

PROVIDING ACCESS TO HEALING NEWSLETTER

WINTER
22



The Wonders of Winter

'Tis' the season for holiday gatherings, drinking hot cocoa, and cozy, snowy nights. For many this time of year can truly be magical. For some, however, winter can be a particularly blue time of the year. Darker, colder days and the post-holiday letdown often cause a decline in mood and motivation. Just like adults, it's normal for kids to experience emotional ups and downs, including the winter blues. This is a time when kids may be especially vulnerable to increased moodiness and irritability.

Parents and educators can support their children and students as they cope with seasonal sadness, while being alert to the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges that require expert care. To help you and your family, and/or students cope this winter season, the incredible team of therapists and community partners who help provide services to youth in Sheboygan County through the PATH School-Based Mental Health Community Impact Initiative are here to help provide insight into what may be impacting youth in our community. Throughout this newsletter PATH Partners will provide helpful information, tips, and resources and hopefully offer some comfort in knowing that you and your family are not alone; there is help - there is hope.

Wish you a rejuvenating winter season filled with much joy,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brianna Heusterberg".

Brianna Heusterberg
Director of Providing Access To Healing (PATH)
United Way of Sheboygan County

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CREATING LIGHT IN THE WINTER MONTHS

Interrupting the Cycle of Fatigue
with Self-Compassion

What is Fatigue & How Can Self-Compassion Help?

BY HANNA MAECHTLE

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT TRAINING SPECIALIST
ROGERS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

As the year wraps, we all have likely experienced times when we felt out of steam. As the winter holidays approach and the cold settles in, many of us have experienced compassion fatigue.

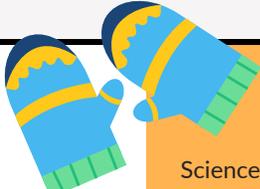
Do these stages sound familiar? Remember the “can-do” energy you gave to prepping for the start of the school year? Or the excitement you felt to decorate your home? This is the **Zealot** stage. Along the way, however, the natural imperfections around us became clear. We found ourselves moving from the energy of the zealot to the **Irritability** stage. How many days are left until fall break? How many people are planning to be at our house for Thanksgiving? It’s going to be how cold outside? In addition to the typical challenges that come with Winter, we’re also faced with the continual complexities that is our political climate, ever changing protocols, and a higher demand on those that serve others. The things that once brought us excitement may now make us cynical or frustrated and our hopefulness wanes. This can be overwhelming and lead us to the natural reaction of **Withdrawal**. The idea of “balancing it all” becomes too much and we begin to question whether or not we can continue to show up how we had hoped. We sleep more, engage less, and find accessing energy for the tasks of caring for others and ourselves increasingly difficult. We struggle to empathize even when it’s clear that empathy is needed the most. Some of us move onto the **Zombie** stage where we shed connections to avoid facing the imperfections and complexities. We trust our ability to “go it alone” with a new level of frenetic energy that can lead to sleeplessness, physical and mental strain, and isolation.

When we find ourselves in these stages, we realize we are not the person we want to be. We have been acting as if this is a sprint instead of a marathon. We have not preserved our balance amidst it all. AND this is the normal human response to overwhelming and complex challenges.

“Even when
the world
is too
much,
there is
always one
person
who is
there for
you, and
that’s you.”

- ALEXIS CARMODY

BREAKING THE HELPFUL CYCLE OF FATIGUE TECHNIQUES



CREATING LIGHT

Science has shown that self-compassion makes us less anxious, depressed, and self-critical—and more productive, supportive of others, and physically healthier. If not being able to deal with imperfections and gradually isolating from others are the hallmarks of compassion fatigue, an anecdote exists in self-compassion.

As you reflected on your experiences of compassion fatigue over the past months, what were you thinking and feeling about yourself?



Was there more self-criticism than self-kindness? Did you feel singled out for ways that you might have fallen short or were you aware that you, like all of us, are doing your best and making some mistakes along the way? Are you able to name your feelings to grow your self-awareness without getting pulled into a swirl of negative self-talk?

These three questions help define self-compassion and can become strategies to practice in the weeks ahead as we do our best to connect with friends and family over the holidays.

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When you notice that you are experiencing an uncomfortable feeling such as disappointment, anger, or frustration, practice saying three things to yourself (things you would say to a friend):

- 
- “I am sorry you are feeling this way, I know it is tough.”
 - “Others experience this painful feeling too and many would understand you.”
 - “You have taken the first step to dealing with the feeling by naming it. Good for you! Do you want to let it go or take another action?”

BUILD YOUR SELF-COMPASSION

How self-compassionate are you?

Take [this quiz](#) to test your level of self-compassion and see where you land.

Then, use these [self-compassion guided practices and exercises](#) to help build the compassion you have for yourself - thus making space for more self-acceptance and lowering fatigue.

Remember:

- 
- **It's okay to say no** - setting clear boundaries can protect our relationships and also allow us to maintain a level of self-awareness and self-regulation, protecting us from compassion fatigue.
 - **Unchecked expectations can be the core of Compassion Fatigue** - Our expectations paint a picture in our head of how things “should” be. Our “shoulds” can reflect expectations that we feel we are not meeting. This can result in guilt, frustration, or anxiety if left unchecked.

HELP YOUTH BUILD SELF-COMPASSION



Research shows that adding mindfulness, gratitude, and common humanity to your and your students'/child's daily routine can reduce anxiety and is associated with more consistent feelings of self-worth.

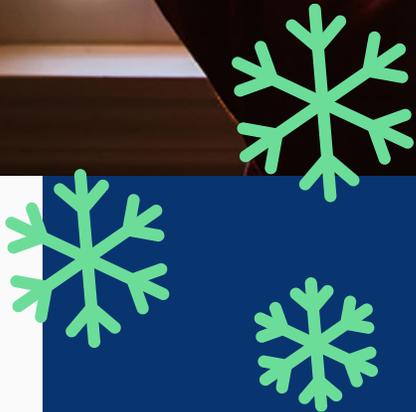
Check out the links below for videos, guided practices/exercises, and trainings to help you build compassion in your children or students - for themselves and for others.

- [Growing Minds - Take 5](#)
- [MHA Lakeshore- Mindfulness Programming](#)



IS IT WINTER BLUES OR SOMETHING MORE?

Helping Kids & Teens Cope



"No
winter
lasts
forever;
no spring
skips its
turn."

-HAL BORLAND

The "Winter Woes"

BY HANNA MAECHTLE

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT TRAINING SPECIALIST
ROGERS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

As the days get shorter, darker and colder, many of us experience a shift in mood; many call this "the winter blues." You, your children, and/or your students may start to feel a loss of energy, have a hard time getting excited about things, or feel down in general.

It's normal for us as well as kids to experience emotional ups and downs, including the winter blues. As holiday breaks disrupt normal school and social activities this winter, youth may be especially vulnerable to increased moodiness and irritability. And at least one in five kids will have a diagnosable mental health condition that needs treatment.

Parents, caregivers and educators can support children and teens as they cope with seasonal sadness, while being alert to the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions that require expert care.

While changes in mood regulation and an increased sense of uncertainty or weariness may be a normal response to a lack of predictable routine or change in plans, persistent presence of these feelings and behaviors should be noted. Page 6 of this newsletter offers resources and support that anyone can use for support.

COMBAT THE HELPFUL WINTER BLUES TECHNIQUES

FOR TEACHERS

With cold weather, shorter days, and a lack of sunshine usually comes decreased energy, sadness, and irritability. Known as the “winter blues,” these moods, common during the winter months, can negatively impact your school community.

Combat winter blues in the classroom:

1. Take movement breaks

Even though it may be too cold to go outside, studies show that when children can move around throughout the school day, their concentration levels, behavior, and mood improve. Take a few five-minute breaks to dance, play charades, or follow a short movement video together.

2. Mix up your classroom routine

Change the pace of the day by switching the order of things. If you notice your students are struggling to focus, ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class to help you demonstrate a concept. You could even change the seating arrangement or provide alternate seating options.

3. Incorporate bright colors

Contrast the dull and gray outside with a bright and colorful classroom. Turn a blank wall into a showcase for students’ artwork. Wear bright-colored clothing and encourage students to do the same. The concept of colors influencing mood, emotions, and behaviors is very real, and it’s known as “color psychology.” Each color on the wheel evokes different feelings, good and bad. Click [here](#) to learn more!

5. Organize a class project that helps others

Acts of kindness and expressing gratitude are shown to improve a person’s mood and broaden their perspective.

Have your students write thank-you notes to school faculty, one another, and/or their own family members. Plan for students to write encouraging notes to each other. Create a kindness chain where students write an act of kindness they experienced on a slip of paper. These slips are linked and then displayed in your classroom. Students can add to the chain throughout the year.

FOR PARENTS

Though the winter months can be a time for families to reconnect, the change in schedules and routine can prove challenging for children to adjust to.

How to combat winter blues at home:

For Your Children/Teens

1. Maintain open communication

Be clear about what can be expected during these winter months to help provide structure. It’s okay to be honest if you don’t know the answers to their questions.

2. Relate to your child’s emotions

Share if you also feel excited, sad, or joyful. By connecting to the feeling the child is experiencing, it provides validation for the child to see that their feelings are welcomed and understood.

3. Plan ahead as much as you can

This provides your child with a sense of predictability for the events to come. Structure can offer a sense of safety and allow children to be more flexible when changes may occur.

4. Model how to deal with difficult emotions

When you, as a parent, feels a strong emotion, you have an opportunity to model how to appropriately respond. Allow yourself room to process the emotion in a self-compassionate manner, acknowledge that it is okay to feel this way as everyone has strong emotions, and ask yourself if you need to take action for change or if you need to let the feeling go.

For Yourself

1. Carve out time to just be adults.

Take the time to make a conscious effort to move away from the added stress of parenthood.

2. Don’t take on too much

This time of year, it’s easy to get swept up into raising your hand one too many times to organize parties or other festive activities.

3. Perform an act of kindness. Giving your time to help someone else can lift your spirits. You’re not only doing good for other people, but for your mental health as well.



SEASONAL

ACTIVITIES | EVENTS | TRAININGS

ACTIVITIES

PLAY IS HEALING WINTER POP-UPS

Join a number of community partners for playful educational opportunities developed to support our children's mental health, overall well-being, and positive connection to others. Click [here](#) to learn more or to register today!

MONTHLY YOUTH & FAMILY RESOURCE GUIDE

This guide helps keep our community in the loop on activities and resources available to families in Sheboygan County! Visit the [Community Partnership for Children's webpage](#) to see this month's events and activities!

NOURISH FARMS: COOKING CLASS 12.14.22 - 4:30 PM

Join [this youth focused holiday cooking class!](#) Learn to make dishes seen at the holiday table around the world. Youth 14-17 may attend without a ticketed adult. Contact: info@nourishfarms.org or call 920-550-2020

MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT 11.25 - 12.31 5-9 PM

Celebrate the holidays with a drive through Evergreen Park for a festive lights show. Admission is free; however, food pantry donations are taken to help local pantries. Click [here](#) for more information.

GET INVOLVED: COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING

Sheboygan County Food Bank, along with community members/partners coordinate the Community Cafe (Mon. - Sat.). Volunteers help with: light food prep, setting up & serving lunch, hospitality, and clean up. [Click here](#) to learn more and/or to volunteer as a family.

PARENT CAFES

Parent Cafés explore the five Strengthening Families Protective Factors through guided peer-to-peer learning, self-reflection and conversations that strengthen the social and emotional health of families. Click [here](#) to learn more!

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING 12.08.22 -8:30A-1:30P 02.28.23 - 8:30A-1:30P

Designed to teach parents, family members, school staff, peers, etc. how to help teens who are experiencing mental health, addiction challenges and/or are in crisis. Registration for the 12.08.22 training [here](#) and the 02.28.23 training [here](#).

TEEN SELF-CARE SUNDAY SERIES SUNDAYS, 11.25 - 12.18

Teens, join Yoga on the Lake to kick off each week with a yoga class focused on self-care. Ages 12+. \$20 for a single workshop or \$60 for the full series. Register by calling the studio directly at 920.453.2817

Importance of Getting Involved

Community involvement is beneficial in all areas of life, but perhaps the greatest examples of the profound and inspiring ways that it impacts our society, is when we look at the benefits of community involvement within families and our children.

Getting your child connected to their community **gives** them a deeper **sense of belonging**, it allows them to view themselves as an important part of a larger network of people. Community projects bring people together, **boosting the mental wellbeing and quality of life** to all those involved and has been shown to **increase self-esteem**.

Community involvement also **helps children form social connections** through a shared objective, fighting off feelings of loneliness or self-doubt, **uniting them with a network of people they can rely on** for support, advice and friendship.

Community projects which benefit other people **give children a sense of purpose and meaning**, taking a break from their own problems and allowing them to focus on the good they can bring to someone else's life.

<https://www.all4kids.org/news/blog/benefits-of-community-involvement-in-early-childhood/>

EVENTS

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

SAFE/AT RISK

211

Call 2-1-1 anytime for free assistance with basic needs, mental health or substance use resources/support, and/or for help during disaster situations. For personal assistance call the three-digit number 2-1-1 or 877-947-2211. You can also text your zip code to 898211 or Click [here](#) for more information.

MHA LAKESHORE

MHA Lakeshore promotes mental wellness through education, prevention programming, advocacy, and resource referrals for care and recovery. Find help today by visiting mhalakeshore.org or calling them at 920-458-3951.

Remember - your story matters!

988

Call 9-8-8 for access to trained crisis counselors when experiencing thoughts of suicide, a mental health or substance use crisis, or emotional distress to prevent a situation from becoming dangerous. To learn more about the 988 Lifeline and/or how it works visit 988lifeline.org.

MOBILE CRISIS

24/7 mental health emergency and suicide prevention support. Immediate assistance will be provided as well as subsequent connection to additional services as needed. Dial: (920) 459-3151

[Click here](#) to learn more about Youth Services provided by Sheboygan County Health and Human Services.

911

Call 9-1-1 to request immediate assistance from police, fire and rescue personnel for any in-progress situation that could potentially result in danger to someone's life.

PRESENT TO LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM

Individuals struggling with a mental health emergency are always encouraged to present themselves at the nearest hospital. *Please note: Aurora has an inpatient behavioral health unit.

- [Aurora Medical Center](#)
- [HSHS St. Nicholas Hospital](#)

UNSAFE

DANGER

OTHER HELPFUL COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY ROAD MAPS

SCAN ME



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT & CRISIS RESOURCES

SCAN ME



ROGERS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IN SHEBOYGAN

Offers partial hospitalization care for adults and teens. By working closely with patients and families, their staff develop a personalized plan to treat OCD, anxiety, depression, other mood disorders, and co-occurring substance use in adults and adolescents ages 13 to 17.

Click [here](#) for more information or to contact them today!

D A T I I I

P R O V I D I N G A C C E S S T O H E A L I N G

I / / I I I

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY IMPACT INITIATIVE

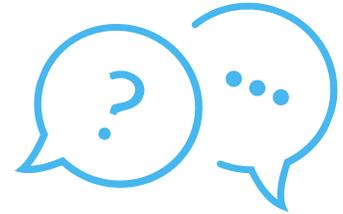


Making youth mental health a priority.

PATH: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

What Is PATH?

PATH is a school-based mental health program that helps create increased access to services for youth by removing financial and geographical barriers.



Who Can Receive PATH Services?

PATH provides counseling to students ages K3 through 12th grade who may be experiencing emotional or behavioral concerns with a barrier that prevents counseling in the community.

What School Districts in Sheboygan County have PATH?

- Cedar Grove–Belgium
- Elkhart Lake–Glenbeulah
- Howards Grove
- Kohler
- Oostburg
- Plymouth
- Random Lake
- Sheboygan Area
- Sheboygan Christian
- Sheboygan Falls
- Head Start



How do I learn more and/or get my child in PATH?

Contact your child's school counselor to learn more about PATH, if your child qualifies, and if there is availability at your school.

to learn more

SCAN ME



For all other inquiries and/or how you can help support PATH, scan this code or visit www.uwofsc.org/path

HOW TO SIGN UP YOUR CHILD TO RECEIVE PATH SERVICES:



CONTACT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL COUNSELOR TO SEE IF YOUR CHILD QUALIFIES FOR SERVICES AND/OR IF THERE IS AVAILABILITY AT YOUR SCHOOL.

SCAN ME



TO LEARN MORE AND/OR GIVE TO THE CAUSE



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY



LAKESHORE
community health care



WISCONSIN



Ozaukee Community Therapies



2022-2023
PARTNERS

Participating Sheboygan County School Locations:



- Cedar Grove-Belgium
- Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah
- Howards Grove
- Kohler
- Oostburg
- Plymouth
- Random Lake
- Sheboygan Area
- Sheboygan Christian
- Sheboygan Falls
- Head Start

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO HELP MAKE THIS COMMUNITY IMPACT INITIATIVE POSSIBLE



United Way of Sheboygan County

<https://www.uwofsc.org/our-impact/path-providing-access-to-healing/>

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