

# Healthy Me!



**committed to improving the lives of area students**

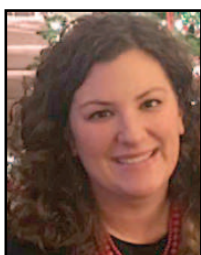
## Self-Care: Learning How to Take Care of Ourselves

*Sarah Howard, Board Member, Care for Children*

Care for Children is a local non-profit that was created by community leaders who saw the need to fill the gap and increase collaboration between services and organizations to provide needed benefits for families. Our community is lucky to have a large number of non-profits and service organizations, and we hope to bridge the gap so that those who need them have a full understanding of what is offered and available to them.

As an organization seeking to improve the overall health and wellness of the children in our community, one of our first focus areas is a resilience initiative. Owensboro is part of a pilot program that seeks to strengthen families and stop adverse childhood experiences such as neglect, abuse and trauma. There is significant research on the detrimental effects of adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, and how those childhood experiences have long term implications on overall health and wellness. We want to help the community understand how adverse childhood experiences can impact the lives of kids and teens, and also how we can all play a part in lifting each other up to promote resilience.

While we cannot always have control over our living situations, there are things we can do to be more resilient. One of the best things we can do for ourselves and our development is called "self-care." That means taking the time to understand what you need at any given moment. Don't be too hard on yourself and take the time



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to remind yourself how amazing you are! While activities, school work and time with family and friends are so important, you also need to make sure that you have some down time to rest and recharge your batteries. You are your own best ally, and should take the time to address the needs that you have.

This can be as simple as identifying when you need a break to spend some time with friends, or take some time alone to read or watch a movie. It could also be re-focusing on eating well, and getting some exercise to make yourself feel better. You could also make the time to focus on a new hobby or skill, or start a new volunteer activity. Learning a new skill, especially if it is something you have wanted to learn for some time, is so fulfilling and will increase your self-confidence. Volunteering can also make you feel better, as you can see the impact you are having on your community. Find a cause that you are interested in, and find out how you can help!

If you are feeling down and you don't know what to do to make yourself feel better, know that there are always people who want to help you and there is always hope! Reach out to a friend, a family member, a teacher or a guidance counselor at school. Sometimes just talking about something can make you feel so much better. If the issue can't be solved by talking through it, these people can help you find the right resources to address the problem. While we are all connected with phones and social media, it is easy to still feel lonely, but always remember YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

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