

WE ARE AWARE

The Latest from Colorado Project AWARE

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Building a "We-Care" Workplace

The new year can bring about a variety of emotional responses for people. The ongoing pandemic, challenges in our educational systems, and political tension only compound our typical beginning of the year stresses. "Self-care" is an overused term that deflects the real role and responsibility that systemic circumstance plays on our internal mental state and overall well-being. Creating and maintaining an emotionally connected environment where organizational well-being practices and individual coping strategies are implemented, is essential to having a safe and productive work environment. In order to acknowledge all things that impact individual and organizational stress levels try shifting your work culture from a focus on self-care to a focus on "we care".

Engaging in calming activities decreases cortisol levels and increases the availability of serotonin which stabilizes our mood and oxytocin associated with relationship building and trust. In addition, research shows that experiencing laughter and engaging in acts of gratitude can increase levels of serotonin in the brain. Therefore, these aren't "extras" or a "poor use of time" in the workplace, they are actually beneficial to employee wellness and should be planned for and supported in the workplace.

As an educator or helping professional we are quick to rush to aid or help others, and have a resistance to taking care of ourselves. Common explanations for this resistance include; "I don't have time", "I need to focus on my students", "I'm uncomfortable with touchy feely things", "It seems selfish to take time to do this", and many more.

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| 1 Use check-in questions with staff regularly. | 6 Create staff shout out boards. |
| 2 Plan initiative implementation with a focus on how you will support staff see planning tool below | 7 Set healthy boundaries (i.e. only email during work hours). |
| 3 Be intentional about connecting with colleagues. | 8 Find opportunities for humor and laughter. |
| 4 Commit to a regular practice of celebrations, personally and professionally | 9 Reflect on workplace practices and integrate the organization's core values. |
| 5 Know the resources available for additional help in your workplace (i.e. EAP services) | 10 Seek out personal and professional development opportunities like therapy or training |

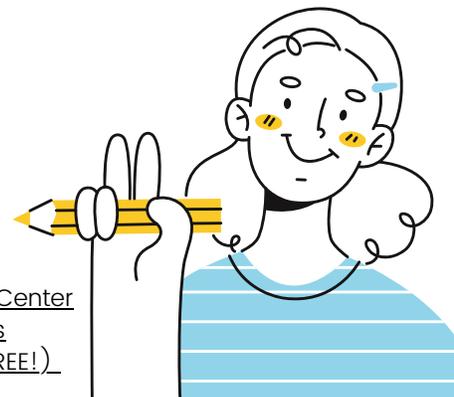
For Continued Exploration...

CDE Developed Tools:

- [Well-Being Quiz](#)
- [Well-Being Action Plan](#)
- [Stress Awareness Tool](#)
- [Employee Centered Initiative Checklist](#)

Articles and Continued Learning:

- [Stress relief from laughter? It's no joke](#)
- [MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Video Series: Workforce Wellness Strategies](#)
- [National Course on Managing Emotions \(FREE!\)](#)



BREAKING NEWS

LIVE

Surgeon general warns of emerging youth mental health crisis in rare public advisory. [CLICK HERE](#) to check it out

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Sending warm holiday wishes to you and your families. See you in 2022!

Cheers,

The Project AWARE SEA Team

FREE

CO Educator Supports Workshops! Happiness and The Holidays Tuesday December 14th @ 6:30pm

Hoping to actually enjoy your time off? Want to use the break to relax, recover, celebrate, and be jolly? Join happiness expert, Dr. Amy Lopez, as she talks about factors that influence our happiness, strategies to feel happier (even if it's only for two weeks).

To Register...

CLICK HERE 

[Click Here](#) to download a flyer you can share with staff.

Holiday Anxiety Management Thursday December 16th @ 6:30pm

This month, the focus will be on navigating the holidays, spending time with family, and ways to survive the hustle and bustle.

To Register...

CLICK HERE 

[Click Here](#) to download a flyer you can share with staff.



REMINDER: SBHC Request for Applications

This RFA opportunity invites eligible organizations to apply for funding to support planning to open new SBHCs and funding to support currently operating SBHCs, including opportunities to participate in the School-Based Oral Health Project and the SBIRT-SBHC Project (SBIRT = screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment).

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information

Evaluate Your Life: News from Mario

- Friendly Reminder to use the [School Mental Health Workforce Development Post Training Survey](#) at any and all trainings affiliated with Project AWARE.
- IPP Indicator data collection for quarter one is coming soon in January.



Upcoming Professional Development

- Wednesday 12/15 [Depression and Integrated Care](#)
- Foundations Begins in January - [Register Today!](#)
- Wednesday 1/12 - [School Climate Improvement Session](#)
- Wednesday 1/12 [Transitioning Back to School During COVID-19 for Anxious Youth](#)
- Recording: [Mental Health Stigma Reduction in Rural Schools](#)

Worth a Listen

"Kids Are Dying. How Are These Sites Still Allowed"
[Click Here to Listen](#)



If you'd like to submit something you think is worth a listen or want to highlight something happening in your LEA in upcoming newsletters email Morgan.

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