



WELLNESS TEAM NEWSLETTER

high prairie school division, february 2025

IN THIS EDITION

- Printable Colouring Sheet by Artist Sharon Gauchier
- Mind Matters: Knowing Our Triggers
- Executive Functioning Tips from our Occupational Therapist
- Story Time Adventures: Tips from our Speech Language Pathologist Assistants
- Winter Wellness
- Resource Numbers

WELLNESS TEAM UPDATE

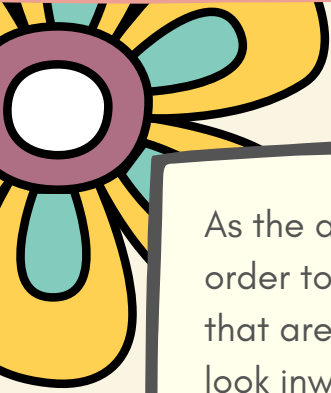
- During Teacher's Convention, the Wellness Team, HOSTs, & members of Northland School Division gathered for an insightful in-service session led by Recovery Alberta. They shared valuable information about tele-psychiatry and the Multidisciplinary Intensive Treatment Services programs. For further details, please contact your Wellness Coach.
- **Big news!** High Prairie School Division is teaming up with CASA Mental Health to bring an incredible new initiative to EG Whalstrom School in Slave Lake—a CASA Classroom, launching in September 2025! This exciting new space will offer crucial mental health support for students. Want to learn more? Check out the poster on page seven of this newsletter and join one of their weekly information sessions to get all the details!

A NOTE FROM ARTIST SHARON GAUCHIER

💡 I truly enjoyed making this piece. I was inspired by my capan Mary's florals she beaded and I loved the idea of nurturing our minds and loving ourself. With February we tend to think of loving our partners, friends, and family but I wanted to stress the importance of loving oneself and taking care of one's mind. sakihsio is something I say to affirm to myself to be kinder, and gentle with myself when I start to feel overwhelmed. 💡



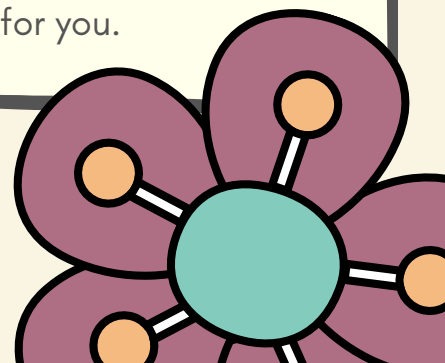
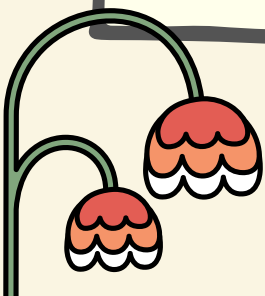
MIND MATTERS: KNOWING OUR TRIGGERS



As the adults in little people's lives, we have to be aware of our own triggers in order to be able to regulate our emotions, it is a tough job taking care of children that are learning to experience their own emotions. I am challenging adults to look inwards at their own emotional intelligence & take a moment to reflect on a time when you reacted to your child's emotions in a hurtful way. I want you to reflect on these questions:

1. Know your trigger: What about this behaviour is triggering for me?
2. What do you:
 - a. Do? (Behavioural Reaction)
 - b. Experience? (Physical Response)
 - c. Feel? (Emotional Response)
3. When was the first time you remember feeling that way?
4. What is the underlying emotion?
5. List the fears/insecurities this trigger brings up.
6. What is in your control?
7. What is out of your control?
8. How can you soothe yourself right now?

Sometimes, when we are in the trenches of helping children, whether we are their parents, caregivers, teachers, educational assistants or other helpers in their lives, it is overwhelming, and we don't always take time to reflect and understand our reactions. Our reactions have a direct impact on the children we are surrounded by, and this is why I am inviting you to take some time to reflect, gain some awareness, and make changes if you feel like it makes sense for you.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

What is **Executive Functioning**?

It is a term that is used to describe the many tasks that our brains have to perform on a daily basis that are necessary to think, act and solve problems. These skills allow children/youth to learn, listen and develop relationships. *You are not born with these skills, they are taught!*

Here are some ideas to help your child/youth develop these executive functioning skills:

Decrease stress

- Take time to be active outdoors
Examples: Going for walks, playing in the snow, try a new activity together
- Activities indoors
Examples: Playing games, creating/making things together, looking at books
- Practice deep breathing
Examples: Belly breathing, 4-7-8 breathing

Creating Routines/Checklists at home

- Morning routines - Getting ready for school
- Bedtime routines - Getting ready for bed
- After School routines
- Weekend routines
- Following recipes

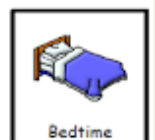
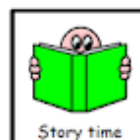
***Creating routines helps so that certain tasks are done the same way each day. This develops planning and organizing skills.**

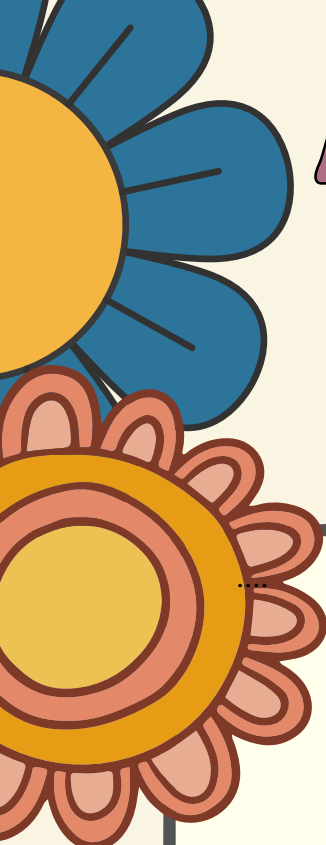
Time Management

- Use timers so everyone knows how much time they have to complete a task
- Use countdowns
Example: In three minutes we are leaving, in 2 minutes, in 1 minute, Ok time to go
- Plan out the week with your child/youth. Go over the calendar and have them look at it to know what is happening that day. It can be helpful to use pictures for younger kids and written words for older children.

SAMPLE BEDTIME ROUTINE

These can be cut out and used in the order they work for your family at home. For older children you can just use words on post notes and organize them in the order that works for the routine. This builds predictably, organizational and independence skills.





A MESSAGE FROM OUR SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST ASSISTANTS SHELLY GLADUE & MELISSA GRAY

Storytime Adventures: Growing Language, One Story At A Time

Reading with your child is one of the most powerful ways to build language skills. When you read together, your child hears new words, learns how sentences are structured, and develops important listening and comprehension skills.

Reading also strengthens your child's ability to express themselves, improves their attention span, and fosters a lifelong love of learning. Plus, it's a wonderful way to bond and create special moments together!

A great way to find new books and keep reading exciting is by visiting your local library. Libraries offer a wide variety of books for all ages, and best of all, borrowing books is completely free! Making regular trips to the library can help spark your child's curiosity and encourage a love of reading.

Point and Label

As you read, point to pictures and label things ("This is a dog. Look at the dog's big ears!"). This helps with vocabulary.

Ask open- ended questions

Encourage your child to think and talk about the story with questions like:

- "What do you think will happen next?"
- "How do you think the character feels?"
- "Why do you think they did that?"

Expand on their responses

If your child answers a question, build on their response. For example:

- Child: "The dog is sad."
- Parent: "Yes, the dog is sad because he lost his bone. Have you ever lost something important?"

Use Descriptive Language

Describe the story with more detail. Instead of just saying, "The tree is big," try, "Wow, look at that tall tree with the thick, green branches!"

Use Expression and Gestures

When reading aloud, use your face, hands, and body to show the emotions or actions happening in the story. This helps your child understand nonverbal language cues.

Try to make reading a daily habit, even if it's just for a few minutes. Every book you share helps grow their vocabulary and imagination!

WINTER WELLNESS

activities to keep you busy as we wait
out the rest of winter!

OUTDOORS

- Go skating or visit an outdoor rink
- Build a snowman or snow fort
- Take a nature walk
 - [Nature Walk Ideas](#)

INDOORS

- Host a family movie night with blankets & popcorn
- Play card or dice games
- Start a family puzzle or craft project
- Make a 2025 Bingo Card
 - [template here](#)

EASY HOMEMADE GRANOLA

Ingredients

4 cups rolled oats	1/2 cup melted coconut oil or olive oil
1-1.5 cups nuts or seeds	1/2 cup maple syrup or honey
1 tsp sea salt	1 tsp vanilla extract
0.5 tsp cinnamon	2/3 cup dried fruit

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper
2. Mix the oats, nuts/seeds, salt and cinnamon together
3. Pour in the melted coconut oil/olive oil, maple syrup/honey and vanilla to the oat mixture, mix well
4. Spread out evenly on cookie sheet, pressing down to make it an even layer
5. Bake for 21-24 minutes
6. Let the oats cool completely and then add your dried fruit (or chocolate chips, etc.) on top
7. Store in an airtight container for 1-2 weeks at room temperature or store in a freezer bag in the freezer for three months

a recipe from www.cookieandkate.com



CASA Mental Health Classrooms: Bridging Mental Health and School Needs

Imagine a world where mental health services showed up where kids already are. No need for caregivers to schedule an appointment or take time off work. Imagine the support families need, built into their lives.



CASA Mental Health Classrooms Information Sessions

CASA Mental Health offers regular information sessions for caregivers and other community members. Sessions are held on the first Tuesday (12 -1 p.m.) and the third Thursday of each month (4 - 5 p.m.)

Scan the below QR Codes to register for an upcoming session.



Tuesday



Thursday

CASA Mental Health has partnered with High Prairie School Division who are hosting a Grade 4-8 Classroom at E.G Wahlstrom School starting in September 2025.

RESOURCE NUMBERS

Name	Contact	Questions to ask yourself
Health Link	Call 811	Do you need health advice?
Mental Health	Intake - 1-888-594-0211 24 Hour -1-877-303-2642	Do you have questions about mental health?
Indigenous Virutal Care Clinic	1-888-342-4822	Are you Indigenous and need access to a doctor?
LGBTQS+	Youth - 1-800-246-7743 General - 1-888-843-4564	Are you seeking an LGBTQ safe support?
Kids Help Phone	Call 1-800-668-6868 Text CONNECT to 686868	Are you a child or youth seeking support?
Native Youth Crisis Line	1-877-209-1266	Are you an indigenous youth needing support?
Addictions	1-866-332-2322	Do you need to talk with someone about addiction concerns?
Food Bank	High Prairie -780-523-5777 Donnelly/Falher - 780-837-2220 Slave Lake - 780-849-3039	Are you facing food insecurity?
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-387-5437	Are you or another child being abused by another person?
Crisis Suicide Line	Phone or Text - 988	Are you or someone you know experiencing thoughts of suicide?
Sexual Violence	1-866-403-8000	Have you experienced or are concerned about sexual violence?