

The Psychosocial Team at BCCFA encompasses three programs: Key Worker Support Services (Burnaby), Stepping Stones Program (Burnaby, Richmond, Vancouver, North Shore) and Family Counselling Support Services (Burnaby and New Westminister)

Happy Spring (almost Summer) from the Psychosocial Team at BCCFA! We hope you are all enjoying the sunshine and more hours of daylight. Over here we have been busy with Spring activities and gearing up for Summer. Check out page 7 for a list of upcoming events and workshops, we hope to see you out at an event this Summer!

In this issue of our newsletter we are sharing information on mental health, building resilience in children, and providing resources for a fun spring and summer. Did you know that activities such as storytelling, dress-up, music, playing sports, dance, hiking and other similar activities help develop executive function and social emotional competencies? These skills are highly beneficial for children when building friendships and participating in group activities. Getting involved in activities also helps children learn problem solving skills and promotes self-esteem and mental wellness. We know that sometimes the end of the school year can be a challenging time with less structure and routine at school so check out page 4 for some helpful reminders!



All the best as this school year wraps up and you head into summer break. We hope you enjoy your time this summer whether that be on vacation, at home, taking a well-deserved break, participating in activities, or whatever your family has planned this summer!

## Child and Youth Mental Wellness

Did you know that 3 to 4 students in every class of 25 students across Canada are impacted by a mental health challenge? Children with developmental differences may also experience anxiety, depression, and/or have diagnosed conditions such as ADHD or OCD.

Children naturally become more interested in friends and developing friendships when they start school. Some children begin to have worries about not being able to keep up, or they struggle with the social and emotional competencies necessary to fully participate in a faster paced social environment such as school. Often mental health challenges are seen as behaviour outbursts, struggles in the classroom or with friends. As children get older, demands from school, home and community life become more intense as the expectation to be independent increases.

If you see changes in your child such as: a loss of interest in activities or spending time with friends and family, trouble sleeping or changes in appetite, increased inattention, or an increase in fears that is not age-appropriate, you could speak to your child's teacher and/or child care worker to see if they are noticing any of the same changes. It's a good idea to speak with your doctor to rule out any medical problems or medication side effects that may be effecting your child's mental wellness.

Finding moments of joy each day can be a great way to help kids ease their worries and feel supported. If your child has a difficult day you can help them calm their mind and body by listening and reminding them that tomorrow is a new day and a fresh start. Social and emotional challenges can be complex. You don't always

have to "fix" problems, but your child does need to feel like you are on their side. Have a snuggle, read a story, play a game — or whatever

helps you connect with your child in that moment. When mental health challenges persist it's a good idea to consult with a professional.



See page 3 for resources.

## Resources for Child and Youth Mental Wellness

Fortunately, there are many effective treatments for children who struggle with mental wellness. Here are a few resources to checkout:

**Canadian Mental Health Association-** National Mental Health Week 2019:

<https://mentalhealthweek.ca/>

**FamilySmart-** Together-Centered for child and youth mental health:

<http://www.familysmart.ca/>

**Kelty Mental Health**– Provincial Resource Centre: <https://keltymentalhealth.ca/>

**Foundry**– Health and Wellness Resources and Supports: <https://foundrybc.ca/>

**Anxiety Canada**– Tools and Resources: <https://anxietycanada.com>

**Child and Youth Mental Health-** BC Mental Health Walk-in intake Clinics:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use/child-teen-mental-health/mental-health-intake-clinics>

**ODIN Books**– Mental Health and Educational Resources: [www.odinbooks.com](http://www.odinbooks.com)

**NCTSN**—The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: [www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)

**Child Trauma Academy-** Dr. Bruce Perry: <https://childtrauma.org/>



## Ways to Brighten Up a Child's Day

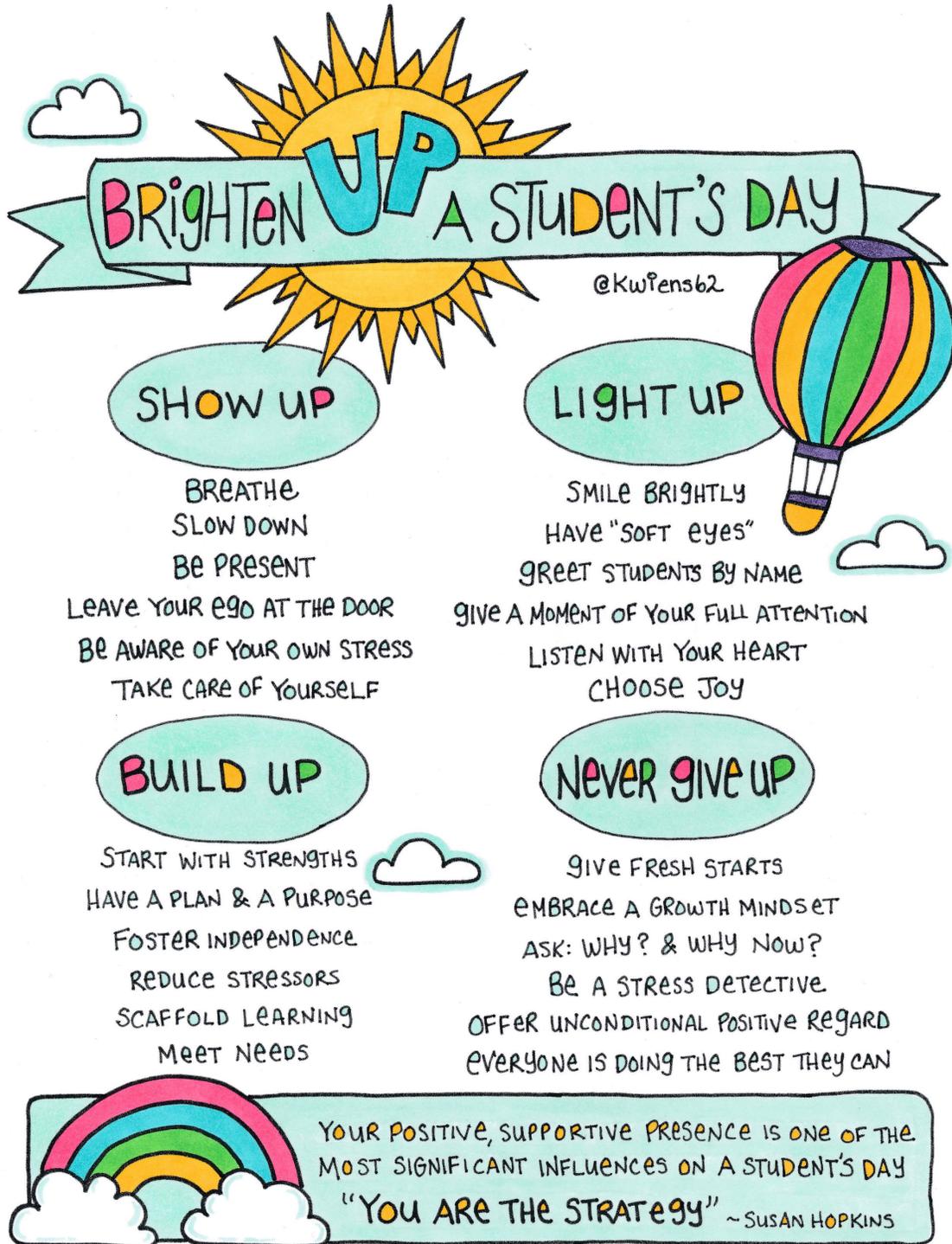


Image from Kristin Wiens at <http://northstarpaths.com/>

## Building Resilience in Children



Experiences during early childhood can impact multiple areas of development. Early childhood experiences can effect the brain and development of children. These effects may be seen as a child having difficulty with regulating emotions or behaviours. Some children may seem quiet and shutdown in response to stressful situations. Many of us know this as the ‘fight, flight, or freeze’ response.

Taking the time to write down your child’s strengths can help shift our thinking from challenging behaviours to being curious about what the behaviour is trying to tell us. What is the child’s need that is not being met? Does the child feel safe? Do they have a sense of control? Are they being triggered by something that might not be obvious?

Support for children includes interventions that promote coping skills and resilience, such as teaching children to label and express emotions and describe how their body feels when experiencing an emotion. Teaching them mindfulness, calm breathing and how to experience joy. Take children hiking, biking, and teach them how to garden and dig in the sand.

Children need to feel they can trust those supporting them. Choice and control go a long way to helping children’s brain development and build resiliency for long term mental wellness.

See page 3 for resources.

## Recreation Opportunities for Summer

**With summer quickly approaching, you might be interested in recreation options for your children over summer break. Check out the following list of options:**

KidSafe Break Programs: <https://www.kidsafe.ca/our-programs/break-programs/>

Sirota's Alchymy Martial Arts Centre: <https://sirotasalchymy.com/camps/>

Pedalheads: <https://www.pedalheads.com/Heroheads/dates-times-costs/BritishColumbia>

Special Olympics: <http://www.specialolympics.bc.ca/>

Challenger Baseball: <http://www.bcchallenger.com/>

Canucks Autism Network (CAN): <https://www.canucksautism.ca/>

SPCA: <https://spca.bc.ca/programs-services/for-kids-teens/for-parents/workshops-summer-camps-youth-events/bc-sPCA-summer-camps-lower-mainland-sunshine-coast/>

Mindesign Kids: <https://mindesignkids.com/>

Eureka Camp Society: <https://www.eurekacamp.ca/>

Easter Seals: <https://www.eastersealsbcy.ca/camp/>

### List of Summer Camps:

<http://kidsclubs.ca/summer-camps-2019/all-summer-camps-listings>

<https://www.familyfuncanada.com/vancouver/summer-camps-metro-vancouver/>

**For more information on inclusive options, contact your local Parks and Rec office:**

Vancouver Parks & Recreation— Adapted & Integrated Programs 604-718-5853

Burnaby Parks & Recreation— Adapted Programs 604-297-4576

Richmond Parks & Recreation— Accessibility & Inclusion Services 604-276-4391

North Vancouver Parks & Recreation— Inclusion Programmer 604-983-6415

## Upcoming Groups & Workshops

Our Programs offer many ways for you to be actively involved with us. Check below for a sneak preview of some of the groups and events that we are offering. Detailed information about each of these will be sent out to you closer to the date. Please contact us with any questions and/or suggestions of groups and events you would like to see.

<u><b>Family-Together Night</b></u>	<u><b>Kindergarten Workshops</b></u>	<u><b>Parent Networking Group</b></u>
Date: August 14th, 2019	Dates: Fall 2019	Date: June 18th, 2019
Time: 6:00—7:30pm	Time: 6:30 —8:00pm	Time: 6:30—8:00pm
Location: A local park. Exact location to be determined closer to the date.	Location: BC Centre for Ability Office, 2805 Kingsway, Vancouver	Location: BC Centre for Ability Office, 2805 Kingsway, Vancouver
Info: We are excited to be partnering with the coaches from NSGSC Soccer 4 Everyone Program for this event. Come join us to work on your soccer skills! We will also have other activities, games and snacks.	Info: For parents and caregivers of children who will have started Kindergarten in September 2019. These workshops will provide information about your child's transition to Kindergarten and social emotional development and learning specific to Kindergarteners.	Info: Parent Networking social! An evening for parents and caregivers to relax, enjoy some food and connect with other parents. We will provide some food and please feel free to bring a snack or dish to share with others if you wish. We will also share some information about child and youth mental health day.
To Register: Contact Margot. More information to come via email closer to August!	To Register: Contact Margot. More information to come via email in the Fall!	To Register: Contact Margot or Michelle.

## Psychosocial Team Staff



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We want to hear from you!

We are always looking for feedback and welcome your input. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about any aspect of our Program's services, please call or email us.

Program staff can be reached as follows:

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