

Prevention for Parents

Happy New Year! A New Year for Mental Health: *Self-Care for Wellness*

2020 is now behind us! The pandemic forced us all to change the way we communicate with one another and also changed the way we go about our daily lives. Self-care in these times are vital to making through each day as best as we can. Though the pandemic has upended many parts of our lives, mental health remains an important component.

When we encounter adversity, we usually don't come out the other side un-changed. This last year is no exception—we are changed and will be dealing with the lasting effects for a while. However, some positives come out of adversity, too.

We have strengthened our resilience and put some practices in place that we might want to keep around. One of those things is a focus on self-care and wellness. If you or your child haven't implemented a self-care routine, it's never too late to begin. Here's how to get started:

1. Create a self-care plan (check out the video in the Parent Resource section). What are the activities or practices that make you feel good? Make a list.

2. Identify your goals around wellness or self-care. How often do you want to practice self-care? What activities do you want to implement on a regular basis? (Check out the Parent Resource section for how to make SMART Goals).

3. Decide how you'll be kept accountable. Will a friend check on you? Will you do activities with other people? Are you (as a parent) able to follow up with your child?

4. Keep going if you slip up! It's okay to miss a day of exercise or skip a couple hours of sleep every now and then. It's just about doing your best. It may feel like one more thing to add to your day, but we are actually more productive when we take care of our-selves. Encourage your child to develop these habits now—they'll pay off in the long run.



Defining Success With a Pandemic Perspective

This is a tough year for academic success as we're used to thinking about it. Students have been faced with many challenges in a short amount of time, and some things have taken precedence over school.

It's okay if your family is struggling and your kids aren't performing as well as they did before the pandemic.

Take a moment to reassure your child that they're not expected to be functioning as well as they used to.

Success is going to look different than last year—it might just be getting to class on time, or getting in enough work to pass instead of getting straight A's.

Whatever the case is for your child, they're not alone. Please reach out to your school counselors if you or your child needs support—this is a difficult time.

OHHS Counseling Office

Phone: 360-299-5717

What Would You Like to See in the Next Issue?

Contact Stephen Keck with any suggestions, comments, or questions:

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[More Information](#)

Crucial Conversations Challenge: MLK Day –A Day On To Serve

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday is coming up on January 18th, and it's a great time to ask your teen about their idea of service.

MLK Day is designated as a national day of service with the hope of encouraging Americans to volunteer to improve their community.

A bonus is that helping others is a proven way to boost our own mental health.

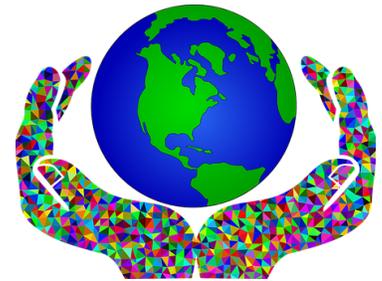
Take some time to ask your teen some of these questions:

- What does it mean to serve?
- What improvements would you like to see in the community?
- How are you contributing

to your community?

- Why is it important to give back to the community?
- What are some ways you can serve your community?

While MLK Day is meant as a day onto serve, it can also be a day to talk about service and make a plan to serve at another time throughout the year. No need to feel guilty about a much needed sleep-in or off day—service is needed all year round!



Parent Resources

[*A Self Care Action Plan*](#) (5 min. YouTube video)

[*How to Make Your Goals Achievable*](#)

[*Signs of Depression During the Pandemic*](#)

[*COVID-19 Resources for Students Grades 6-12*](#)

(Check out the "Parents & Teachers" section)

[*MLK Day of Service in the time of COVID-19*](#)