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PACT for Families Newsletter

An 11-month publication

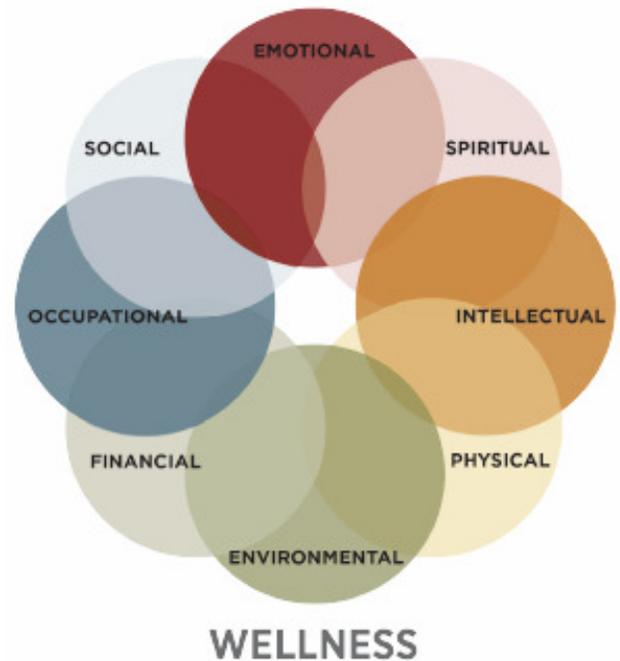
Learn the Eight Dimensions of Wellness

Wellness: Connecting All Aspects of Behavioral Health

Each dimension of wellness can affect overall quality of life.

Through its Wellness Initiative, SAMHSA encourages individuals, organizations, and communities to work toward longer, healthier, and happier lives, particularly among people living with behavioral health conditions.

The Eight Dimensions of Wellness take into account not only an individual's physical health, but all the factors that contribute to a person's overall well.



Source: Adapted from Swarbrick, M. (2006). A Wellness Approach. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 29(4), 311-314.

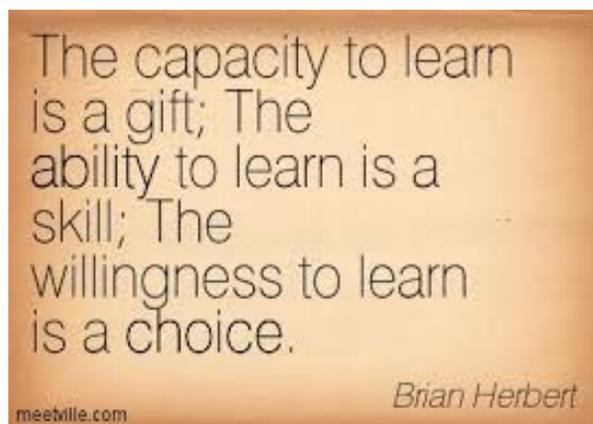
To learn more about the Eight Dimensions of Wellness, visit: www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative



Director's Discussion—Learning Through Many Lenses

Learning comes in many forms and is a central part of life from the time we are born, and hopefully, until we leave this life. Unless we are in a formal learning environment of studying and repetition, we sometimes forget that we are “learning”. But learning takes place in everyday interactions and observations as well.

*“It has been suggested that the term learning defies precise definition because it is put to multiple uses. Learning is used to refer to (1) the acquisition and mastery of what is already known about something, (2) the extension and clarification of meaning of one’s experience, or (3) an organized, intentional process of testing ideas relevant to problems. In other words, it is used to describe a product, a process, or a function.” **



There are many definitions of learning, but this one seems to resonate with me as it encompasses a broad framework. In order to thrive, we do need to master skills, but we also need to understand the skills we acquire and apply those in the context in which we live. We also should mature in our aptitude and test our knowledge. All of these concepts support strengthening ourselves individually and collectively.

Supporting children on their path to become learners should be intentional. By examining our world, we are demonstrating the value of learning. This can be done by observing the natural world, understanding how science has an impact, studying art and history, or encouraging self-reflection and social justice. By encouraging and modeling learning ourselves, we are showing children how to become their own teachers. They learn how to explore, discover, create and ponder the world in which they live through many different lenses.

Rochelle Peterson, Executive Director

*From Learning How to Learn: Applied Theory for Adults by R.M. Smith.

Join Us!

Please join us at our next full collaborative meeting in Willmar on September 13th. The meeting begins at 11:45, and lunch costs just \$10.00. A calendar invitation will go out soon. If you do not receive it, you may RSVP via email to Shawna at: shawna.steffen@pactforfamilies.org; or call 320-231-7030 ext. 2961.

Never Too Late to Learn

Growing up in Peru, I remember there was a program called ALFALIT. This program's mission was to teach how to read to adults. Their slogan (which they sang at the end of each session) was: "Nunca es tarde para aprender," which means: It's never too late to learn.

I met many students who slowly were learning how to read. I remember their stories and testimonies after finishing the ALFALIT program, tears of joy running down their cheeks as their lips were putting letters together, words together, sentences together. There was no doubt that learning was something very important for each of those students. As I look back, I understand those tears and realize that for them learning wasn't just a good accomplishment in their lives—it was an open door to a world that, because of the lack of opportunities growing up, categorized them as illiterate. For them, learning to read was an entry to a whole different world: opening doors to new opportunities, connecting to new people, reflecting and making decisions. Learning how to read brought independence and a sense of freedom that they did not experience before. Indeed, if you encounter them today they would surely say: it is never too late to learn.

In my work with Guía and now with the Reentry Ready program, one of the goals of the program is to educate clients. In a sense, many of clients are taking baby steps to learn new ways. I have, more than once, used the phrase with them: it is never too late to learn. Learn how to say no to drugs and alcohol, learn to get out of bed and go to school, learn to communicate with parents, learn to tell oneself that one is good enough, learn how to have new friends. The list goes on but it is very rewarding to see our youth and their families learn new tools to face their challenges. They also are very proud of their learnings and yes I have seen also tears of joy as they realize that they have new open doors and new ways of freedom!

Just this summer as I start working with the Reentry Ready Program, I have become a learner as I meet with new networks, new settings, new young adults. I look forward to continuing to learn and enter into a world with new possibilities.

I wonder, as you read this article, if you realize that it is never too late to learn? What are the areas in your life that needs new learning? Today is a good day to start learning about new opportunities, new open doors, new ways of doing things, new friends, new community, indeed a new world! My friend, it is never too late to learn!

Happy learnings!

J. Pablo Obregon, Reentry Ready Navigator

21st Century Programming at BOLD

As we start off another school year with the 21CCLC Grant, BOLD will be dedicating a large portion of its school year curriculum to service learning. There is a "bigger than one would expect" gap in communication between our youth and our area elders and we are hoping to implement programs that our after school group can partake in to help bridge that gap. This type of learning will be beneficial to all parties involved and we can't wait to see the interactions between generations. When researching our families and our heritage, several of our students felt disconnected from grandparents and others of that age group and they felt that both parties could gain a better understanding of each others lives and worlds they grew up in with learning-based interaction. Their biggest objection in the gap was the use and non-use of technology. Youth will plan activities that will engage elders in today's technology and it is hoped that in return the youth can learn about the days when technology wasn't a part of daily lives. Plenty of follow up and reflection will be important to determine outcomes and it look like it will be a great project at BOLD.

Debora Ziller, Site Coordinator



Funding for the PACT for Families Collaborative 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program is provided by the federal government through the No Child Left Behind Act and is administered by the Minnesota Department of Education.

September / October

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4  | 5 Executive Board Mtg; 11:30; #2075 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 11 Brain Conference mtg; 3:00; #2045 Parent Advisory mtg; 5:45; YMCA, Willmar (RSVP requested) | 12 | 13 Committee & Full Collaborative meetings- KCHHSB in Willmar ; Early Childhood / 5-25: 10:00; Collaborative:11:45; LAC: 1:45; check website for more details or call the office (RSVP requested) | 14 | 15 LCTS IV-E Specialists mtg; LuLu Beans in Willmar; 9:00-10:00 |
| 18 21st CCLC Coordinators mtg; 3:00pm; #2057 | 19 | 20 21st CCLC Advisory mtg; 2:00pm; #2037 | 21 | 22 |
| 25 | 26 Community Wellness Webinar; 10:00-Noon; Willmar/Olivia/Hutchinson | 27 CEO/Executive Boards Retreat; Green Lake Bible Camp in Spicer; 9:00-2:00 | 28 | 29 |
| | | | | |
| 2 | 3 Executive Board Mtg; 11:30; #2075 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 Brain Conference mtg; 3:00; #2045 Parent Advisory mtg; 5:45; YMCA, Willmar (RSVP requested) | 10 Tentative ACEs Training; MPR (more info to follow) | 11 Committee & Full Collaborative meetings- Project Turnabout in Granite Falls ; Early Childhood / 5-25: 10:00; Collaborative:11:45; LAC: 1:45; check website for more details or call the office (RSVP requested) | 12 | 13 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 PACT All Staff mtg; 8:30-Noon; MPR office closed during this time | 26 | 27 |
| 30 | 31 Community Wellness Webinar; 10:00-Noon; Willmar/Olivia/Hutchinson | 1 | 2 Youth Leadership Conference; Epik Center, Willmar; 9:30-3:00 | 3 |

SUCCESSING IN SCHOOL: A Worthy Wraparound Goal

A wraparound team started meeting midway through the school year. Among the goals for this team was a goal for Beth* to “get caught up in school.” This was defined. She needed to turn in a couple of late projects, she wanted to achieve high school status, and she wanted to have regular attendance. Worthy goals. Education was very important to this family.

There were other goals too. One was focused on Beth’s mental health, as she struggled with depression. The other was a goal to help nurture her creativity and musical talent....things that were identified as some of her greatest strengths.

It was interesting, through the course of the wraparound process, to see how these goals fit together.

Beth did well with the wraparound process. While it often takes a while for youth to feel comfortable, she seemed to feel safe with her mom, grandma, aunt and uncle, and school staff supporting her. That was a plus, a definite strength. Each meeting, we went over the three goals and talked about progress made and obstacles felt. We brainstormed ways to work around the obstacles. She listened to our suggestions but made decisions on her own of what she felt she needed to do.

We recognized progress along the way. When she achieved high school status, we ordered pizza and celebrated success. When she gave a speech at a school assembly, most of the wrap team was present to give support. And when she was struggling with the new math program and it was getting her down, we brainstormed ideas. (In the end, Beth chose to accept her uncle’s tutoring in math). Each time we met, she scaled for us from 1 to 10 where she felt she was with her depression. It helped us gauge how she was doing from month to month.

Then there was the time when she was very down. Her self-esteem had plummeted along with a falling grade. She scaled high for depression. There were some developments in her circle of friends that got her down. The heaviness on her face was evident as she tried to take the world’s problems on her own shoulders, and she felt inadequate for the task. So at that meeting, we stopped so each one could remind her of her many, many strengths. The joy she brings to others. Her empathy for others. Her ability to be a leader and to contribute to a group. Her talents. Then, the school social worker reminded her of the coping skills she has learned to use in her DBT group. We encouraged her to talk to her therapist later that day about what was hers to work on and what responsibility belonged to others. Then, someone asked her to demonstrate some of the cheers she had learned in cheerleading.

She hesitated at first. Here? In this quiet building? She had to think about it for awhile. Then, she stood up and in her outdoor cheerleading voice, saluted her school’s football team. It was great. We couldn’t help but smile. No doubt someone in the building wondered who was shouting, but somehow no one came to check. It was a great idea, a great moment.

Very often, wraparound teams are focused on helping kids succeed in school. And more often than not, working towards that goal involves accomplishing other goals. Improvements in managing depression. Involvement in other activities that bring a sense of fulfillment and resilience. Taking a step towards finding a job. Connecting a youth with a mentor. That’s one of the reasons why wraparound is a great forum for helping youth who are struggling in school; we can look at the entire picture, the entire person, and celebrate success with the entire team...maybe even with a loud cheer!



**not her real name*

Char Erickson, Wraparound Coordinator

PACT for Families Collaborative est. 1993

2200 23rd Street NE Suite 2030
Willmar, MN 56201

Tel: 320-231-7030; Fax: 320-231-7033

WWW.PACTFORFAMILIES.ORG

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2017 Executive Board

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| Jennifer Mendoza, Parent-Kandiyohi Co. Serves through 2018 jennifer.mendoza@kcmn.us | Corinne Torkelson, Kandiyohi Co. Family Svcs Serves through 2018 (320) 231-7800 x2459 / corinne_t@co.kandiyohi.mn.us |
| Diane Winter, Meeker Co. Public Health Serves through 2017 (320) 693-5373 / diane.winter@co.meeker.mn.us | Gerald Brustuen, Renville Co. Human Svcs. Serves through 2018 (320) 523-2202 / jerry_b@co.renville.mn.us |
| Lisa Kraft, Hutchinson School Dst. Serves through 2017 (320) 234-2618 / Lisa.Kraft@isd423.org | RaeAnn Keeler-Aus, Yellow Medicine Co. Family Svcs.; Serves through 2019 (320) 564-2211; raeann.keeleraus@co.ym.mn.gov |
| Sandy Hruby, Parent-McLeod Co. Serves through 2019 (320) 237-7727 / sandy@fasdfamilyresource.org | Tammy Thompson, Meeker Co. Court Svcs. Serves through 2017 (320) 693-5260; tammy.thompson@co.meeker.mn.us |
| Tara Nelson, Hutch Health Serves through 2019 (320) 484-4610 / tnelson1@hutchhealth.com | Gladys Kirsh, Fiscal Agent (non-voting) gladys.kirsh@co.mcleod.mn.us |
| Rochelle Peterson, Director (non-voting) (320) 231-7030 ext. 2965 / rochelle_p@pactforfamilies.org | |

Chief Elected Officials

| | |
|---|--|
| Rollie Nissen, Kandiyohi County; (320) 212-9887 rollie_n@co.kandiyohi.mn.us | Bob Fox, Renville County; (507) 557-8265 BobF@renvillecountymn.com |
| Mike Huberty Meeker County; (320) 224-5763 mike.huberty@co.meeker.mn.us | Greg Renneke, Yellow Medicine County; (507) 925-3117; greg.renneke@co.ym.mn.gov |
| Rich Pohlmeier, McLeod County; (320) 587-6084 rich.pohlmeier@co.mcleod.mn.us | |