

WINTER WELLNESS: HEARTS & MINDS

CCYSB YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION



• WINTER 2023 •



JANUARY IS MENTAL WELLNESS MONTH

January is recognized as Mental Wellness Month throughout the United States and was started to highlight the importance not only of physical health, but also emotional health. Mental wellness involves being able to cope effectively with the difficulties of life, having an awareness of your own abilities and opportunities, and having healthy relationships with yourself and with others. There are many things that we can do to put focus on mental wellness not only in January, but all year long.

Ideas for improving mental wellness are included below. We hope that everyone has a positive start to the new year and makes the time for promoting their own mental wellness!

- Create a mental health wellness plan: Create a guide of coping skills, people to talk to in stressful situations, and enjoyable activities to ensure that you maintain the balance between your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.
- Put yourself first: Self-care isn't selfish. It's important to take time every day for yourself and your mental health. Engage in something that is meaningful and brings you joy. Do what helps you relax and recharge, and seek out experiences that have a calming effect.
- Slow down: Notice with intention the things you are doing. Draw your awareness to the moment especially those that are positive.
- Practice self-acceptance: Use the new year as an opportunity to practice self-acceptance and self-esteem. (For more on self-love and self-acceptance, see our article on page 2).
- Be grateful: Practicing gratitude every day can invoke feelings of thankfulness and optimism that make managing challenges easier. Don't beat yourself up when you make a mistake – everyone makes them.
- Laugh – Humor is a great stress reducer. Studies indicate laughter can make you healthier.
- Improve your diet – During times of stress, you can skip meals or eat junk food. A diet rich in fruit, vegetables, and fiber will help you maintain the physical and mental stress you need to deal with the situation.
- Get enough sleep: Most health authorities recommend that adults get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each day. Avoid caffeine after lunchtime.
- Ask for help when you need it: It's a sign of strength to reach out to resources and supports when your mental wellness is suffering.

Sources:

triumphtx.org/january-is-national-mental-wellness-month/
January is Mental Wellness Month

WHAT'S INSIDE:

January: Mental Wellness Month

February: Practicing Self-Love

National Eating Disorders
Awareness Week

Activity: Mindful Melt

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD, NOT A SUBWAY

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20 @ 2:00 PM

THE CARROLL ARTS CENTER
91 WEST MAIN STREET
WESTMINSTER, MD 21157
-FREE-

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
[HTTPS://CARROLLCOUNTYARTSCOUNCIL.ORG/
EVENT/UNDERGROUND-RAILROAD-NOT-A-
SUBWAY/](https://carrollcountyartscouncil.org/event/underground-railroad-not-a-subway/)

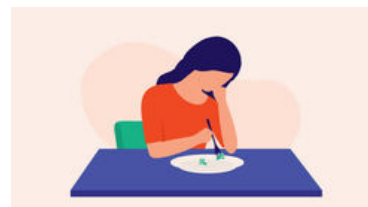


Practicing Self-Love & Self-Acceptance

When we hear the term "self-love" I'm sure some of us will roll our eyes. It can seem cliché and can be an overused term that we see influencers "hashtagging" all over Instagram or TikTok. But the truth is, practicing self-love can actually bring about a lot of positive change in our lives such as letting go of limiting thoughts, increasing self-confidence and self-acceptance, and help us to live the lives that we really want. The following list has been compiled by therapists and other professionals in the area of self-love in order to give you more practical ways that you can achieve self-love and acceptance. (Also to note: don't expect new thought patterns to appear overnight: Like any habit, accepting and being kinder to yourself takes practice.)

- **Think of self-love as a practice, not a destination—and define it for yourself.**
 - There is no finish line you cross when you officially love yourself. Self-love is neither constant nor permanent.
- **Work on forgiving yourself.**
 - Try to identify the wisdom you gained from a disappointing situation. For example, if you fail a test, try not to be extra hard on yourself and instead think about what you learned that could benefit you in the future. Maybe scheduling more study time or getting a better night's sleep beforehand.
- **Challenge your negative self-thoughts by sticking to the facts.**
 - "Is there any evidence against these thoughts?"
- **Acknowledge that oppression and trauma can make self-love even more challenging.**
 - If you belong to a marginalized or historically oppressed group, you may internalize societal messages telling you you're not valuable and start to neglect your physical, emotional, and mental needs in the process of trying to prove, on an outward level, that you're worthy of respect. Trying to be kinder to our bodies can be one small step toward healing. This could include things like taking a warm bath with essential oils or scented candles, or listening to your favorite songs and dancing in your room.
- **Practice setting boundaries—in real life and online—to build self-worth.**
 - Avoid giving your time and energy to people—parents, friends, or partners—who trigger feelings of unworthiness.
- **Remind yourself that loving (or at least accepting) yourself is a worthwhile pursuit.**

For more visit: www.self.com/story/how-to-love-yourself



Eating Disorders Awareness Week: February 27th - March 5th

Eating Disorders Awareness Week is recognized globally and this year has been designated as February 27th through March 5th. The purpose of EDAW is to educate the public about the realities of eating disorders and to provide hope, support, and visibility to individuals and families affected by eating disorders. There are many concerning statistics surrounding eating disorders that show the importance of continued education and support for our communities: 28.8 million Americans will experience an eating disorder at some point in their lives (9% of the population). 95% of eating disorder cases occur in individuals aged 12-25. Eating disorders have the 2nd highest mortality rate of all mental health disorders. It's estimated that 40-70% of non-binary and trans individuals struggle with eating disorders. Black teenagers are 50% more likely than white teenagers to exhibit bulimic behavior, such as bingeing and purging.

Many of us may struggle with how we can help our loved ones who are struggling with an eating disorder and are worried about saying the wrong thing or making the situation worse. The National Eating Disorders Association provides some advice on supporting loved ones who are struggling. (www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/learn/help/caregivers)

- Learn as much as you can about eating disorders.
- Rehearse what you want to say.
- Set a private time and place to talk.
- Be honest.
- Use "I" statements.
- Stick to the facts.
- Be caring, but be firm.
- Remove potential stigma.
- Avoid overly simplistic solutions such as "just stop."
- Be prepared for negative reactions.
- Encourage them to seek professional help.

Unsure if you or someone you know should seek professional help for an eating disorder? You can take a screening test by visiting:

www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/screening-tool

*If you or someone you know is struggling with disordered eating, call or text the National Eating Disorders Association Helpline at **800-931-2237**.*

ACTIVITY: MINDFUL MELT

Start by finding a comfortable seat. Place your feet flat on the ground, relax your shoulders, and place your hands flat on your lap or someplace comfortable. Close your eyes or find a soft gaze and enjoy using your imagination. Be very still, and imagine that you are a snowman - standing in the middle of a snow-covered yard. All around you is fresh, glistening snow; not a shoe print in sight. The sunshine is warm on your face, yet the air around you is cool. You are a snowman. You have a carrot for your nose, small stones for your eyes, and sticks for your arms. On your head is a colorful hat. A striped scarf is draped around your neck. Being a snowman, you cannot move, focus on your stillness. Be still. Be frozen, throughout your body, stiff as snow. You are alone, in this yard. It feels good to be alone in the sparkling snow and crisp air. You like the silence. You are quiet, you are still. Take a few moments to feel how peaceful it is on this sunny morning. The rays of the sun are bouncing off of you, making you glisten and shine. Experience the warmth of the sun on your snowy face. Now, gradually feel yourself melting. Beginning from your head, feel the snow melt to water, and drip to the frozen ground. Notice yourself shrinking, getting smaller and smaller, delightfully warm and ready to move again. Melt in the warm sun, until only a small pile of fluffy snow is left. You feel relaxed, still and no longer a snowman. When you are ready, I invite you to slowly wiggle your fingers and toes. Allow yourself a big stretch, come back to this room, come back to this time and open your eyes.

<https://beechacres.org/mindful-meditation-snowman/>



Crisis Resources

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
9-8-8 (Call or Text)

Chat: <https://988lifeline.org/chat>

Crisis Text Line: 741-741

The Steve Fund

www.stevfund.org

Text "STEVE" to 741-741

to speak with culturally competent
crisis counselor

Maryland Helpline:

Dial 2-1-1, press 1

Text zip code to 898-211

or visit 211MD.org

Carroll County Mobile Crisis:

410-952-9552

To access assessment and treatment
services at CCYSB call

410-848-2500 x 1



CARROLL COUNTY
YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

"It Starts With the Heart."

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM:

@ccysbyouthsuicideprevention

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In honor of Black History Month and to promote self-love, we invite you to color and share this quote from jazz musician and civil rights activist Nina Simone.

(if you do color this, make sure to tag us on instagram so that we can see it!)

