

# MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY  
EDITION 2025

AS WE ENTER FEBRUARY, A MONTH DEDICATED TO CONNECTION, LOVE, AND CARE, LET US REFLECT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH. THIS MONTH, WE FOCUS ON FOSTERING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS, ADDRESSING SECONDARY TRAUMA, AND BUILDING PRACTICES PROMOTING SELF-CARE AND RESILIENCE FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN.

## MENTAL CONNECTION & SHARING FEELINGS: THE HEART OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE PROFOUND IMPACT OF SHARING FEELINGS ON MENTAL HEALTH.

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, "EXPRESSING EMOTIONS FOSTERS DEEPER CONNECTIONS, REDUCES STRESS, AND ENHANCES PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS." WHEN STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND EDUCATORS FEEL SAFE TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS, WE CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF TRUST AND SUPPORT.

TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION:

- FOR PARENTS: ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS LIKE, "WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF YOUR DAY?" OR "WHAT MADE YOU FEEL PROUD TODAY?"
- FOR EDUCATORS: CREATE CLASSROOM "FEELINGS CHECK-INS" TO ALLOW STUDENTS TO IDENTIFY AND SHARE HOW THEY'RE FEELING.
- FOR YOURSELF: KEEP A JOURNAL OR TALK TO A TRUSTED FRIEND TO PROCESS YOUR OWN EMOTIONS.

## SECONDARY TRAUMA: UNDERSTANDING & ADDRESSING ITS IMPACT

SECONDARY TRAUMA, ALSO KNOWN AS COMPASSION FATIGUE, REFERS TO THE EMOTIONAL TOLL OF EXPOSURE TO ANOTHER PERSON'S TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES. EDUCATORS AND PARENTS, AS CAREGIVERS, ARE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO THIS. RESEARCH SHOWS THAT SECONDARY TRAUMA CAN LEAD TO BURNOUT, EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION, AND PHYSICAL STRESS.

SIGNS OF SECONDARY TRAUMA:

- FEELING EMOTIONALLY NUMB OR DETACHED
- DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING
- EXPERIENCING CHRONIC FATIGUE OR IRRITABILITY

SELF-CARE STRATEGIES FOR SECONDARY TRAUMA:

- SET BOUNDARIES: PROTECT YOUR TIME AND ENERGY BY SAYING NO TO OVERCOMMITMENTS.
- PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION: ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS WITHOUT JUDGMENT.
- SEEK SUPPORT: TALKING WITH COLLEAGUES, A COUNSELOR, OR TRUSTED LOVED ONES CAN REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF SECONDARY TRAUMA.

## MINDFUL MOMENTS



FEBRUARY BRINGS OPPORTUNITIES TO SPOTLIGHT IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF MENTAL HEALTH:

- VALENTINE'S DAY (FEB 14): BEYOND ROMANTIC LOVE, IT'S A TIME TO PROMOTE SELF-LOVE AND APPRECIATION FOR OTHERS.
  - ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO CREATE "KINDNESS CARDS" OR GRATITUDE NOTES.
  - REFLECT ON PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND WHAT MAKES YOU PROUD.
- RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK (FEB 11-17): SMALL GESTURES OF KINDNESS BOOST MOOD, REDUCE STRESS, AND FOSTER CONNECTION FOR BOTH THE GIVER AND RECEIVER.
- CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK (FEB 5-11): A GLOBAL CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL GROWTH THROUGH COMPASSION, ACTIVE LISTENING, AND HEALTHY COPING SKILLS.

"COMPASSION IS THE FOUNDATION OF CONNECTION. IT'S THE ABILITY TO SEE OTHERS' PAIN AND RESPOND WITH KINDNESS." – DR. KRISTIN NEFF

EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD." – NELSON MANDELA



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ONE CARING ADULT  
CAN CHANGE THE  
TRAJECTORY OF A  
YOUNG PERSON'S LIFE."  
– JOSH SHIPP

"EDUCATING THE MIND WITHOUT EDUCATING THE HEART IS NO  
EDUCATION AT ALL." – ARISTOTLE

## A SPECIAL NOTE ON COMPASSION AND EDUCATION

EDUCATORS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN  
SHAPING YOUNG MINDS AND HEARTS.  
ACCORDING TO DATA FROM THE  
NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS  
NETWORK, STUDENTS WHO  
EXPERIENCE SECONDARY TRAUMA OR  
EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION OFTEN  
BENEFIT FROM A SAFE AND  
SUPPORTIVE ADULT PRESENCE IN  
THEIR LIVES.

BY CULTIVATING COMPASSION IN  
OUR CLASSROOMS AND HOMES, WE  
GIVE CHILDREN THE TOOLS TO THRIVE  
EMOTIONALLY AND ACADEMICALLY.  
REMEMBER, MODELING KINDNESS AND  
VULNERABILITY INSPIRES STUDENTS  
TO DO THE SAME.

YOUR PARAGRAPH TEXT

## MINDFUL MOMENTS

## SIMPLE SELF-CARE PRACTICES FOR FEBRUARY

### FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS:

- PRACTICE GRATITUDE: WRITE DOWN THREE THINGS YOU'RE GRATEFUL FOR EACH DAY.
- BREATHE DEEPLY: TAKE A MOMENT TO SLOW DOWN AND BREATHE DEEPLY FOR 60 SECONDS.
- UNPLUG FOR A NIGHT: DISCONNECT FROM DEVICES AND SPEND TIME WITH LOVED ONES.

### FOR STUDENTS:

- MOVEMENT BREAKS: ENCOURAGE DANCE, STRETCHING, OR YOGA TO RELEASE PENT-UP ENERGY.
- POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS: TEACH THEM TO REPEAT PHRASES LIKE, "I AM CAPABLE," OR "I AM LOVED."

STUDENTS DON'T CARE HOW MUCH YOU  
KNOW UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU  
CARE." – JOHN C. MAXWELL

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

AS WE FOCUS ON CONNECTION AND MENTAL HEALTH THIS  
MONTH, LET'S REMEMBER THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING LOVE  
AND COMPASSION NOT JUST TO OTHERS, BUT TO OURSELVES.  
WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO REFLECT ON THE WAYS YOU CAN  
NURTURE YOUR WELL-BEING AND THE EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF  
THOSE AROUND YOU.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO EXPLORE MORE RESOURCES OR NEED  
SUPPORT, PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL  
HEALTH TEAM FOR ASSISTANCE.

TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A MORE COMPASSIONATE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITY!