

July 2019

Wellcare Monthly



NRPA National Recreation and Park Association

Because everyone deserves a great park

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GAME ON!



NRPA'S PARK AND RECREATION MONTH - JULY 2019

Visit Your Local Parks!

Since 1985, America has celebrated July as the nation's official Park and Recreation Month. Local park and recreation spaces offer health and wellness opportunities to everyone!

America faces many adversities that it must overcome, most notably chronic diseases and the prevalence of sedentary lifestyle and poor nutrition habits. Parks and recreation help to offer resources to encourage active lifestyle habits and wellness initiatives in states and local communities.

The National Recreation and Park Association area of focus is to offer individuals safe access to quality facilities, promote healthy eating and physical activity standards.

This month, get outdoors and check out some local parks and nature spots! To see a complete listing of parks and events going on this summer around Morgantown, please visit: <http://www.boparc.org>.



The Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness

America continues to feel the strain of a serious health crisis affecting adults and young alike. One in which we are plagued by poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles, and unhealthy habits. However, there is a solution with little to no cost and is available in nearly every town, city and community – local parks and recreation!

Public park and recreation agencies create healthy communities and play a fundamental role in enhancing the physical environments in which we live. Through facilities, outdoor settings, and services provided, they support good health for people of all abilities, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ethnicity. They foster change through collaborative programs and policies that reach a vast population to:

- 1) Help reduce obesity and incidence of chronic disease by providing opportunities to increase rigorous physical activity in a variety of forms.
- 2) Provide a connection to nature which studies demonstrate relieves stress levels, tightens interpersonal relationships, and improves mental health.
- 3) Aid in reducing hunger in America and increasing access to nutritious food options.
- 4) Foster overall wellness and healthful habits, such as becoming tobacco-free and engaging in enrichment opportunities that add balance to life.

Scientific evidence continues to also show that the influence of parks and recreation helps to build healthier communities. Even some of the top health and public health officials in the country (U.S. Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) continue to validate that parks and recreation are a critical solution for our nation's health epidemic.

Information provided by: <http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/>



Parks and Recreation: A TRUE HEALTH SOLUTION

Local park and recreation agencies provide health and wellness opportunities for all populations in communities across the country. As America continues to face serious health issues parks and recreation offer an affordable and accessible solution. Share with your communities the impact you are having on their health!

People who use parks and open spaces are **3 times more likely** to achieve the recommended levels of physical activity than nonusers¹

Organized activities in parks in low-income neighborhoods can **increase park use by as much as 25%**²

Older adults engage in over **3.5 times more physical activity** in parks with walking loops.³

Children in summer camps at park and recreation sites report a **20% increase** in fruit and vegetable knowledge⁴

73% of adults believe parks, trails, and open space are an **essential part of the healthcare system**⁵

www.nrpa.org/Health