

# THE BLC BULLETIN

October 2016

## Literacy, Nutrition, & You

### From the Director's Desk

Celine O'Neill, Executive Director



Do you read food labels? I do, every time I am in the grocery. I have been inundated by information about the evils of corn syrup, hydrogenated oils and ingredients that can't be pronounced or found on the food chart. I am bombarded by articles in newspapers and magazines that encourage me to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, and to steer clear of fats, sugars and processed foods that can cause obesity, high blood pressure and cancer.

Our students don't know much about food labels. They probably get most of their information about food from commercials on TV, not the most reliable or unbiased source of data. In fact, adults who struggle with illiteracy often have never been taught how to evaluate food advertisements, balance their meals, or pass on good habits to their children.

Healthy food choices for illiterate adults are few, and the food choices they do have are mostly full of sodium, sugars and fats. The fact that fast food causes debilitating and deadly diseases is known and understood, if sometimes ignored, by those with better food options and the ability to read. For those whose only grocery is a drug store or a dollar store, for those who are unable to comprehend the ingredients on the side of a box or the calories posted on a menu, illiteracy is just one more way that vulnerable people can be exploited.

Try to find a Whole Foods or even a farmers' market in west Dayton, a notorious food desert in the Dayton area. Fast food is cheap, subsidized by the federal government, and readily available.

At the Brunner Literacy Center, reading is a way to empower positive choices. Reading can help our students find and keep jobs. Reading can also save their lives, or at least help them to make informed decisions about what they consume as food. Reading brings a greater awareness of what is possible.

Nutrition is key – to a healthy body and a sharp mind. And literacy helps us all make better choices when it comes to what we eat.

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### Upcoming Events

**Monday, October 10th**  
8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.  
[New Tutor Orientation](#)  
at BLC Salem Plaza

**Saturday, October 29th**  
10:00 a.m.  
[4th Annual 5k Walk/Run](#)  
at Englewood Metro Park

**Thursday, November 17th**  
4:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.  
[New Tutor Orientation](#)  
at BLC Salem Plaza

**Wednesday and Thursday,  
November 24th and 25th**  
BLC closed for Thanksgiving

**Tuesday, November 29th**  
[Giving Tuesday](#)

Food  
for  
Thought



## Issue Focus: Literacy & Nutrition

Bridget Shingleton, Marketing and Communications Manager



Fall brings so many joyful experiences each year. Cooler winds, rain-dark skies, and vibrant foliage inspire many of us to reach for our coziest sweaters, cups of coffee, and favorite books.

With Halloween and Thanksgiving on the horizon, and the Christmas season in the not-too distant future, our thoughts turn to delicious meals soon to be shared with our families and friends. My family always had strict culinary traditions to be followed each year, and everyone always knew who was in charge of the cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, corn fritters, and pumpkin pie.

Fall, to many people, is a sumptuous season filled with creature comforts. For people living in poverty, food and employment scarcities become even more pronounced this time of year.

Illiteracy is bigger than not being able to enjoy a good book while curled up on the couch during an autumn rainstorm.

Illiteracy means insufficient employment opportunities, and the food insecurity that comes as a result. Economically depressed areas often become food deserts, urban areas where fast food is king and grocery stores and farmers markets are nowhere to be seen.

Illiteracy means not being able to read labels or identify warnings against the consumption of unhealthy foods. Illiteracy often means not even knowing that better options exist.

Illiteracy in our communities hurts us all. When you sit down to your families' traditional dishes at your holiday tables this fall, remember your neighbors who are not able to follow a written recipe or to write theirs down for their children to follow one day. Remember that not all traditions are positive.

## Special Events Focus



The [4th Annual Brunner Literacy Center 5k](#) is fast approaching! Mark your calendars for 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 29th at Englewood Metro Park Lawwill Shelter. [Register before October 16 to get a free t-shirt!](#)

If you or your business are interested in sponsoring our race and would like more information about sponsorship benefits, call the Center today to speak with Bridget Shingleton.



[Giving Tuesday](#) is the generosity movement that has been sweeping the globe since 2012. On November 29th, 2016, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, you can be part of the largest international day of giving. [Check out our website to find out how to get involved with the BLC for Giving Tuesday 2016!](#)

## Take Action



Find and donate to a food drive near you! Click the logo for more info about [The Foodbank Dayton](#).



Make healthy eating a priority for your family by following [guidelines from the Ohio Dept of Health](#).



Stay active and encourage your kids to do the same using First Lady Michelle Obama's ["Let's Move!" challenges](#).

## Learn More



["Six miles separate cornucopia, desert" by Josh Sweigart](#)

["West Dayton closer to getting grocery store" by Cornelius Frolik](#)



[Department of Health's Guide to Healthy Lifestyles](#)

[health.gov](#)

[The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's guide to health literacy and communication](#)



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Monday - Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
by appointment

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