



Kenowa Hills Public Schools  
Education inspired.

# Kenowa Hills Mental Health Newsletter

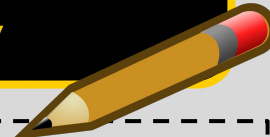


"Mooooom!!!" squeals the most excited two-year-old voice ever. I peer over my iPad during the staff meeting to find her naked, finally wanting to use the potty. The very same potty that has been refused for weeks.

**Have you been there, too?**

*In the spirit of "Mental Health Awareness Month," we wanted to get real with our Kenowa Hills Community & hear from them!*

**An open letter from one of our KH parents to the rest of our community**



The balance of being a parent, being an employee, being daycare, and teaching your own child can seem heavy and downright overwhelming. Did I forget to mention exhausting? If you feel like this, **you are not alone**. We are right there, walking a similar path, and we see you.

So how do we not just survive but start thriving in our current situations? Balance. Such a hard word, but **the importance of finding balance is going to be key** for all of us. Days are hard. I have cried, I have been angry, I have been lazy and frankly, I have wanted to throw it all out the window. I am now teaching a second grader. I have a two-year-old piranha Godzilla that I love with all my heart. That being said, daycare is closed and if I turn around for a split second, she is flushing wipes down the toilet causing a clog in the pipes resulting in 12 inches of standing water in the basement. True story. I have a job that my soul desires to thrive at, students that I want to connect with and make this the most painless experience ever. Yet, I feel like I am not giving anything the best me, because everything seems to need me, and that is draining.

**Playing all these roles is hard.** However, I know that home is a safety net. When our house flooded, my oldest shut down. Her home was the place keeping her safe and in that instance, something broke through those walls and stole some sense of security from her. Working in the education field, I wish I could tell you my children do all their school work on time, with happy hearts, and that it's never a struggle. Oh, and that screen time is minimal. It's not.

If there's anything I've learned during the past few weeks, it's that my children's home comes first. I am my child's parent first. If we don't get all the work done for the week and use a little summertime to keep learning, it's ok. It's okay to say enough is enough. If she hates school work because I put too much stress on the 'should' get done instead of focusing on her needs, she will actually be hindered in the long run. If I can engage them in academics in some way, shape, or form, **I am doing my best**. If I am trying my hardest to set a good example of how to handle life's hard moments and take care of myself, I am doing my best. Juggling all these roles is hard. **This is not normal, but it also can be beautiful.**

I have been able to spend time with my girls that I am not typically able to have. I have watched and learned new things about each one of them. My oldest has a crazy amount of knowledge and love of birds. I knew she would mention birds from time to time, but without this forced time halt, I never knew the depth of it.

I challenge you to find something for yourself, with your children, and with your friends, that you can incorporate into your life to help the bad days be just that, bad, and not horrid. Let the good moments and memories outshine the rest.

I know that can seem overwhelming and way easier to say than reality. Please hear me out, this is hard, but **we are all in this together**. Remember **it's okay to reach out**, there are so many resources available for you (if you need help finding any, please let us know!). **It's okay to not be okay**, it's okay to admit this is HARD. But it's also okay to be okay with the chaos and creating the best current life, no matter what that looks like.

-submitted by Heather Woy, KH parent & staff member

(edited for space)



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## What do our K-8 students have to say?



**Challenge:** Figuring out how to do my homework

**Strategy:** I worked with my teacher

-River, 4th grader (Central)

**Challenge:** Trying to submit my work

**Strategy:** Emailing & Meeting with teachers

-Travis, 4th grader (Central)

**Challenge:** Doing work instead of playing video games all day....

**Strategy:** Help my sister with her work & do mine at the same time

-Chay'ce, 7th grader (KHMS)

## Let's hear from some of our high school students!

**Challenge:** Not seeing my friends...

**Strategy:** Stay in contact on social media

-David, Freshman

**Challenge:** Getting on track with my classes...

**Strategy:** Get enough sleep at night

-Jon, Junior

**Challenge:** Feeling bored and dealing with my mood....

**Strategy:** Eat healthy and go for walks

-Shawn, Sophomore

**Challenge:** keeping myself busy & active while @ home

**Strategy:** started a couple new hobbies! I've started painting, gardening, and researching things that are interesting to me! I've also been keeping active by taking bike rides and my dog out for a walk. Some days are harder than others but it's important to keep yourself active!

-Cora, Sophomore

## & last but not least - let's hear from some of our KH 2020 Graduates!

"As I said before, my family and I are very lucky to be able to minimize exposure and risk. I understand that this is not an option for everyone. I am sorry for that. Even for those of us without a direct connection to the virus, these are difficult times. Personally, the hardest part has been the feeling of detachment from the people and schedule I had come to rely on. Time seems to blur together and even texting and other quarantine activities hardly compare to actually spending time with people. However, I understand how important it is to stay home for our frontline workers, but there is still a lot we can all do to help from a distance. Checking in on people has been the best use of my time. Taking time to see their faces and hear their voices has been a way of connecting to people, even if we're all so far apart. We could all use a little company right now."

-Sonnet Yancey, Senior

"I would say the biggest challenges I had to overcome during the pandemic would be maintaining a positive attitude about missing out on a graduation ceremony or senior related activities. Also coming to terms with myself that just because I didn't have a traditional senior year it doesn't mean that all my hard work was a waste. With the help of my mom and her positive attitude she's shown me that I can still have my big moment whether it's on stage or at home. In saying that, I noticed, graduation is obviously an important moment in my life, but the most important part of it all is the people who I celebrate it with because without their motivation and speeches I wouldn't be where I am today and I'm hoping I get to celebrate that with them as well."

-Alexiya Cooper, Senior

"I think the biggest challenge I am facing during the school closure would have to be the social aspect, not being able to see my friends has really taken a toll on me and affected me negatively, I have been able to overcome obstacles by not letting this tragic event affect my mentality. How I have been able to do that is by learning new things that I wouldn't usually find interesting. I am also putting my education as a priority even with the epidemic and making sure that everything is set for me to attend college in the fall."

-Hugo Cano Jr., Senior

"Personally, the biggest challenge during this school closure has been trying to stay positive while some of the big events such as prom, spring break, graduation, etc. are being cancelled and postponed, when those were some of the things I was most excited about, and looking forward to for so long! I have been dealing with this by honestly distracting myself by looking forward to college and the new opportunities that will bring me, and staying in close touch with all my best friends!!"

-Camille Shoup, Senior





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## Let's talk more about Mental Health!

### Building Resilience as a Family



- Have real, frank conversations with kids about challenging situations, like job loss.
- Discuss your family's values & goals and create a sign that can be hung on the wall as a reminder to work together during challenges.
- Talk about the challenges faced by ancestors & elders in your family: How did Great-great Grandpa get through the war? How did Aunt Jay make it through her toughest time? Connecting to a family history of resilience helps children see themselves as resilient.
- Connect with your cultural identity. Check out books from the library (online), watch documentaries together, and plan an at-home celebration to build links to your broader cultural community.

### What does a resilient family look like? LIKE YOUR FAMILY RIGHT NOW

"Resilience is not about the 'rugged individual' saying 'I just did it on my own' and 'I had all the ingredients inside of me.' It is more about support from others. ...Adversity itself can turn into an opportunity to become stronger, together. Resilience is something that can be built at any point in the life cycle." -Dr. Froma Walsh

### Quiz Yourself on your Mental Health knowledge!

#### Two Truths and a Lie...

Can you spot the 'lie'?

- 1: A. Mental illness may be biological.  
B. Mental illness is a personality flaw.  
C. Mental illness may be hereditary.
- 2: A. Mental illness can be treated by professionals.  
B. Mental illness can be managed with coping skills.  
C. Mental illness is permanent and hopeless.
- 3: A. It takes courage to speak up and ask for help.  
B. Humans need and benefit from a support system.  
C. Seeing a doctor or therapist is a sign of weakness.

#### Break the Stigma!

1, Lie, B

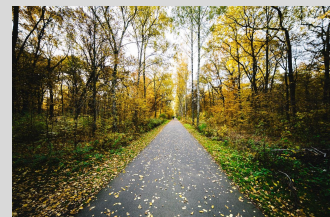
2, Lie, C

3, Lie, C

### Increasing your physical activity will boost your mental health! Get outside!

Go for a walk/explore a new park! Link to map of parks in the Walker area:

[Walker Parks and Recreation Map](#)





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## MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES, (NEW) FROM STATE OF MICHIGAN:

There are several resources now available to Michiganders through MDHHS - "Stay home, Stay well."  
*Take a look!*

### Crisis Text Line

People who text RESTORE to 741741 will receive referrals to local mental health resources and connections. Crisis texts are confidential.

If anyone in emotional distress feels a chat via text would be useful to resolve the emotions of the moment, the text line's crisis counselors can help people shift from a heated moment to a calmer state.

### National Suicide Prevention Hotline

NATIONAL

**SUICIDE  
PREVENTION**

LIFELINE™

**I-800-273-TALK**

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

People considering suicide are urged to contact the National Suicide Prevention Line  
**(800-273-8255)**

### Disaster Distress Helpline

This is for anyone in distress pertaining to the COVID-19 crisis. It is available 24/7 at 800-985-5990.



THIS WEBSITE PROVIDES FREE, EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDED MEDITATIONS, INCLUDES AT-HOME WORKOUTS THAT GUIDE PEOPLE THROUGH MINDFUL EXERCISE, SLEEP ASSISTANCE, AND CHILDREN'S CONTENT TO HELP ADDRESS RISING STRESS AND ANXIETY. THIS RESOURCE IS FREE AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC. [CLICK HERE TO GO TO THE HEADSPACE WEBSITE.](#)



### Michigan "Warmline"

The statewide "Warmline" for Michiganders living with persistent mental health conditions connects people with certified peer support specialists who have lived experiences of behavioral health issues, trauma or personal crises, and are trained to support and empower the callers.

Open daily, from 10 AM- 2 AM, 7 days a week.  
@ 888-PEER-753 (888-733-7753).

For more information: please visit the [following link!](#)