

Blue Zones

‘There are people who will never be happy in life because they want too much of life. If they don’t get what they want, they don’t let themselves be happy. The trick is to work for contentment. Then happiness will follow.’

– Dan Buettner, Blue Zones Project founder



Megan Greer, Worksite Lead at Blue Zones Project SWFL and PBS Contractors Field Manager — Tyler McMackin SPECIAL TO THE DAILY NEWS



Catherine Faerber

Columnist

Safety doesn't have to be scary this Halloween

Halloween has become one of the most anticipated holidays of the year with activities like carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, dressing up in costumes and, of course, trick-or-treating.

Unfortunately, Halloween is also one of the most dangerous holidays for children. On average, children at Halloween are two times more likely than any other holiday to be hit by vehicles because of the lack of visibility due to low lighting at night, children suddenly darting into the street, and pedestrians improperly crossing the street, to name a few reasons.

There's no better time than now to start raising awareness of drivers, pedestrians and trick-or-treaters about safety measures that will keep everyone safe on the scariest night of the year. Whether you drive, run, walk or are pulled in a wagon, goblins of all ages can take the following safety precautions as they venture out for a night on the town.

Before you accompanied and unaccompanied goblin goes on the prowl:

- » Check the costume to ensure it fits well to help prevent trips and falls.
- » Use reflective tape on the costume and trick-or-treat bag or bucket.
- » Avoid masks that obstruct vision.
- » Have a flashlight and/or glow stick to increase visibility.
- » Plan your route and a time to return home.

Remind your goblins of all ages to always:

- » Walk on a sidewalk or facing traffic if there are no sidewalks present.
- » Look both ways before crossing the street.
- » Make eye contact with drivers before crossing in front of their car.
- » Trick-or-treat in well-lit areas and go in groups.
- » If you ride a bike, turn on the lights, and wear a helmet and reflective clothing.

Driving goblins be alert:

- » Always anticipate pedestrians and watch for children darting in the street.
- » Watch for pedestrians wearing dark clothing.
- » Drive slowly and with your headlights on in residential neighborhoods.
- » Yield to pedestrians.
- » Don't pass a stopped car. The driver may be dropping off children.
- » Communicate with other drivers using turn signals and hazard lights (if needed).
- » Enter and exit driveways slowly and stay alert.
- » Avoid drinking and driving. If you drink, designate a sober driver or hire a taxi.
- » Limit phone use, if you must —

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Positive culture in workplace helps keep talent



Tyler McMackin

Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLA.

Recruiting great employees is a challenge for construction firms throughout Southwest Florida.

The combination of a growing economy and low unemployment means talented people can be selective in signing on with an employer. Becoming a Blue Zones Project Approved worksite is one way companies in Southwest Florida can distinguish themselves and promote a healthy lifestyle that many candidates seek.

For Tyler McMackin at PBS Contractors in Naples, the Blue Zones Project designation was one of many factors considered when he applied.

The 33-year-old had several offers in the pipeline, even a few that were offering a higher salary. But McMackin had grown uncomfortable with his previous employer, who was so focused on the next quarter results that they overlooked the well-being of their employees.

“All things considered are you happy?” McMackin asked himself. “I answered, honestly, no.”

PBS Contractors is one of only two construction companies in Southwest Florida that have earned the Blue Zones Project approval, which identifies employers that shape the workplace environment to make healthier choices easier.

For McMackin, maintaining a balanced lifestyle is important. He exercises daily, practices yoga three times a week and walks his dogs with his girlfriend. He says other companies may not consider these things important for a motivated and productive team, but they are crucial.

When he joined PBS Contractors, his family was surprised at the change in his attitude.

“My mood improved so much that everyone noticed,” said McMackin.

“I wanted a culture that was team-oriented and put people first, and the positive culture at PBS makes it fun and exciting to come to work every day.”

Employers who adopt Blue Zones Project well-being initiatives in the workplace can enjoy the following

benefits:

- Increased employee engagement, resulting in better productivity and reduced absenteeism

- Reduced healthcare costs through health-risk reduction


- Reduced turnover along with an increased ability to attract top talent by becoming an employer recognized for being part of an important community-wide project to improve well-being

- Employees with higher levels of well-being perform better and cost less

Worksites have the power to dramatically improve employees' well-being in a number of ways that can be transferred to the home environment, and positively affect the larger community, because healthy employees become powerful advocates for change in other organizations, like schools, restaurants, grocery stores, and civic groups.

Tyler McMackin is field manager for PBS Contractors.

To learn how to create a healthier, happier work environment, visit SouthwestFlorida.BlueZonesProject.com and fill out the worksite pledge.



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