

Culture COUNTS

OCM BOCES

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May 2021

Restorative Practices build trust, community

By Randi Downs

Instructional Coach

Most of us have now been trained in Restorative Practices. It doesn't take long to weave these proactive strategies into everyday practice, but incredible things can happen when we do make the time and space to restoratively build community.



Here are some observations about the process from two of your colleagues:

"Having time and space to talk to each other helped my two students realize that their argument was all the result of a misunderstanding!"

"I facilitated a restorative circle, and the student and facilitator both said that the process made both of them feel heard and able to work toward solutions. Their relationship has been one of open communication since then."

Both educators noticed that restorative conversations and circles can enable everyone in the community to feel heard and understood. We can use restorative problem-solving circles to enable students to collaboratively solve any issues that come up during the day. When we give a problem to the collective wisdom of the circle, strong and trusting bonds will be formed.

Another fun and quick way to use a circle to build relationships is to have a "shout out" circle at the end of class, where students take a moment to give a recognize another person who made their day better.

If we use Restorative Practices daily, all students will have the opportunity to be validated, and there is power in that. If we use circles to build relationships, the classroom community can become a positive and safe place for all students. So if you've been trained, it is only a matter of planning what type of conversation, community builder, or circle you will have!

As one of your colleagues said recently, "You don't have to be excellent to **start**, but you do have to **start** to become excellent!"

Students at Seven Valleys brainstormed positive words for each other

How would you describe yourself and your colleagues in a positive way?

Onna

Super Cool
Fun
Creative
Hard worker

Jayden

Willing to talk
Introspective
Good friend
Patient

Seth

STRONG
Resilient
Clearly desires to improve
Hilarious

“LIFE IS A CIRCLE.
THE END OF ONE
JOURNEY IS THE
BEGINNING
OF THE NEXT.”

— JOSEPH M. MARSHALL

Please turn to the
next page to learn
about “Emotional
First Aid.”

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Remember the top three goals of Emotional First Aid

By Dan Hesler

During the school day, different conditions in a given setting can impact a student's ability to cope, causing a change in behavior. This is because many of our students can interpret a situation differently from what actually happened — e.g., a student cannot find their backpack and immediately thinks someone stole it.

When this occurs, we can use Emotional First Aid.

The goals of Emotional First Aid are as follows:

- Provide immediate help and support to reduce the emotional intensity;
- Resolve the crisis; and
- Keep the student in the program.

We can reach these goals by using active listening and clarifying events for the students.

Source: *Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools Workbook*, pages w39-w40

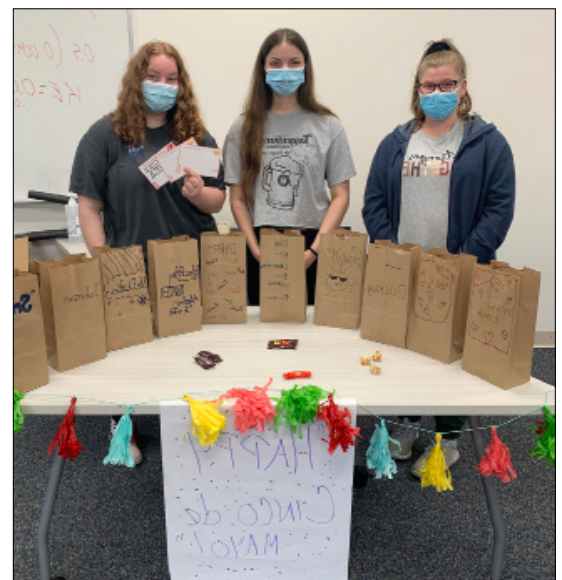
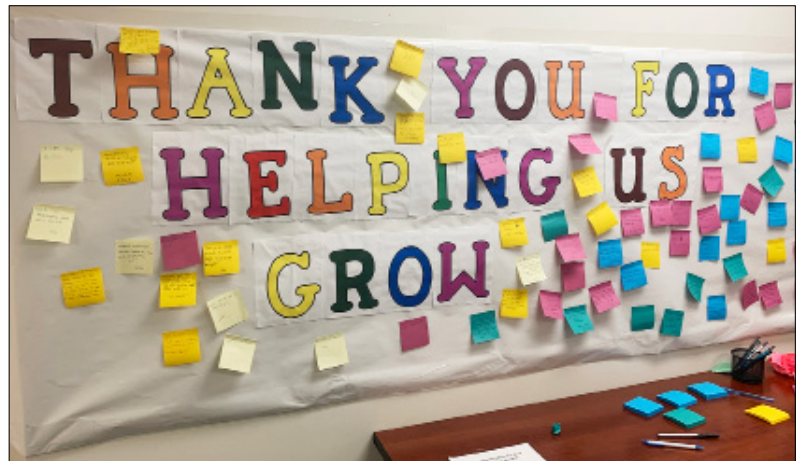


Students share messages of gratitude for teachers

Messages of gratitude for all of our OCM BOCES teachers were prominent this month because of Teacher Appreciation Week, which was celebrated May 3-7.

If you stop by the Career & Technical Education building at the Thompson Road Campus, you'll find a colorful display that students in the Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club put together so students could thank their teachers through messages on sticky notes. Students shared sentiments to specific teachers such as, "Thank you for everything you do for us and for always making my day brighter," "Thank you for being the best teacher I've ever had," and "Thank you for creating such a safe space for us to learn and have fun."

At Innovation Tech, the theme for May has been "pay it forward." FOR Club advisor and school counselor Kayla Beyer said students celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week by decorating goodie bags for each staff member and putting candy and thank you cards inside. The thank you notes were personalized cards recognizing what our students love most about each of their teachers. In the photo, students **Diana Sugrue**, **Aleyah Hunter** and **Luka Galle** pose by some of the goody bags that were presented to the school's teachers, or facilitators.



WELLNESS COUNTS

Wellness committees continue to offer art classes, organized walks

The Wellness Committee at Crown Road Campus sponsored two wellness events in April. Staff participating in a “Chalk and Sit” activity created artwork out of chalk. Staff

Wellness Committee Update: Crown Road & Main Campus

were also invited to a weekly walking group that starts after school on

Thursdays. At Main Campus, a noontime walking group that began in April is continuing through May and into the first week in June. A host from the Main Campus Wellness Committee guides each 20-minute walk.



From left to right, Amy Wood, Rebecca Salbert, Patricia Dillon, Donna McCormick and Cathy Stone gather at Main Campus for a 20-minute walk.

Open to all: Try a free, mind-body workout called ‘Group Centergy’

If you like the idea of doing some relaxing yoga, engaging in some invigorating Pilates and listening to music — all in the same workout — a new class called “Group Centergy” might just be for you.



Patrick Shaw, a staff development specialist in Instructional Support Services, will lead **two hourlong sessions this month:**

When: 4:15 to 5:15 p.m. May 20 and May 27

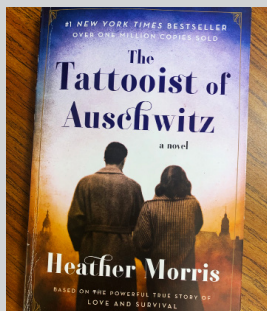
Where: Onondaga Conference Room at 200 Elwood Davis Road (next door to Main Campus)

Cost: Free

Participants will need comfortable clothes (workout clothes if possible), a towel, a water bottle and a yoga mat. [To register,](#)

[please click here](#) or go to the [Adult Education catalog](#) and turn to page 20.

If you have questions about the class, [click here for a detailed flyer](#) or send an email to Patrick Shaw at pshaw@ocmboces.org. Protocols for social distancing, masks and other health & safety measures will be followed during the classes. All abilities welcome!



Enjoy reading? The next book club meeting is May 26

If you love to read good books, join Terri Hewitt and guests for a book club discussion scheduled for noon on Wednesday, May 26, in the Skaneateles conference room at Main Campus. Bring a lunch and enjoy some discussion about the club's latest book selection, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. The book, by Heather Morris, is a fictional romance based on the real lives of two concentration camp survivors. Email Terri Hewitt at thewitt@ocmboces.org if you are interested. Have you read a great book lately? Share your ideas with the club!

WELLNESS COUNTS

Tips for choosing a physical activity that suits your lifestyle

Enjoyment is the key to maintaining an exercise program. Try to choose an activity you enjoy and suits your lifestyle. Suggestions include:

- Choose an indoor activity if you are bothered by weather extremes such as heat or cold.

Physical Activity Tips for the Month of May

- Choose an activity you look forward to, not one you think is “good for you” — you are more likely to stick to it.
- Think back. Did you enjoy a particular physical activity as a

child, such as riding your bicycle or playing basketball? If so, give that activity another go.

- Keep your budget in mind. Some physical activities, such as skiing or sailing, can require a big financial investment.
- Be realistic about your current health and level of fitness. If you are a beginner, the physical demands of certain activities (such as running) may be too

much at first. Choose a gentler alternative and work your way up. You will find this approach much more satisfying than trying to do too much, too soon. You are also more likely to avoid injury if you gradually build up.

Click here to [read the full article on Physical Activity - Choosing the One for You](#). This site also offers other [helpful articles on the best way to pick the right exercise](#).

Need to unwind? [Try this short Headspace mini-meditation video to “Let Go of Stress.”](#)

Self-Care & Mindfulness
“Let go of stress”

Healthy eating: pasta prima vera with fresh veggies

Ingredients

- 75 grams (about 2.5 ounces) young broad beans (use frozen if you can't get fresh)
- 2 x 100g (about 3.5 ounces) of asparagus tips
- 170g (just shy of 6 ounces) of peas (use frozen if you can't get fresh)
- 350g (about 12 ounces) of spaghetti or tagliatelle
- 175g (about 6 ounces) pack baby leeks, trimmed and sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra to serve
- 1 tbsp butter
- 200ml (6.7 ounces) tub fromage frais or creme fraiche

- Handful fresh chopped herbs (we used mint, parsley and chives)
- Parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), shaved, to serve

Directions

STEP 1

Bring a pan of salted water to the boil and put a steamer (or colander) over the water. Steam the beans, asparagus and peas until just tender, then set aside. Boil the pasta following pack instructions.

STEP 2

Meanwhile, fry the leeks gently in the oil and butter for 5 mins or until soft. Add the fromage frais to the leeks and very gently warm through, stirring constantly to ensure it doesn't split. Add the



Healthy Eating:
Recipe of the Month

herbs and steamed vegetables with a splash of pasta water to loosen.

STEP 3

Drain the pasta and stir into the sauce. Adjust the seasoning, then serve scattered with the cheese and drizzled with a little extra olive oil.

[For more information about this recipe, click here.](#)