment: NONE

### **C2BF-Created Database for Teachers**

On the website, C2BF offers a large database of classroom activities and brain breaks for teachers (PREK- 12). For elementary teachers, we have created BrainSTAR (Brain Strengthening through Action Repetition) database, which is a collection of short movement based activities that can be done in the classroom to help students refocus while practicing the 10 key foundations that are used in the Action Based Learning Lab. Additionally, there are classroom games with SOL integration for grades PreK- 5<sup>th</sup>. Finally, we offer brain breaks in a video format for all elementary grade levels. For the high school, we have a large variety of brain breaks that the teachers can pull from to provide movement activities designed for older students. All activities can be found at [www.rappc2bf.com/teacher-resources](http://www.rappc2bf.com/teacher-resources)



#### **Effectiveness of a Movement Intervention on PALs Scores**



Addendum- 2023

# **R E P O R T**

### **Evidence-Based Practices & Research**

Commit to Be Fit measured growth in the Action Based Learning Lab throughout the 2022-2023 school year. Our research report from the prior year (SY21-22) found that many of the students started with deficits in fundamental motor skills, with 71% presenting at least one area of weakness in progression 1 of movement activities. Given the disruption to routine caused by the global pandemic, this was not overly surprising. While last year's 8-week program successfully closed the developmental movement gaps, further research was warranted, particularly related to cross-lateralization and gross motor skills.



## community

Year 6: Reboot & Reimagine- In the post-pandemic era, Commit to Be Fit focused on rebooting our premier school-based wellness programs, emphasizing staff and community wellness while continuing to enhance our wellness initiatives for students. **For our community prong, this included relaunching our in-person staff/community classes, workshops, and events that were interrupted due to the pandemic and necessary safety mitigation measures; Reviving and enhancing our challenges to enhance motivation and social support; Evaluating the impact through staff/community engagement.**

**Meditation & Relaxation**



**Monday Fun Day**



**Salad in a Jar**



**Strength Training**



**Meal Prep**

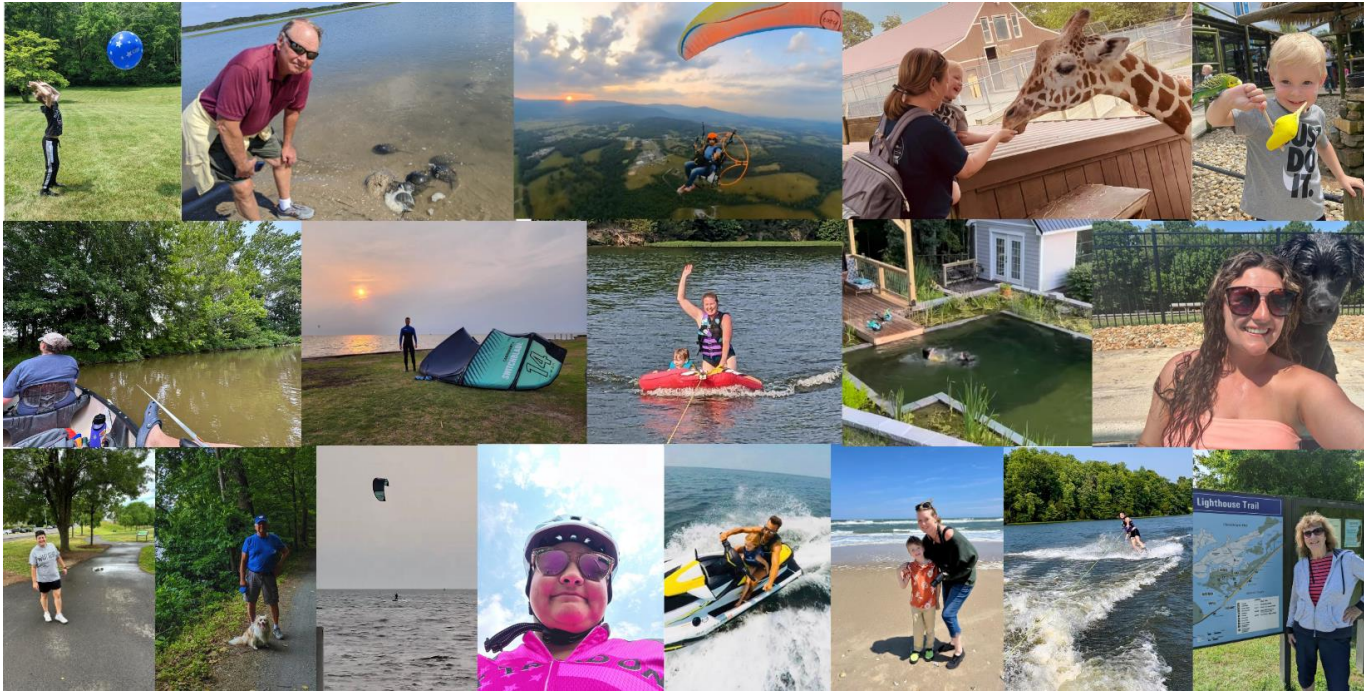
**Commit Club- Classes & Workshops**

During SY22-23, Commit to Be Fit rebooted our free, weekly group fitness classes for staff and community members. Dubbed Commit Club, participants received a point for attending activities, which could be redeemed for prizes. This incentivized program allowed us to track program participation while creating tangible goals for individuals to work towards. Additionally, a variety of wellness-related workshops were offered throughout the school year. This included Monthly Meal Prep, Introduction to Strength Training, BlazePods, and more!

Ultimately, the weekly class attendance was lower than our previous offerings prior to COVID-19, despite providing similar times and class formats: yoga, low-impact aerobics, circuit, meditation & relaxation, Monday FunDay, and walking group. Yoga, held directly after school, had the highest class average throughout the year with 6.4 participants, 72% were community members (non-staff). Looking at all of our offerings held directly after school, the combined total was 3.9 participants (58.7% attendees were community members). Our evening class, Low Impact Aerobics on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, averaged only 3.3 participants throughout the year, which was surprisingly lower than the afterschool average, 95% of attendees were community members. Looking at these averages, C2BF has pivoted to a different format for SY23-24 to hopefully engage more of the Rappahannock community. It is worth noting that while the class averages were not high, we did reach 326 individual participants in our community prong throughout SY22-23.

### Wellness Challenges

During the school year, we offered two physical activity community challenges: **It's May: Get Outside & Play** and **Summer of Fun** (pictured). Additionally, we led a **Kindness, Love, & Positivity Challenge** to promote social and mental wellness. Also, we hosted the **16-week Governor's Physical Activity Award Challenge** for RCPS staff.



 **commit to be fit**  
*Weekly Newsletter*  
 14 April 2023/ Issue No. 242

### Weekly Newsletter

In July, we published the 250th edition of the Commit to Be Fit Newsletter! The weekly community newsletter is still going strong after 6 years. The newsletter first debuted in October 2016, originally in PDF format, and featured a single tip of the week, upcoming activities, and a featured recipe. It has expanded over the years and is now in a digital format. We are grateful that this weekly communication tool has been so well- received.



#### Announcements



**Every Kid Healthy Week**  
 Next week, Commit to Be Fit will be celebrating Every Kid Healthy Week. Follow us on social media to see the daily happenings!

#### Tips from the Team



**Grow Your Own Plants**  
 Summer is almost here, which also means planting season. You might say you're not the type who can grow anything, but I beg to guess your thumb is greener than you might think. Try growing a few of your favorite vegetables this year. Many vegetables grow quite easily and do not take up a lot of space. Go as big or small as you like. You may want to only use a couple planting pots or create a small raised bed. Some examples of what I consider easy growers are zucchini, peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes, and sunflowers. If sunflower seeds

#### Featured Recipe



**Healthy Breakfast Banana Split**  
 This week's recipe is a healthy alternative to banana splits. Rather than using ice cream, try Greek yogurt or cottage cheese. Yum! [Click here to view.](#)

### Additional Community Activities

**Turkey Trot-** In November 2022, C2BF hosted a virtual turkey trot. With 129 registered participants, it was the largest C2BF turkey trot to date.

**BlazePods & Movement Stations-** Throughout the school year, C2BF collaborated with a variety of organizations to provide activity stations. This included Art of Aging: Lifestyle & Wellness Expo 2022 (shown left), PTO Monster Mash, RCES Family Engagement Night, Headwaters ASEP, and more.

**Community Cookbook-** In March 2023, C2BF released an electronic community cookbook, which included a variety of healthy community submitted recipes. This cookbook is available on the website.

### Presentations

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Mental Wellness Conference-** In September 2022, C2BF had the honor of presenting at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Mental Wellness Conference in San Diego, California. From the main ballroom stage of the convention center, the team shared easily replicated ideas to support students and staff during their presentation, *Supporting Our Staff Superheroes: Promoting Mental Wellbeing for All School Staff to More Effectively Help Our Students*. While it's always an honor to represent RCPS and share best practices, the team enjoyed meeting other wellness warriors from across the country and learning helpful ways to increase mental wellness for staff and students.

**National Conference on Child Health and Well-being-** On Thursday November, 3<sup>rd</sup>, C2BF presented at the inaugural National Conference on Child Health and Well-being, hosted by Action for Healthy Kids in Chicago. During the presentation, *Creating a Culture of Wellness for All in Rural Communities*, the team shared ideas and various aspects of the C2BF program with fellow wellness warriors from across the country. Throughout the conference, the team gathered several wonderful, inspiring wellness promotion ideas to bring back to Rappahannock!





*Pictured: A few of the 16-week Governor's Physical Activity Award Challenge recipients proudly displayed their certificates.*



## Staff Feedback

**At the end of the school year, we asked our staff if there was anything they would like to share for our annual report. Below is the anonymous feedback that we received.**

- *"Commit to Be Fit does a great job of keeping me motivated to reach all of my fitness goals."*
- *"The C2BF program is run at a highly professional level. The program is ready to support everyone with great programs during and after school hours. The C2BF program consistently looks for ways to improve and provide additional opportunities for an entire school community and general public."*
- *"Commit to be fit is an amazing program that benefits many! With a knowledge staff, they are able to reach so many."*
- *"C2BF is a great program offering some insightful information, classes, and special initiatives on nutrition and exercise. The program is a true asset to the RCPS family."*
- *"Yoga was new for me and I tried it and love it. Thanks so much for the class. It was fun to get to know community members, too."*
- *"Commit to be fit is an amazing and unique program. We are so lucky to have this program in place for our community. Promoting a healthy lifestyle is essential to our well being."*
- *"I love attending the yoga class offered after school. Miranda is an amazing instructor and Rappahannock is so fortunate to be able to offer classes to the community! I also appreciate the C2BF team introducing students to healthy foods when they may not have exposure otherwise."*

 commit to be fit



*The C2BF Team (L-R): Kayla Midkiff (Wellness Integration Specialist), Holly Jenkins (Wellness Integration & Promotion Specialist), Jermey Gates (Wellness Integration Specialist), and Jackie Tederick (Wellness Integration Coordinator). Not Pictured: Dr. Shannon Grimsley, Grant PI & RCPS Superintendent*

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