



Prevention *for parents*

Gearing Up For a Season of Gratitude

As we continue to live in uncertainty and our wellness reserves may be running low, how do we persevere?

Gratitude is a great ally in the fight for wellness. Studies suggest that practicing gratitude helps people feel positive emotions, improve health, deal with adversity, and build stronger relationships.

Everyone (especially parents!) are dealing with a lot right now.

Incorporating a quick gratitude practice into your daily routine can help.

Have a conversa-



tion with your family and brainstorm some ways to practice gratitude each day as a family or

individually—gratitude is great for adults *and* young people. It doesn't have to be complicated or time consuming!

Here are some ideas to get started:

- Have everyone share one thing they are grateful for each night at dinner.
- Start a gratitude journal.
- Make a list in your
- head as you drive to work every morning.
- Text or call someone each day or week and tell them why you're grateful for them.
- Make a visual reminder to put in your house.
- Try guided mindfulness / meditation with a focus on gratitude.

As Time Falls Back, Move Mental Health Forward

As we head into the winter months and our days are shorter, it's important to be intentional about maintaining mental wellness—especially as we are more isolated than usual.

Take some time to plan with your child and

figure out a wellness routine. Mental health is kind of like taking care of a car, maintenance is important! We also want to have a plan if something breaks. Have a conversation with your child about what to do if they realize they are not well and need help.

Here are some signs that your child's mental health may need a tune up:

- Lost interest in favorite activities
- Low energy/motivation
- Eating/sleeping habits drastically changed
- Feeling sad/irritable for long amounts of time



Check out the parent resource section on the second page for more information and resources.

Parents Need Support Too!

This pandemic has been a very trying time for our youth AND for parents! Juggling the balance of work or stress from lack of work, childcare, at-home teaching, and life responsibilities, it's easy for personal self-care to be pushed to the wayside.



Prioritizing self-care benefits the whole family; that's why South Whidbey Middle/High School will be offering a [Parent Support Group](#) for our Middle and High School parents! Please join Student Assistance Professional, Colleen Chan, and other parents to discuss strategies, supports, and struggles. We do not have to go at this alone and we can get through this hard time together. Please reach out to Colleen if you are interested and she will send you a zoom link.

What Would You Like To See In The Next Issue?

Contact Colleen Chan with any suggestions, comments, or questions.

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Crucial Conversations: National Native American Heritage Month

Crucial Conversations is a new column dedicated to challenging you to have a meaningful conversation with your child about current issues. Navigating 2020 hasn't been easy for many of us, and teens are no exception! As teen brains develop and they gain more access to their pre-frontal cortex, they gain abstract thinking skills, are forming their own beliefs, and are questioning authority. This is developmentally necessary and normal, but throw

in the fact that they have access to so much information, and that is a lot to handle on their own. They need help sifting through everything, processing their thoughts and beliefs, and dealing with stress.

This month's challenge is to explore the history of the land we are on as we celebrate it! It is National Native American Heritage Month, so spend some time learning together and thinking together about what it means to you.



Parent Resources

HOPE in the Time of Coronavirus: 10 Ways to Promote Positive Childhood Experiences

<https://positiveexperience.org/hope-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-10-ways-to-promote-positive-childhood-experiences/>

Mental Health Toolkit for Parents

[Well Being Trust Mental Health School Toolkits](#)

Native American Heritage Month

<https://nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/>