

January 2021

Talking About Mental Health: Self Compassion

Welcome back from the Winter Break. This has been a different break than any other year I can remember. We all had to adjust to different traditions, different expectations, different connections, different situations to manage in our lives. January is the beginning of a new year. January's Umbrella Theme for Upper Grand District School Board is Self-Compassion. What better way than to remind ourselves that we, too, deserve the same kindness, compassion and care that we give to so many others.

Here are some ways to help yourself with your own self compassion:

1. Remember it's okay to say "this is really difficult right now". What do you need to take care of yourself? What does your self-care look like? Is it a walk outside? A few minutes of deep breathing in a quiet space? A conversation with a friend or family member? Writing down your thoughts? There are so many different things we do to take care of ourselves. Find your "thing" and give yourself permission to do it. You deserve it.
2. Are you judging yourself? Your situation? Your decisions? Try and notice when you are self-judging and hit the pause button. Can you try being gentle with yourself? Give yourself a moment of compassion and kindness. Words can be very powerful. What you say to yourself has an impact. Speak and think kindly of yourself.

Here are some family activities that you can explore this month alongside your child/ren.

1. Have everyone write a letter to themselves. You can choose to share it with the rest of the family if you want or just spend the time writing together and keep your letter in a special spot
2. Have everyone go around the table and do "rose, bud, thorn". What is one things you really like/appreciate about yourself (rose), What is one thing that you are working on for yourself (bud) and what is something that you are finding difficult (thorn).
3. Have everyone brainstorm ways to be kind to yourself. You can make a big chart or picture and put it up on the fridge. When someone is needing some self-care they can always go to this and choose something that works for them in that moment

There is no doubt that these are difficult times. It is so important that we are kind to ourselves. Remember to reach out to someone if you are feeling alone and look out for others as well. Remind your kids that they can talk to you when they are feeling sad or down or confused.

If you are in crisis and live in Wellington you can call Here247 at 1-844-437-3247 (HERE247)

If you are in Dufferin and are in crisis you can call Dufferin Child & Family Services at 519-941-1530

Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868