



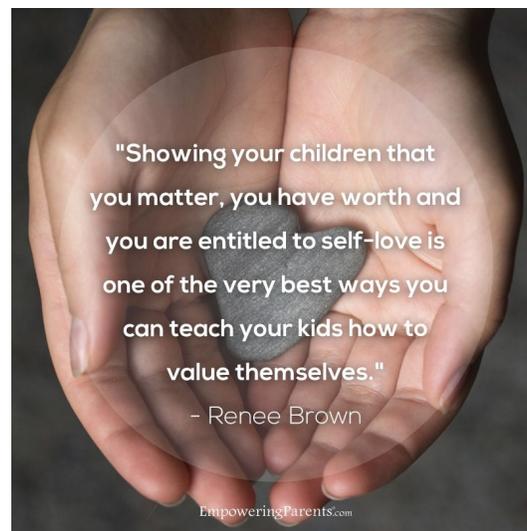
thefamilycenter

VIRTUAL CENTER

Welcome to The Family Center!

Franklin County's newest resource for families with young children.

Mental Health & Self Care



One of the hardest challenges for a person caring for young children is to remember that taking time for yourself is not selfish but is necessary. When we are in the midst of diapers, meals, playtime, and bedtime routines, sometimes our own mental health and wellness can take a backseat. The truth is if we want our child to get along with others, manage emotions or take a deep breath instead of melting down, we must be able to do that ourselves. The only way to model those calm behaviors is to make caring for yourself a priority. This can look different for each person and at each season we go through in parenting; sometimes it may look like a shower or reading a chapter in a book and other times it might be a massage or a trip out of town. In self-care, one small act can make a big difference in how we show up for our children. Parenting is hard and you deserve to feel cared for too! Try one of these ideas:



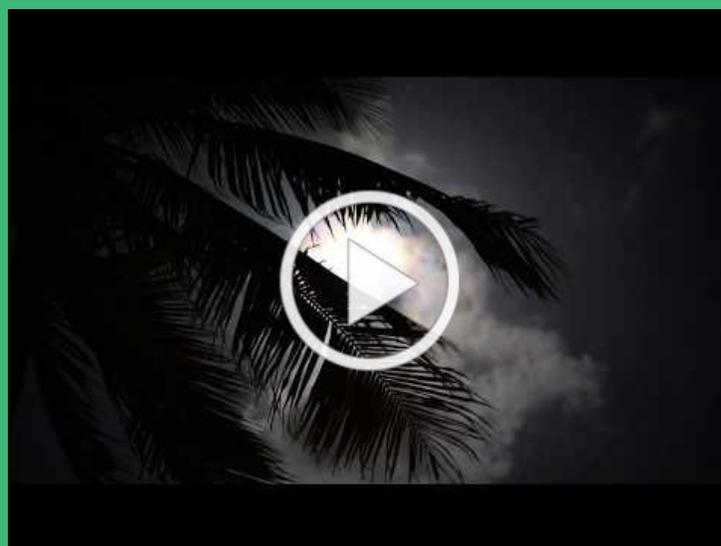
Self Care

What is self care? Self care describes a conscious act one takes in order to improve their own physical, mental and emotional health. There are many forms self-care may take. It could be anything from making sure you get enough sleep every night to taking a few moments to get outside for some fresh air. When you've taken steps to care for your mind and body, you'll be better equipped to handle those stressors in your life that you can't eliminate.

Source: VeryWellMind

If you would like to learn more about the importance of self-care in the COVID-19 pandemic, check out this [article](#).

Self Compassion Meditation for Parents



Yoga for Relaxation



**"taking care of myself
does not mean "me first,"
it means "me, too."**

-L. R. KNOTS

WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD 2021 April 10 -16

There is so much that children learn as they sing, cook together, build together, create art, and celebrate with their families.

WOYC™ celebrates what quality early learning looks, sounds, feels, and even tastes like! In five fun-filled days, this campaign showcases hands-on collaborative activities encouraging movement and healthy lifestyles through music, food, art, and more. Each day focuses on a different theme and early learning educators, globally celebrate with their young children, early education programs, and communities.

Celebrate with us and be sure to share your planned activities, photos, and videos on Facebook and Instagram using #firststartpartnerships #woyc21.

Daily themes include:

Through music, children develop math, language, and literacy skills while having fun and being active!



[Music Monday Ideas](#)



This fun, food-themed day is about more than just cheese and crackers. Cooking together connects math with literacy skills, science, and more.

[Tasty Tuesday Ideas](#)



When children build together they explore math and science concepts and develop their social and early literacy skills

[Work Together Wednesday](#)



Children develop creativity, social skills, and fine motor skills with open-ended art projects where they can make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands.

[Artsy Thursday Ideas](#)

Engaging and celebrating families is at the heart of supporting our youngest learners. NAEYC applauds family members' role as a child's first and most important teacher.

[Family Friday Ideas](#)



Parent Corner

Question: I'm a mom of two and I feel completely empty and drained at the end of the day. Is that normal?

Response: Absolutely, yes! That is a typical feeling and can be a result of various factors. Let's explore some of

those factors. The most common is burnout. This can be due to engaging in multiple tasks and not feeling successful in any one of them. Sometimes we feel drained due to sleep disruptions. Sleep disruptions are when we feel exhausted yet when we try to rest our mind it decides to click on, and we end up thinking about all the things we did not accomplish today or the laundry list of things we need to do tomorrow. When we begin to feel empty and drained, our productivity and motivation are near zero. We begin to make shifts to our lifestyle to accommodate these new feelings. We put our self-care on the back burner, we avoid hobbies, we could become physically sick, and/or we could begin to think we are doing a terrible job just because we accomplished the bare minimum today.

The good news is that you are not alone. Mothers in various stages of child development have felt this to some degree. Here are some strategies to try. First, figure out what is doable in a day, week, and month. Less is more sometimes. This means identifying small achievable goals that can be accomplished by the end of the day, by the end of this week, and by the end of this month. Create a to-do-list allowing you to focus on one thing at a time. Always remember, if you do not achieve your desired goal, go back and rewrite it to make it fit what you can manage. Life is a journey, not a destination.

Another strategy would be to create routines. Routines provide us comfort and allow us to feel more in control of our environment. I would encourage you to start by creating a morning routine and bedtime routine. Once you establish the bookends of your day then you can begin to work on the in-between. Lastly, if I can leave you with anything it would be to "Be Kind to Yourself". Mom-guilt is a very real thing and can make us feel less than. **You are enough!** Try to incorporate self-care into your weekly routine. It is super important. It can be as little as 30 minutes a week. Also, it is okay to say no and to ask for help. You've got this!

Heather Diehl, MA
Outpatient Therapist
TrueNorth Wellness

How would you like to have the support of an early childhood community at your fingertips?

Do you have a question about your child's development or behavior?

Do you need new ideas for things to do with your little one?

Are you struggling with an issue as a family?

Talk to us!

We have a whole community of childcare providers, early childhood teachers (infant through third grade), mental health staff, social workers, doctors and early intervention specialists ready to help. Send us any question, and we mean **ANY** question and we will get you answers. Each month we will feature a few of these questions to help all the other families in Franklin County too. You are not alone-let us be a part of your village!

Ask your
question

Community Spotlight

The Mental Health Association of Franklin & Fulton Counties
478 Grant Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
<http://www.mhaff.org/>

The Mental Health Association of Franklin and Fulton Counties offers a number of services and supports that would be beneficial to parents and children.

Focusing on parents first:

- MHA has a Helpline that runs every evening from 5-10:00 pm. The Helpline is a service for information, referral, and support. Many parents have called MHA and the Helpline looking for suggestions or support of where to get services, what to do if they are not receiving needed services, to discuss their own distress, and get general resources such as food, assistance with utility bills, etc... To call Helpline, individuals do not need to be in distress, they do not need to have a mental health diagnosis or condition, they may just need information or to talk.
- MHA also does satisfaction surveys with parents of children 0-18 years of age to find out how their services are going.
- Through the Community Support Program (CSP) there are educational meetings monthly in both Franklin and Fulton Counties. These meetings focus on services that are available to the community and connecting individuals with these services or programs. CSP also hosts a variety of advocacy events in May for "May is Mental Health Month." On May 7, 2021, is our Annual Wellness Conference. This conference is open to the community and completely free to attend. The goal is to increase the knowledge and education around mental health for the community. Examples of trainings that will be held at this year's conference include: Grief and Loss during Covid, Trauma awareness class (one for kids and one for adults), QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer Suicide Prevention Training), and a few others. Through activities such as the ones listed

above, we work to connect individuals and family members with providers and professionals to bridge the gaps.

- Peer Support Services are also available to parents who also have a mental health diagnosis. Peer Support is a program where individuals with lived experience receive training and become certified to provide services to adults experiencing challenges related to their mental health.
- On Tuesday nights from 6-8 pm there is a support group that is open to all community members. The support group is designed for individuals experiencing mental health challenges and those who support others with mental health challenges. There is no registration required, they just show up.

Children/Youth:

- MHA is credentialed to provide Peer Support Services to Youth ages 14+.
- MHA conducts satisfaction surveys directly with Youth ages 14+ regarding the services and supports they receive and how they feel about their services.

Written by **Bethany Peake, MS**
Chief Executive Officer

Cooking Adventures

Join us for our next adventure
LIVE on Facebook!

Recipes will be posted on Facebook
1 week before each LIVE.

Schedule:

[Thursday, April 8, 5 p.m.](#)

No-Bake Cookies in a Bowl with
SueChefs

[Thursday, April 15, 5 p.m.](#)

TBA with Nicole and Morgan

[Thursday, April 22, 5 p.m.](#)

Cook Me a Story with Melisa and Abby

[Thursday, April 29, 5 p.m.](#)

TBA



Local Event

Family Fun Day

Silver Star Valley Saddle Club is hosting a horse expo and family fun day! Enjoy hayrides, face painting, carriage rides, and more! This event is April 17 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Visit the [Silver Star Valley Saddle Club Facebook page](#) for more information.



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amazing newsletter in their inbox each month!

AND you will receive a gift from us for helping us spread the word!

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