



**YScreen** is the emotional health screen offered to all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students at the high schools in Fond du Lac County to identify risk factors for depression, anxiety and suicide.

**November 2020**

### **Practicing Gratitude During Stressful Times**

The simple act of practicing gratitude can help us shift our focus from only seeing the negative to appreciating what is **positive** in our lives. We know that a lot of youth have had many things taken from them recently. This can be anything from the normalcy that they have become accustomed to in school routine, sports schedules, social interactions, responsibilities at home and in school among many other things. It can be really easy to only focus on the things that we have lost and not the things that we have. Research has shown that gratitude can **enhance our moods, decrease stress, and drastically improve our overall level of health and wellbeing.**

#### **People that practice gratitude daily tend to have:**

- ❖ Fewer feelings of isolation and loneliness
- ❖ A stronger immune system
- ❖ Better sleep
- ❖ Lowered blood pressure
- ❖ Reduced anxiety and depression
- ❖ Reduction in body aches and pains
- ❖ More forgiveness
- ❖ Increased satisfaction at work/school

So, a slight change in mental attitude can positively affect us in many ways. Here are some helpful and simple tips for parents to help youth foster gratitude every day.

#### **Appreciate the Little Things in Life:**

Forget about the material things you do not have. Instead appreciate all the relationships you have and positive interactions you encounter each day. It doesn't matter how big or small these things are.

#### **Keep a Gratitude Journal:**

Jot down all your positive thoughts. Take 5 minutes every night to think about one thing you are thankful for and write it in your gratitude journal. At the end of the week you'll realize that the positives outweigh any negatives.

#### **Say 'Thank you':**

Sometimes we forget to be thankful for the people that are the closest to us. We assume they already know how much we appreciate them. **Tell them!**

#### **Create a workout routine:**

Did you know that regular exercise can help clear your mind and reduce stress? Working out not only helps improve your physical health, but will also support your mental wellbeing. Add exercising to your weekly routine and see for yourself!

#### **Volunteer:**

We know it can be difficult to volunteer for the causes you care about — especially during these unprecedented times, but do not let this pandemic prevent you from doing something AMAZING for your community.

YScreen can help identify signs of stress, anxiety, and depression that impact a student's health especially during this time. YScreen staff can also help connect teens and their families to the appropriate community resources that can address these concerns and help them cope. YScreen is available to teens in Fond du Lac County. If you would like to request screening for your child or would like more information about YScreen, please contact us at **(920) 906-6571**.

The Fond du Lac Area YScreen Program is administered through Fond du Lac School District with guidance from the YScreen Advisory Board. The Fond du Lac Area YScreen program is proud to be supported in part by Agnesian HealthCare, a member of SSM Health and Fond du Lac Area United Way.