

## December: Low Light But Living With Awe!!!

By Barbara J. Green, Ph.D., YHC Medical Director

December is upon us with all the flurry of holiday activities and gatherings. Many people exclaim that it is a time with too many expectations for creating the perfect holiday season. I want to focus attention on a different perspective, away from tasks and obligation. In New England, December ushers in days with low light and few hours of natural daylight. This is in contrast, however, to the lights that festoon houses and send out a glow that can be enchanting. With the light low and hours of darkness, we are drawn in. This gives us the opportunity to find ways to embrace “inside coziness”. Rather than complaining, I am suggesting we “go with the flow” and find a rhythm that accepts what is rather than fighting it.

Observing young children has taught me how to see the world through their eyes and therefore allows for a perspective that opens me to their sense of “awe” and wonderment. They see the world and experiences with curiosity. They show us how to relish in small things, in nature, in the moment. This is “Awe”. Awe is breathtaking, awe is simple, awe is grounding, awe connects us to each other and to the moment. With awe, we remember what matters, we can find our heart center and feel mindful.

Awe centers us. Watching children teaches us how to live with awe, to not get caught up in the “busyness” of December, but rather to breathe deeply, accept low light, marvel at the glow of holiday lights, giggle with awe rather than sigh with pressure. What matters is living mindfully and naturally, in connection, with gratitude. There is never a better time to do this than December and to teach our children. These are the gifts that give every day and every moment.

### **Tip for Better Living:**

*“Always End The Day With a Positive Thought. No Matter How Hard Things Were, Tomorrow’s A Fresh Opportunity To Make It Better”*

## Inside

## Page

Social Media Study	2
CDC Report on Physical Activity in Classrooms	2
Some Family Outings For Winter	3
Gratitude and Everyday Life	3
Guiding Word - Balance	4

## Youth Health Connection Meetings and Events:

### **December 4, 2018 from 9-11 AM**

Digital Depression: How Social Media is Worsening Mental Health in Youth presented by Nassir Ghaemi, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Tufts University. **Open to all. Save your place by emailing Jean Kelly at [jkelly2@southshorehealth.org](mailto:jkelly2@southshorehealth.org)!**

**All meetings** are held at South Shore VNA, 30 Reservoir Park Dr. Rockland, MA. 02370. ■

## Social Media Use Increases Depression And Loneliness, Study Finds

The University of Pennsylvania recently published their findings on a study they conducted regarding Social Media use. The summary they reported was Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram may not be great for personal well-being. The first experimental study examining use of multiple platforms shows a causal link between time spent on these social media platforms and increased depression and loneliness. They used subjects between the ages of 18 and 22. The study does not speak to eliminating social media use because we all know if we have a young adult in our life that might not work. What this study speaks to and provides is backing that we all might be a little happier if we reduced our screen time. It gives us two related conclusions that we could all use relating to social media use. You can find these conclusions and more information in the article using the link below.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/11/181108164316.htm>



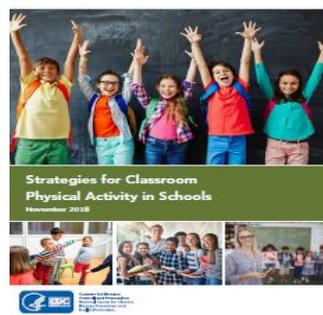
## Strategies for Classroom Physical Activity In Schools

Remember the days when running around outside at recess was a wonderful break in the school day. The freedom, the fresh air, and the chance to interact with other children was priceless. Back then recess was not the only time we spent outside. Today less and one-third of children and adolescents in the United States are meeting the recommendation for the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans which is to get 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day. Recently the CDC published the *Strategies for Classroom Physical Activity in Schools*. We have provided the link below.

Classroom physical activity affects student enjoyment of learning, which is an important factor in motivating students to want to learn. Allowing students to collaborate and interact with each other in a fun way can create conditions for them to feel safe, comfortable, accepted, and happy. Classrooms, where students feel connected to their teachers and peers, can provide a foundation for students to be more engaged, enjoy learning more, and perform better. According to the CDC Classroom physical activity can also benefit teachers. When they are physically active themselves, teachers may experience the same health benefits as students.

Check out the link to get the full booklet:

[https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/pdf/ClassroomPAStrategies\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/pdf/ClassroomPAStrategies_508.pdf)



## Some Family Outings For Winter

Check out these great family activities that are sure to beat winter boredom! Whether you like to stay inside out of the cold, or you enjoy venturing out, below are a few ideas that are good for all.

**Movies-** Make this perfect cold weather activity a family affair. Kids movies can be entertaining and enjoyable for the entire family! Besides, who can resist the popcorn and quiet time?

**Skiing or Snowboarding-** If snow is in the forecast, bundle up and head to the closest ski area. You can rent the equipment, and a lesson from a professional ski instructor will have you on the slopes in no time.

**Bowling-** Enjoy a little friendly competition with your kids, and if your kids are young, ask the bowling alley for the lanes with bumpers to prevent gutter balls from ruining the fun.

**Library-** A local Library is a great place, with books for everyone.

**Volunteer-** Visit a sick person in the hospital or bake cookies for an elderly neighbor. Kids will feel good about giving at this time of year.

**Science Museum-** The Newest Temporary Exhibit at the Museum of Science Boston is *All Aboard! Trains at Science Park*.

**Aquarium-** Check out the seals and the penguins which are usually kids favorites. While you are there check the IMAX theater for an interesting movie. They have Oceans 3D: Our Blue Planet, Pandas 3D or Galapagos 3D: Natures Wonderland.

**Ice Skating-** Ice Skating is a great way to incorporate exercise in the winter months. Whether you are a beginner or not this is a fun activity for all.

Whatever you decide the biggest gift is being together.



## Gratitude and Everyday Life.

A recent article published in Forbes Magazine reminds us that life goes by so fast and we should all try and take time to be grateful/mindful for what we have. The article titled *8 Ways to have More Gratitude Every Day* gives us a jumping off point for things that we might want to try and incorporate in our everyday living. Sometimes we get so busy in life trying to get things done and crossed off our to-do list that we forget all the things we have already accomplished. This article mentions that it only takes 8 weeks of gratitude practice for people to start showing changed brain patterns that lead to greater empathy and happiness. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. To imagine or have the capacity to imagine feelings that one does not actually have. Happiness is something that we need for ourselves. What makes us happy and can we incorporate more of that in our lives. Being grateful is not always about the positives in our lives. Sometimes the not so great things make us the people that we are now.

Read the article at the link below

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/womensmedia/2016/07/08/8-ways-to-have-more-gratitude-every-day/#6aade5ce1d54>



## Guiding Word: Balance

### By Jean Kelly, YHC Secretary

Continuing with Kim's guiding word let's explore Life Balance. In life is there really such a thing as balance. Is this like the elusive unicorn? How do we go about achieving this life in the middle of our busy schedules? I think balance can sometimes be the same as control and there are some things that we might be able to control and make room for in our lives that will help us.

Give some, one or all of these a try and remember to keep it up year round.

**Say No-** Say no to everything that is not essential and does not add value to your life.

**Keep Your Health At The Top Of Your List-** Try to get enough sleep, try to eat healthier and try to fit in some exercise.

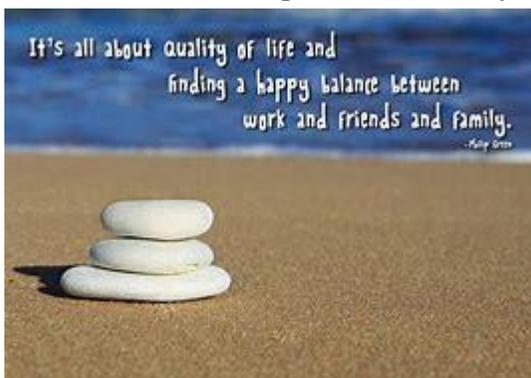
**Avoid Toxic People** – If they are not adding value to your life avoid them.

**Spend Quality Time With Yourself** - Put some relaxing music on in the car, meditate, take a yoga class, sit quietly with a cup of tea or coffee. These moments can recharge your battery and give you a centered feeling. I enjoy a good Hallmark Channel movie.

**Make time for your family and friends-** Being with people that lift you up, make you laugh and generally make you happy. These are the people you want to occupy the free time you have.

**Get Out and Go Somewhere Different-** Go somewhere you have never been before whether in a car, on a plane or by foot. Sometimes exploring a new place is invigorating.

**Expand your awareness-** Take a class and learn something new or read a book on a topic that interests you.



### Medical Director:

Barbara Green, PhD  
(781) 749-9227 x101  
[Barbara@bjgreenphd.com](mailto:Barbara@bjgreenphd.com)

### Program Coordinator:

Kim Noble, RN, MBA  
(781) 624-7415  
[knoble@southshorehealth.org](mailto:knoble@southshorehealth.org)

### Administrative Secretary:

Jean Kelly  
(781) 624-7423  
[jkelly2@southshorehealth.org](mailto:jkelly2@southshorehealth.org)

*Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Hospital dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, community health providers, law enforcement officers, state agencies, religious leaders, parents and peer leaders to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime.*

To subscribe please visit:  
<http://bit.ly/2CJppKj>

Connect with us:



**Youth Health Connection:  
Builds and Sustains Community Connections through Healthy Dialogue and Sharing Knowledge to Keep  
Our Youth Safe Today and Moving Forward**