



934TH AIRLIFT WING

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Prevention Connection: Building a Healthy Community

August is Happiness Happens Month, American Adventures Month, National Wellness Month, and National Night Out

How many times have you said, “I’ll take care of myself when I...?” You can fill in the blank with a myriad of things: make more money, get a different job, finish taking care of the kids, get that degree, etc. But really... the best time to take care of yourself is now. And you can do so by taking one small step at a time.

National Wellness Month is about taking care of yourself one step at a time. Research shows that taking care of yourself in small increments can lead to a lifetime of less stress and more joy. Wellness is not a one-and-done thing. It’s a lifetime of taking care of yourself. The more wellness you have in your life, the happier you are. Think about those little things that can add to your wellness: 10 minutes of stretching each day, drink more water, add fruits and veggies to your diet, practice good sleep hygiene, take a friend out to lunch, etc. Remember, your health and wellness depends on it.

**Special points of interest:
For more info on wellness
go to: [https://
www.mayoclinichealthsys
tem.org/hometown-health/
speaking-of-health/
7-tips-
to-live-a-happier-life](https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/7-tips-to-live-a-happier-life)**

**“It’s up to you today to start making healthy choices. Not choices that are just healthy for your body, but healthy for your mind.”
~ Steve Maraboli**

Happiness Happens-So Make it Happen!

by Ch. Cooper

August is Happiness Happens Month and I have some great news for you about happiness: You can make it happen! I'll explain later, but first I'd like you to complete this sentence: I will be happy when... Or this one: I would be happy if...

Did you notice both of those sentences imply that happiness is a result of our circumstances? Certainly, circumstances contribute to happiness. It is equally true that genetic makeup influences happiness as well; we all know people who just seem to be happy. But happiness is more than the sum of circumstances and personality.

Happiness is also a choice. If you have ever taken a child to Disney World, or some similar place you know what I mean. The little kid is in the middle of paradise on earth, a dream come true. He is surrounded by thrilling rides, castles, wild animals. Storybook figures are coming to life. He has that face that a parent only dreams of seeing-inexpressible joy and glee, happiness beyond measure, until... until you don't buy him the 6 inch, \$4.99 Mickey Mouse stuffed toy. His world collapses, and he lets everyone know it. He is still in Disney World, but that doesn't matter. He isn't happy. You offer to take him on more rides; you remind him of all the children that will never go to Disney World and how special this is. Nothing works. In spite of being in one of the most fun places on earth, he has made the choice not to be happy.

Therein is our lesson: We can choose to be happy, or not. However, the choice to be happy is not simply an arbitrary choice, made in isolation. Rather it is the result of several choices, and those choices together make happiness happen.

Here are some choices that research has identified as contributors to happiness: Choose regularly to do things you find enjoyable (especially small things); maintain strong social connections; set goals and work toward them; challenge yourself; find a purpose greater than yourself; be grateful. Here are some others: Refuse to feel entitled, or have a victim mentality; don't hold grudges, don't worry over things you can't control. These are choices we all can make. Go ahead, choose to make happiness happen.



American Adventures Month

American Adventures month is the celebration of vacationing in the Americas. There is lots to explore in this vast landscape of North, South, and Central America. Many of us often take for granted the great amount of activities and adventures that are available to us within this country.

Everyone needs a vacation once in a while to get relief from the stressors of our environment.

Adventure allows us to be more creative, have more endurance, enjoy more play, and brings cohesiveness within you and your family. Now is the best time to plan your next vacation adventure.

Get out, enjoy the world, and celebrate what America has to offer. Travel opens your perspective, expanding your borders while also leading to more appreciation for your own community. You don't need to travel to a foreign country or spend large amounts of money to explore new territory. Take the time and try something new, even if it is right in your own community.

Here are some ideas you can do to celebrate American Adventures Month:

1. Explore the waters—Minnesota has thousands of lakes to explore. Be adventurous and go canoeing, kayaking, boating, or simply just to cool off.
2. Take a Road Trip—Since flying may not be in your best interest at this time, take a road trip instead. Plan a trip to any of our neighboring states. There are lots to explore, such as Mount Rushmore, Badlands,
3. Explore your State or National Parks—there are hundreds of parks to explore. Take the adventure and go hiking, rock climbing, sight-seeing, or enjoy the beauty of nature.
4. Take an aerial tour virtually to several of our historic areas across the country. There are lots of websites to check out:

<https://www.nationalparks.org/connect/blog/take-virtual-visit-national-park>

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/national-parks/virtual-national-parks-tours>

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/npscelebrates/find-your-virtual-park.htm>



National Night Out

Did you know National Night Out was created in 1981. At the time it was referred to as the National Association of Town Watch. The goal was to provide community watch programs across the nation to get similar information, resources, and assets. In 1984, National Night Out was officially introduced as an event across the country to help bridge the gap and bring people together. It now involves over 38 million people in over 16,000 communities.



The purpose of National Night Out is to build strong partnerships between the police and communities and to promote crime awareness programs such as neighborhood community watch groups. Events are also meant to increase awareness about police programs, such as drug prevention and other anti-crime efforts. Events range from simple backyard barbeques to as large as a festival that includes music, entertainment, and lots of food.

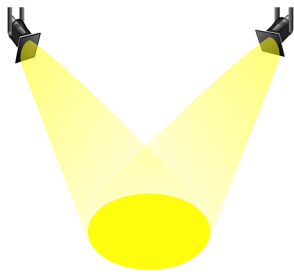
Most communities, large and small, have some sort of event that's held on National Night Out. It is typically held the first Tuesday during the month of August. However, due to the pandemic, this year communities are being asked to push it back to October. You can easily find out if your community is having an event by going to the National Night Out website.

Source: <https://natw.org/>

“One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing.”

~ Jean Vanier, Catholic philosopher and theologian





Resource Spotlight

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon (<https://mnbyr.ng.mil/>)

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon is a comprehensive program that creates awareness for the purpose of connecting service members and their families with community support, training, services and resources. The mission is to serve as a component of the Total Force wellness by providing operationally ready, and well-equipped Service Members who can respond to any national contingency, ranging from war and peacekeeping missions to nation-building operations.

Prevention Partners/Response:

Violence Prevention: 713-1159

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator:
713-1315

Director of Psychological Health:
713-1224

Airman & Family Readiness: 713-1516

Personal Financial Counselor:
612-297-2826

Chaplain Corp: 713-1226

Equal Opportunity: 713-1221

Exercise Physiologist: 713-1472

Security Forces (BDOC): 713-1101/1102

Military One Source: 1-800-342-9647

DoD Safe Helpline: 1-877-995-5247

Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233

National Human Trafficking Resource
Center: 1-888-373-7888

APP* Spotlight and Self Care Strategy—Add this to your Tool Box!



The AF Connect© app has everything you need to stay in touch and up to date with the Air Force and the 934th Airlift Wing. Features include notifications, news, directory, Facebook, Twitter, etc. The app is set so that you can save different wings and organizations to your phone or tablet.

Information posted on the 934th AW is plentiful: contact information, updated announcements, updates on COVID-19, Family Support, Base Chapel, SAPR, Violence Prevention, Psychological Health, Fitness, Finance, and much, much more.

*The AF Connect app is the official app of the Air Force.