

Stronger Together

Parkland School Division Family Supports Newsletter November 18, 2021

Dear parents and caregivers,

Welcome to our November newsletter. This month we decided to focus on mindfulness and ways to help us all reduce our stress. Sometimes this is easier to say than to do but it really does help. Mindfulness is simply focusing on being aware of the present moment and trying not to worry or think too much about all of the other stressful situations in your life. How can we do this? Breathing and relaxation techniques can help us move towards calm and away from chaos. Kids and adults alike can learn these strategies. Read below to see the benefits of mindfulness and how you can bring it into your life.

Wishing you calm and peaceful moments this month.

Vicky and Dena

Vicky Mamczasz -Family Support Facilitator, Dena Davis- Sunrise Supports Program Liaison



Family Tips for Emotional Regulation with Joel Pukalo's special guest Jenn Banas, Parkland Wellness Centre

Am I Stuck with My Trauma_Jenn Banas, MPCC, RPC, CCTP

For most of us, we will experience at least one traumatic experience in our lifetime. For others, they will relay having experienced many ongoing traumatic experiences. For some, the trauma leaves a lasting impact and it's hard to know how to move forward from it.

Trauma occurs when we have an experience that leaves us feeling threatened, overwhelmed and ill equipped to process what is happening to us. Because of this, the brain struggles to properly file the memory of the experience. Without that memory being properly processed and essentially filed away in the brain, the brain keeps re-living the memory as if it is still happening. This leads the brain to ring the alarm bell to the rest of the body that danger is imminent. This is a brain spending too much time in Fight and Flight mode and not enough time in Rest and Digest mode. With that cocktail of chemicals that the Fight and Flight response produces constantly moving through the body, our brain eventually over adapts to an ongoing Sympathetic Response. This can lead a person to feeling "stuck" in a way of thinking, feeling and relating to the world around them that feels unsafe and unhealthy. It's stressful!

So, how do we get un-stuck from this? Good news, we can re-train our brain! First, we can use simple tools to bring our body into a calm, non-anxious state by employing skills such such as, yoga, breathing exercises, mindfulness, muscle relaxation, laughter, exercise and <u>self-compassion practices</u>. Finally, finding a good therapist that is trauma informed can help to unpack and finally, file those disruptive memories. Having experienced trauma is *not* a lifetime sentence of being stuck in the memory of it anymore!

Some excellent free, online resources to access for further learning on this:

- Apps for your phone: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile/
- YouTube videos for recovery: https://www.youtube.com/c/Whatisptsd
- Online Trauma Recovery Program: https://psychink.com/trauma-courses/trauma-recovery-program/
- Supporting children with trauma:
 https://institute.crisisprevention.com/EDTraumaInformedCare.html?src=PPC&utm_source=google&utm_me
 dium=cpc&utm_campaign=bts-2021&utm_content=tofu_ed_search&gclid=CjwKCAjw2vOLBhBPEiwAjEeK9q
 -h5PLM1T6AP2664BMX4550c4FIKXAq0hyBJrbRPxFNph6q1qBFkxoCZokQAvD_BwE
- https://childmind.org/guide/helping-children-cope-after-a-traumatic-event/

Jenn is a Master Practitioner in Clinical Counselling, a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional, and recently graduated from the Traumatology institute's Clinical Traumatology program. Jenn is the Founder and Director of Parkland Wellness Centre and Refugee Welcome Space in Spruce Grove; AB. Parkland Wellness offers holistic mental health care to the residents of the Tri Region and offers sponsorship programs for their services for those without coverage or low income. Jenn is a music and cat lover and argues that carbs are, indeed, life.



Parkland School Division is proud to partner with **Alberta Parenting For The Future** to present two more **FREE** sessions for local families.

In our upcoming **Strong Families** sessions, parents/guardians and their children can join Kristi Sikorski for an hour of calming, mindful movement to help them unwind from the day and regulate their bodies for a peaceful sleep. These yoga sessions are specially geared toward children who struggle with settling down and relaxing at bedtime: the first session will address the needs of children still in their early school years, while the second will cater to their older peers.

For Children in Kindergarten - Grade 2 Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Time: 6:30-7:30 pm

Location: Online Zoom Webinar / Discussion Group

Presenter: Kristi Sikorski

For Children in Grade 3 and Up Date: Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Time: 7-8 pm

Location: Online Zoom Webinar / Discussion Group

Please register early to reserve your spot by visiting

https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/bedtime-yoga-for-the-whole-family-children-kindergarten-to-grade-2-registration-183012303727 or

https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/bedtime-yoga-for-the-whole-family-children-grade-3-registration-183016305697.

For more information, please contact: Vicky Mamczasz, Family Supports Facilitator, email vicky.mamczasz@psd.ca

"The development of children's cognitive abilities is fundamentally dependent on how well children function emotionally"

-Stuart Shanker.

Mindfulness works!

Mindfulness is attending to the here and now, other people, the environment, a concern or challenge in a considerate and in a non-judgemental way. It is a skill that everyone can develop by paying close attention to our present situation and our role in it. By reflecting on our thoughts and actions we can decide how to make better choices. Mindfulness makes the space to move through the stress. Being mindful helps us to stop, take a breath and choose before saying or doing something we wish we wouldn't have. This can create a space between strong emotion and our reaction to that emotion. By learning how their brains respond to stress and by quieting their minds students become better at self regulating and increase their capacity for absorbing information and improve their relationship skills.

Focusing on breathing can help calm the body by slowing the heart rate, lowering blood pressure and sharpening

focus. Paying attention to the breathing also supports strong functioning in the higher brain. It lessens anxiety by overriding the fight, flight or freeze response set off by the amygdala and gives control to our conscious thought which takes place in the prefrontal cortex (where executive functioning takes place). When breathing is deliberately regulated, the brain is primed to think first and then plan a response enabling mindful behavior. As children practice controlled breathing their brains develop and reinforce the habit of responding to anxiety by focusing on breathing. The more kids practice this breathing the more mindful and self regulated they become.

The brain gives priority to emotions because they matter. Children who associate school with safety can become more engaged learners moving out of their comfort zone. They can work in groups, share ideas and take risks. They train their amygdala to keep calm and keep information pathways to their prefrontal cortex open at school..

https://self-reg.ca/ Please check out all the resources through the Mehrit Centre to support children and families.



#kidsmeditation #kidssleep #mindfulnessforkids

Mindfulness for Teens - Mobile Apps http://mindfulnessforteens.com/resources/

Breathr: Dr. Vo helped to develop this mindfulness app for youth with the Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre (British Columbia, Canada). Free for Apple and Android mobile

devices!

Stop, Breathe, and Think: Web and mobile app for youth, with meditations for mindfulness and compassion.

Calm.com: Free website and mobile app with guided meditation and relaxation exercises.

Insight Timer: Free mobile app with virtual "bells" to time and support your meditations, and access to lots of guided meditations by many different meditation teachers (including Dr. Vo).

Plum Village: Zen Meditation. Free app for iOS, loaded with beautiful meditations and teachings in the Plum Village / Thich Nhat Hanh tradition.

MindShift: Free mobile app for teens developed by AnxietyBC, with mindfulness and other coping skills for anxiety.

Smiling Mind: Free mobile mindfulness and for young people.

Smiling Mind: Free mobile mindfulness app for young people, from Australia.

Headspace: "Meditation made simple." This app has a free introductory period, after which it requires a paid subscription to continue to use.



Check out great free teen mindfulness resources at https://gozen.com/printables/

Mindfulness Benefits for Families

What is Mindfulness?

There are many definitions of mindfulness. Mindfulness is simply the practice of training our brain to non-judgementally be aware of our feelings, our bodies, and our environment in the present moment. Mindfulness has its roots in Eastern World meditative practices, but has been adapted to our Western medical system.

Mindfulness is something that we can practice. It's like exercise for the brain. We focus our attention on the present moment, and if our attention goes somewhere else, we just bring it back to the present moment without judgement. We can practice mindfulness formally (e.g. meditation, mindful movement [i.e. stretching, yoga, tai chi], mindful walking, mindful eating, body scans, loving kindness) or informally (being mindful as we go about daily activities). The more we practice mindfulness, the more we have mindful moments and live in a state of mindfulness. Over time, we develop a mindfulness trait (way of being).



source: www.mindfulschools.org

Here is one example of a mindful activity you can practice: "Plant both feet on the floor. Wiggle your toes. Take deep breathes while you look around and notice 3 new things... what do you see ... what do you hear ... what do you smell?

Why Mindfulness?

Research into mindfulness has skyrocketed over the last 15 years. Mindfulness supports healthy brain development, physical and emotional wellness, and helps to 'immunize' children against the pressures of the modern world (watch Dr. John Kabat-Zinn, "The Benefits of Meditation" – Youtube) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiXXvtGEZQQ)

Without mindfulness, we tend to react impulsively (without thinking) to situations. Learning to bring our attention to the present, helps us develop greater self-awareness and emotional regulation abilities. When we focus our brain in the present, it activates certain brain regions connected to self regulation and executive functioning.

Mindfulness can support caregivers/parents to decrease stress and caregiver fatigue, and can support emotional regulation, self-kindness, and empathy. In children and teens, mindfulness has been shown to improve focus & attention, executive function, self-regulation, and can promote empathy and optimism (http://leftbrainbuddha.com/why-we need-mindfulness-in-schools/)

What do Kids Think about Mindfulness? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YEZnrySrtQ

What do Teens Think about Mindfulness? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kk7lBwuhXWM

How to Get Started?

There are many ways you can develop a mindfulness practice for yourself and your children. You can find mindful activities online, in activity books, and on flashcard decks. Here are some free resources that can help you get started: • TeachStarter:

https://www.teachstarter.com/au/teachingresource/mindfulness-activity-task-cards/

• TherapistAid:

https://www.therapistaid.com/therapyworksheet/mindfulness-for-children

Apps that provide guided practices are another great way to get started. Popular apps include: Stop, Breathe & Think; Smiling Mind; Breathe, Think, Do; Headspace, Calm, 10% Happier

Where & When to do Mindfulness?

You can practice mindfulness anywhere, such as in your home, while driving, or out for a nature walk. Consider making mindfulness a part of your daily routine, such as in the morning, evening, or before bedtime. The main thing is to remember that it's a practice- something we learn to do over time. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgoxYKtEWEc

Remember to start small, practice it yourself (for your own wellbeing and so you can model it for your kids) and to keep your family mindfulness practice simple, short, and fun!

From Alberta Health Services-Children, Youth and Families - Edmonton Zone

Community Education Service



Improving emotional health and well being

Managing the Holidays through Mindfulness:

Supporting your Child's Social & Emotional Well-Being
Ashley Meagher, BA, CYC & Stephanie Sands BSc.

CES@ahs.ca http://community.hmhc.ca/ 403 955-4730

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Stony Plain Library FREE after school programs

Take a look at the great FREE community involvement activities that you might want to take advantage of, all at your local Stony Plain Public Library

Be ready to register for our programs when we offer them on our website in a

couple of weeks at www.mysppl.ca .

Program Name	Day	Time Description	Ages and where?	Partnership
Drama Club	Mondays (weekly) Sept 20- Dec 13 and Jan 10- June 13 (No program Oct 11, Nov 8,15, Jan 31, Feb 21, Mar 21,28, Apr 18, May 23)	4:00pm-5:00 Create, act, film, design your own pm plays! BYO afterschool snack.	6-12 Registered Max 15 participants Program Room and Multicultural Centre.	Multi-cultural Centre
Entertainment Engineers	Tuesdays (weekly) Sept 21- Dec 14 and Jan 11- June 14 (No Program Nov 9, and Mar 22)	4:00pm-5:00 Design, play and build your own pm games using the 3D printer! BYO afterschool snack.	6-12 Registered Max 10 participants Program Room and Creative Space Older adults drop in!	Darythe
Wong Style Tai Chi and relaxation exercises for mental health	1st Wed of every Month Nov 3, Dec 8, Feb 2, Mar 2 and April 6	3:30pm-4:15 Take some time to just breathe! pm Stretch, relax and learn some Tai Chi.	55+ Registered Max 10 Meet by the front desk of the library at 3:15pm	Trudy and Erin from the Three Robins
Big, Little Tale of Two Cities- Book Club with St. Thomas Public Library in Ontario	3 rd Wed of every month Oct 20, Nov 17, Jan 19, Feb 16, Mar 16, Apr 20, May 18, and June 15	4:00pm-5:00 Connect with your adult and our pm favourite sister library in St. Thomas, Ontario Be prepared to share your love of reading!	9-12 Registered Max 5 families Program Room Older adults join in!	Sister Library St Thomas Darlene
Kids Can Cook – LIVE Virtual Program	2 nd and 4 th Wed of every month Oct 13, 27, Nov 24, Jan 12, 26, Feb 9, 23, Mar 9, April	4:15pm-5:00 Virtual cooking fun in your own pm	Ages 6-12 Google meets event Registered Max 10	none
Insightful Innovations!	13,27, May 11, 25 and June 8, 22 Thursdays (weekly) Oct 15- Dec 16 Jan 13- June 16 (No Program on Nov 11, Feb 10, Mar 24)	kitchen! Fun and easy after school snack recipes! 4:00pm-5:00 Drop-in and inspire!! Crafts, pm technology, art, books and more! Bring your friends and creative ideas to the library. Exciting discoveries will be made!	6-12 Families and friends invited too Drop-In and meet at the Creative Space. Older adults drop in!	none



Spruce Grove Public Library



New program Dial-A-Story

Listen to a pre-recorded story right off your phone, no internet access required. Storytime for all ages at SGPL anytime you want. Call 587-853-4554. New content added every 2 weeks.

Highlight: an Indigenous tale on our Dial-a-Story service, 'How Creator Helped the Animals to Help Humans' read by Dianne Melli.

Further info on Fall programming: https://sqpl.ca/programs/fall-programs

- At **SGPL**, "join our Talking Circles as we share various gifts, wisdom, stories and teachings from our local Indigenous community and neighbors. Listen deeply with a profound opportunity to understand, learn and establish a sense of community in a safe sacred space. Gain a mutual understanding of one
- Virtual Rizdvo Ukrainian Pioneer Christmas

Wednesday 8 December @ 11:15am-12:00pm (noon)

In this session, interpreters will teach about Ukrainian Christmas Eve traditions and foods. Take a virtual step back in time to learn how Ukrainians in Alberta celebrated Christmas 100 years ago and learn how those traditions continue today. You'll learn how to make a kolach, a special bread made for Christmas, and have a chance to interact with interpreters and ask them questions.

Presented by the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village

For further information about the program: Ukrainian Village

FREE, Registered*

Registration: call us at 780-962-4423 or register online.

Recommended for grades 1-6. School age kids, homeschoolers and history

buffs of all ages are welcome!

*Space is limited



Winter Holidays Celebration

The winter holidays are here! Join us in celebrating all month long! This December join SGPL for a special event. We will be offering a variety of activities online and in-person, including seasonal Take & Make Kits*.

*while supplies last, 1 kit per household

December 1-31

FREE, All Ages

For further information about the program: https://sqpl.ca/





Check out the Lighthouse Church **free** clothing store - Garments of Praise and Community Outreach Days on FB.





Connect with the Youth Centre on Instagram and Snapchat! There's always something going on at SPYC.

Hours Monday: 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Tuesday:1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Wednesday:1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Thursday:1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Friday:1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Saturday: CLOSED

Saturday: CLOSED Sunday: CLOSED







November will be a busy month for our Spruce Grove GSA. We are introducing a new group running the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month, this group is for adults ages 18+.

SAFE, (Support & Advocacy for Everyone) is a space for adults who are part of our 2SLGBTQ+ community, for parents and caregivers of our gender diverse youth, or for any adults who have questions, would like to share, or would like to learn in a safe and caring space. We have been generously offered space to meet at The Play Café in Spruce Grove, from 7 – 8 pm.

Pre-registration is required by email, as well as proof of Covid vaccination. This is a shared space, so please wear a mask, and only attend if you are healthy.

GSA YOUTH!!!

WE ARE BACK INSIDE!!!

Yes, I know. It's been a rollercoaster of outdoor meetings, and very few indoor meetings. But we kept meeting, and you have all been AMAZING!

I want to say a massive thank you to our GSA kids and their adults who have stuck with us through the changes. Your support with mask wearing, sanitizing, distancing, and the covid vaccinations has allowed us to remain open.

Alberta GSA Conference Registration for the 2021 AB GSA Conference is now OPEN!

Youth, students, home-school students and online students, community GSAs & QSAs, teachers, professionals! Have you had a chance to register for the FREE Alberta GSA Conference?? This year all workshops, resources and fun activities, will be presented online from Nov 22-26th. Originally, they were hoping to have in-person events in Peace River & Edmonton, however due to covid-19 health restrictions, the conference will be taking place exclusively online.

To register, click on the link, and you will receive a registration package within 4 business days.https://linktr.ee/abgsaconferrence

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR)

https://www.glaad.org/tdor

This is an annual observance on November 20 that honors the memory of transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence.

<u>Important Reminder!</u>

Stony Plain FCSS -

• Stony Plain FCSS is seeking folks from our 2SLGBTQ+ community in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove and Parkland County. Are you able to connect and help work on creating a Poverty Reduction Action Plan?



Register Here

a free, province-wide online peer-to-peer mental health community that may be of interest to you

- FREE to ALL Albertans aged 16+ through a partnership with the Alberta Government and Alberta Health Services.
- A safe, online, 24/7 peer community where members remain anonymous to each other and can share their lived experiences with common mental health concerns.
- Registered mental health practitioners moderate and monitor the community to ensure individuals are safe and feel supported. Moderators help signpost resources and escalate those at risk, but they do not provide 1:1 counselling or therapy.
- Access to self-assessments, resources and self-guided courses to help foster wellbeing.

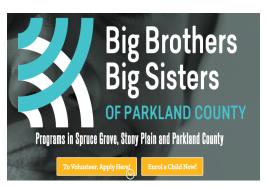


Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta - Edmonton Chapter

Check out LD Edmonton for Social Skills Groups and for virtual monthly parent information sessions.

For more information contact info@ldedmonton.com, call our office at 780-466-1011

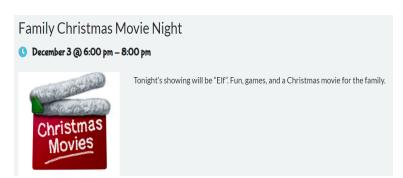
Does your child struggle with friendships and social cues? Do they have difficulty with organizational skills? Trouble paying attention or staying on task? Do they have trouble managing their emotions/



https://bbbsparkland.ca/



B.I.L.Y offers a **youth group** designed to work specifically with youth whose parents attend and participate in the parent group. To find out more call 587-588-8633.



Alberta Parenting For the Future

Family Connection Centre

5600 50 Street, Stony Plain, AB T7Z 1P8 Stony Plain, T7Z 1P8 CA + Google Map

Register at:

https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/family-christmas-movie-night-registration-208757618657

Does the thought of the holiday have you feeling stressed? There is support in our community. (check https://www.parklandcounty.com/en/live-and-play/christmas-supports.aspx)

- 2-1-1 is here to help you find the right community and social services. It is confidential, multilingual, and available 24 hours a day across many parts of Alberta including Parkland County. Don't feel stuck this holiday season. Call 2-1-1 today to get connected with the resources you need to get ahead.
- Parkland Food Bank- apply online
 https://parklandfoodbank.org/need-help/christmas-hamper/
- Christmas Hampers apply through the Food Bank



Reach out for support...

Youth Mental Health (Westview Primary Care Network) - call in for an appointment - 780-960 - 9533 ext 221 Community Connector - Simonne Massner - 780-217-4146 Stony Plain and Prabh Gill - Spruce Grove and Greater Parkland area 780-217-8701

Youth Mental Health - Northgate Walk In Clinic (AHS - now call in or virtual appointment)780-342-2700 MOBILE/AFTER HOURS CRISIS TEAM: 780-407-1000

AHS - Substance Use Therapist - Lisa Kimmerly - 780-868-1895

Parenting support (APFA) - Triple P Parenting 780-963-0549

Adult Crisis Response - 780-342-7777

Support Network Distress Line - 780-482-4357

Adult Mental Health Referral and Treatment - 780-424-2424

Parkland School Division - Family Support - Vicky Mamczasz - 780-668-7422





Youth Mental Health Clinic

Walk in Service

Available to Youth 11-17

Fridays only: 10AM -2PM First come, first serve.

Book by phone: **Day:** Fridays **Time:** 9AM-12PM

Phone: 780-960-9533 Ext. 221 Location: 101, 505 Queen St., Spruce Grove

www.westviewpcn.ca

HELP FOR HARD TIMES TRI-REGION SUPPORT GUIDE

WHO CAN HELP, WHERE CAN I GO, AND HOW DO I GET SUPPORT?

I NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE NOW (24H)

Distress Line 780-4	82-4357(HELP)
Addiction Helpline 1	-866-332-2322
Child Mental Health (8am-11:30pm)	780-427-4491
Kids Help Phone 1	-800-668-6868
Bullying Helpline1	-888-456-2323
Seniors Abuse Helpline	.780-454-8888
Family Violence Info Line	310-1818
Sexual Assault Center (9am-9pm)	780-423-4121
First Nations & Inuit Mental He	
Hope for Wellness 1	-855-242-3310

I NEED IMMEDIATE HELP Call 911

Emergency Financial Assistance

780-644-513	35
Access 24/7 (Adults)	
Addictions & Mental Health780-424-242	4
Westview Health Centre780-968-360	0
Child Intervention Services780-422-200	1
Kids Cottage Crisis Childcare 780-944-288	88
Parkland RCMP825-220-200	0
Poison Control 1-800-332-141	4
NeighbourLink Parkland (ovectical crisis help)	
Monday-Friday 9am-4pm780-960-966	9
Pay Forward Kindness (homeless supports)	

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START?



24-hour information and referral line connecting you to social, health and government services.

587-286-4663



or download **HelpSeeker**, onto your phone to find local supports and resources.

WHERE CAN I FIND A SAFE PLACE TO SLEEP AT NIGHT?

George Spady (men, women)	780-424-8335
Women's Emergency	
Accommodation Centre	780-423-5302
Hope Mission (ages 16+, men, women)	780-422-2018
Youth Empowerment &	
Support Services (YESS)	780-468-7186
Salvation Army (Transitional Housing, \$1	(2/day)
	780-429-4274

I NEED A DOMESTIC ABUSE SHELTER

Alberta	Council	of	Women's	Shelters
				.1-866-331-3933

I NEED DETOX SUPPORT

George Spady	780-424-8335
AHS Detox Centre	780-427-4291
Youth Edmonton Detox	780-422-7383

I NEED A SAFE CONSUMPTION SITE

Boyle Street Community Serv... 780-424-4106 George Spady Centre....... 780-424-8335 Boyle McCauley Health Centre 780-422-7333

I NEED HELP WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND/OR ADDICTIONS

	Access 24/7 Addictions and
	Mental Health (adults) 780-424-2424
	Youth Addiction Services 780-422-7383
	Access Open Minds (youth 16-25) 780-415-0048
	Child and Adolescent
	Mental Health Services 780-342-2701
	Westview PCN Youth
	Mental Health Clinic (ages 11-24) 780-960-9533
П	

I NEED HEALTH INFORMATION

Health Link Alberta (24/7)811

WHERE CAN I FIND FOOD?

Parkland Food Bank
105 Madison Cres, Spruce Grove
Auggies Café (Tuesday Free Lunch)
131 Church Rd, Spruce Grove

Spruce Grove FCSS #105 - 505 Queen Street, Spruce Grove, AB 780 - 962 - 7618 \$tony Plain FC\$\$ #107, 4613 - 52 Avenue, Stony Plain, AB 780-963-8583





