

# MENTAL HEALTH MEMO

## JANUARY 2025



Holley Elementary School

### Multi Club "Coat, Cocoa and Coffee" Drive

The Multi-club members will be hosting a coat drive on January 21st from 3:45-4:30 in the cafeteria. If you are need of a coat or know someone who needs a coat, please stop in. Hope to see you there!



### January 2025: Mental Wellness Month

January is the month focusing on raising awareness about mental health and promoting strategies for maintaining mental well-being. Raising awareness about children's mental health is crucial because:

- Mental health affects physical health and can interfere with learning, socialization, and self-esteem.
- Early intervention and treatment can prevent symptoms from persisting into adulthood.
- It helps children recognize, interpreting and understand their emotions accurately and helps them build resiliency.
- Encourages positive attitudes and safe behaviors.
- Parents can help by checking in with their child, listening, encouraging them to learn about and label their emotions, and teaching coping strategies.
- Common mental health concerns in children include anxiety, ADHD, and behavior problems.

### Elementary Mental Health Team:

**Kristina Tese:** Counselor  
**Holly Curtis:** Psychologist  
**Michelle Palmer:** Social Worker

### Contact Information: 638-6318

**Mrs. Tese:** extension 2408

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**Mrs. Curtis:** extension 2411

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**Mrs. Palmer:** extension 2558

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### Community Resource Spotlight:

#### Orleans County Mental Health

4014 State Route 31, Albion, NY 14411

(585) 589-7066

Services offered include individual, family and group psychotherapy for children adolescents and adults. Services also include a care management program that assists individuals in assessing needed medical, psychiatric, social and other educational services.



## The Use of Cell Phones and Tablets by Children Impacts Mental Health Risks

Children and adolescents are increasingly reliant on devices for entertainment and communication, however, this has raised concerns about the potential negative effects of digital screen use on young people's mental health. Some studies have found some links between high screen time and poor mental health. Research has found that reducing leisure-time screen media not only improves young people's mental health, it has also showed a reduction in behavioral difficulties, particularly internalizing symptoms like emotional and peer-related issues.

The **American Academy of Pediatrics** recommends these acceptable amount of screen time limits:

- No screen time for children under 2
- One hour per day for children 2 to 12
- Two hours per day for teens and adults



**These six tips can help you trim your children's screen time when not in school:**

1. **Be accountable:** Set expectations with your kids, and create goals to be intentional about reducing screen time. Many devices have features to set time limits for use.
2. **Be realistic:** If your kids spend a lot of leisure time on screens, including watching TV, start by setting smaller, more attainable goals. Instead of jumping right to the recommended one to two hours or less per day, start by cutting their current screen time in half.
3. **Be engaged:** After school or work, spend time each day talking face to face with kids and give them your full attention.
4. **Put hand-held devices away:** During screen-free hours, put devices away or at a charging station in a common area so they're not attracting your kids' attention.
5. **Create phone-free zones in the home:** Making family meal areas a phone-free zone is an easy way to start.
6. **Go outside:** Putting down the phone and taking a walk or playing outdoors increases your endorphins and provides that feeling of happiness in your brain, boosting your mood and improving your physical health.

Do you know that **nutrition affects the brain development and mental well-being** of children more than adults? Children who eat more nutritional diets, with more fruits and vegetables, have better mental health and wellbeing, which can directly impact anxiety levels, sleep patterns and more.

- Nourishing foods give our children's bodies the energy they need throughout the day to do the things that matter: learn, play, grow, and connect.
- A healthy diet supports gut health, which plays a role in brain function and emotional regulation.
- Good eating habits also support overall physical health. When we feel good physically, we are more apt to feel good mentally.
- Eating dinner together as a family at least three nights a week is a powerful protective factor for preventing mental illness in children. It is a special time to connect emotionally and express interest in each other's lives. Slowing down to eat together shows children that you value them and that you are present for them. Make family dinners a priority as much as possible.

