

February, 2021



# #LIBERTYSTRONG

Newsletter from your Clinical Team

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## How are we doing and what would you like to see in the Clinical Newsletter?

We want to connect with you! Please let Angie Huber know what you would like to see in the newsletter. We will do our best to meet your request. Send any requests to [aahuber@fcps.edu](mailto:aahuber@fcps.edu).

## Do your goals hurt your relationships?

By: Angie Huber, School Social Worker, Liberty MS

Having a goal is a good thing!!! It helps us look to our future and direct our lives. However, your view toward goals and approach to setting goals could be helping or could be hurting your relationships. Are your goals more important than your relationships? Do your goals keep you from having time for your relationships? Do your goals put too much pressure on your relationships? Are your goals in your control?

All goals take focus, time, commitment, effort, and consistency. Some goals often involve trying to outperform yourself or someone else, such as earning a reward over someone else. Competitive goals might make someone more dishonest and less of a team player by having the attitude of not being open to someone else's opinion to win. Goals for self-improvement can be positive but it should be clear that they are an individual self-motivated goal and not for a relationship. When a self-improvement goal is set for a relationship and not achieved, resentment can develop in the relationship. Maybe goals should focus on "Best Individual Improvement", as opposed to goals such as who is the "Best Student/Employee" to remove competitive reactions. Goals help us to strive for more, help us to grow and help us to have focus, but how do they impact our social environment. A great example is the goal of believing more money will make us happy. Many of us have heard of people who are "rich" and not wanting for anything material but are still unhappy. Why is this? Likely because their relationships- family, friends, spiritual- are lacking. Is this because they chose to focus only on reaching their financial goals as opposed to nurturing their relationships? Does this tell us that relationships should be put first over all other goals?

Relationships goals also bring their challenges. First and foremost, the people you spend time with should be supporting and encouraging your goals. If they are not supporting you, maybe they are concerns as to how your goal will impact your relationships. With that said, a conversation would be helpful to find the underlining reasons for the lack of support to decide if your goal needs to change to balance your life. How do you balance this? Do you give up on your goals? Maybe you can schedule quality time for your relationships to make sure you do not neglect them? Maybe your relationship needs some boundaries so that you both have time to pursue individual interests and have a better balance in your relationship? Focusing on self-awareness and communication are key. None of us are perfect and all of us are different. So, what works for one person or relationship might not work for another. However, we can all grow to have better relationships (friend, spouse parent, child....) while not forgetting that self-care is always first and foremost in any relationship! We don't have anything to give if we have not taken care of our "self" first. On the other hand, if you are setting goals for your relationship, it should be a combined agreed upon goal and likely involve common needed characteristics for any relationship typically revolving around improving problem solving together, communicating, listening, understanding and/or supporting each other. Forget about what you see on social media in establishing goals. Don't compare to other people's relationships! We all know that most people post only the positives and what they want you to see! We also

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# SELF CARE

## Checklist

- Read a book
- Plan a Fun Day
- Cook Your Favorite Meal
- Light a Candle
- Listen to Music
- Take a nap
- Listen to a Podcast
- Listen to an Audiobook
- Watch a Favorite Movie
- Take a Break from Social Media
- Eat a Healthy Meal
- Go Shopping
- Accomplish a Goal
- Spend Time Outdoors
- Try Something New
- Call Your Favorite Person
- Create a Vision Board
- Take a Bubble Bath
- Go out with Friends
- Compliment a Stranger
- Learn something New
- Meditate
- Buy Yourself Flowers
- Be Kind to Someone
- Write Yourself a Love Letter
- Garden
- Go for a Ride
- Go for a Hike
- Go to the Beach
- Drink a Smoothie
- Plan a Trip
- Go to a new City
- De-Clutter your Home
- Organize Your Room
- Re-decorate
- Write something
- Drink Some Tea
- Take a long Shower
- Buy a new Lotion
- Do what feels GOOD!

@VISIONARYPRINTABLES

## Let's Talk



## Friendship!

By: Joanna Wheeler School Psychologist, Liberty MS

My freshman roommate in college became a lifelong friend of mine, and one of the things that she does for her friends is make them feel special on Valentine's Day. Back in college, she would buy me and other friends a Valentine's Day present rather than getting us birthday presents. Her logic was that friendship love was just as important as any romantic love we will ever have, and she wanted to make sure we all felt appreciated on a day where circumstances could leave someone feeling left out. I also suspect that she liked buying all of our birthday presents on Valentine's Day so she didn't have to shop throughout the year. ☺

There is so much research on the benefits of having friends. Having a few close friends may help us deal with stress, boost our confidence, help us cope with negative life events, and even help us live longer. While making friends may come more easily to some than to others, let's discuss some ways to help students make friends. First, making lasting friendship requires more than just the ability to make small talk. To be truly successful, children need to master skills such as being able to regulate their own negative emotions, understand other people's emotions and perspectives, show sympathy and offer help, feel secure and trusting of other people, know how to participate in conversation, be capable of cooperation and compromise, know how to apologize, and be understanding of others' mistakes. Learning these skills takes much practice, and below are some tips for both parents and teachers.

Use positive discipline strategies, which includes reasoning with children and discussing the reasons for rules. Children who are exposed to these strategies instead of more punitive or manipulative strategies tend to be more prosocial over time.

Children may develop stronger self-regulation skills if they have a grown-up who talks with them sympathetically and constructively on how to cope with bad moods and difficult feelings.

Encourage your child to seek to understand the emotions and perspectives of other people. Ask them to describe to you how another person may be feeling and why.

Provide support and understanding for children who may be socially anxious and attempt to problem-solve situations that may cause a lot of anxiety.

Role play and practice the art of conversation with your child.

Role play and practice ways to cope with and handle awkward social situations.

Practice and role play situations where an apology is needed. Also, practice receiving an apology from someone else.

These tips come from the article *How to Help Kids Make Friends: 12 Evidence Based Tips by Gwen Dewer, PhD*. Here is the link to the article. <https://www.parentingscience.com/kids-make-friends.html> The article has other links embedded that you all may find helpful, as well as, a full bibliography at the end.

# TOP 10 Conversation Starters

1. What was the funniest thing that happened today?
2. Which one of your teachers is the best and why?
3. What's one thing you learned today that was really unexpected?
4. What was the worst thing you ate at lunch today?
5. What's the weirdest thing you saw today?
6. If you could take back one thing you or somebody else said today, what would it be?
7. If your life had a rewind button, what would you change about today?
8. If you could have used a superpower today, what would it have been and how?
9. To whom would you have liked to talk today but were too shy?
10. What would you like to do differently tomorrow than you did today?

# Welcome

# FEBRUARY

Wishing you  
a month filled  
with love,  
peace & joy.

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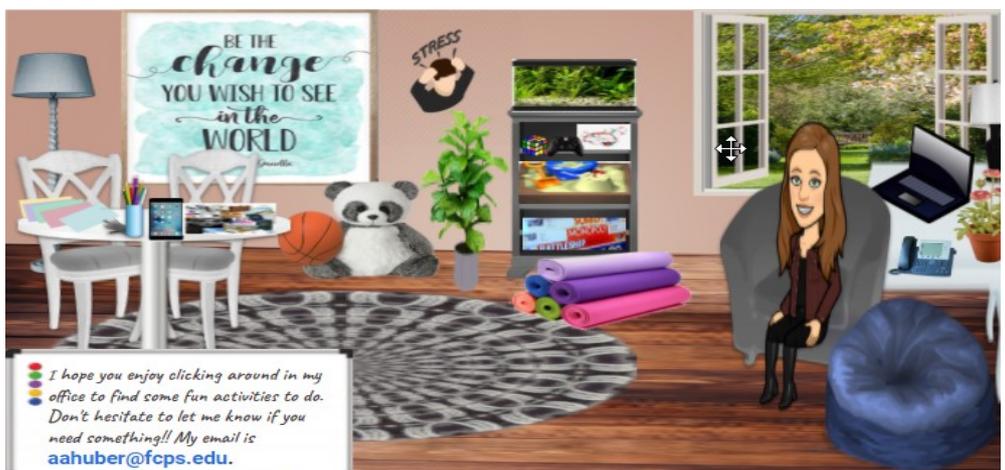
## 100+ Family Bonding Ideas

sammyapproves.com

1. Read bedtime stories for 10+ minutes each night
2. Plan a family game night
3. Go for a walk around the neighborhood
4. Ask about their day at school
5. Bake cookies together
6. Sing aloud together in the car
7. Tell them how much you love them
8. Plan a one-on-one date with your child
9. Play tag
10. Watch a family movie
11. Play dress up
12. Put on a play
13. Go stargazing in the back or front yard
14. Have family dinner or breakfast daily
15. Make time for no electronics
16. Read a chapter book series together
17. Go on a scenic family drive
18. Go roller skating/ice skating
19. Learn more about your child's interests
20. Make a craft
21. Let the kids help make an easy dessert
22. Ride a roller coaster
23. Go on a family bike ride
24. Plan a family picnic
25. Plant a garden
26. Carve out time for daily play
27. Encourage your kids in their hobbies
28. Let your kids help make the grocery list
29. Go on a family road trip/day trip
30. Get out some coloring books
31. Draw pictures
32. Learn how to play your child's favorite video game
33. Go camping
34. Involve the kids in vacation planning
35. Make yearly, monthly, weekly family traditions
36. Explore some old family photos
37. Tell stories about your childhood
38. Ask questions about your child's day
39. Volunteer for a local cause
40. Learn a new skill/hobby together
41. Have a family contest/competition
42. Create a schedule of family events
43. Start a family Youtube channel
44. Do a science experiment
45. Take a class together (Art, exercise, cooking)
46. Make family goals
47. Volunteer in child's classroom
48. Go on a class fieldtrip
49. Attend your child's extra curricular events
50. Build a LEGO set
51. Make a blanket fort
52. Find a Groupon Coupon for a day of family fun
53. Go on a family hike
54. Play a board game. We love Monopoly!
55. Have a family Pokemon card tournament
56. Build a world with your kids in Minecraft
57. Tell jokes
58. Donate old toys together
59. Have a small, family only, birthday party
60. Go to the park
61. Take a weekly trip to the library
62. Have a themed story time
63. Video chat with the kids when you are away
64. Surprise your kids with a trip or fun activity
65. Decorate a cake or sugar cookies together
66. Go out for a family dinner
67. Stick a note in their school lunch
68. Find shells at the beach together
69. Let your kids help with holiday baking and decorating
70. Have a water gun/balloon fight
71. Have a staring contest
72. Listen and respond when your kids are talking
73. Visit a zoo or museum together
74. Make ice cream sundaes
75. Learn a new game
76. Go to a concert
77. See a drive in movie
78. Play instruments and sing together (Family Band?)
79. Have weekly family meetings
80. Go swimming
81. Build a sand castle
82. Feed the ducks at a park
83. Pick out a family pet together
84. Make some dirt cups
85. Make a secret code
86. Go to a theme park
87. Sing Karaoke
88. Make dinner together
89. Make a family calendar together
90. Plant a tree
91. Go on a bus/trolley ride
92. Climb a rock climbing wall
93. Blow Bubbles
94. Make up stories
95. Tell spooky stories
96. Dance around
97. Go searching for bugs, birds, wildlife
98. Have a nature scavenger hunt
99. Start a family piggy bank, save for a family trip or activity!
100. Have a family slumber party
101. Ask your kids what they want to do when they grow up
102. Make a backyard fire pit, then make S'mores.
103. Make chalk art in the driveway
104. Play in the sprinklers
105. Learn a new song
106. Have a family pizza party
107. Go searching for Pokemon
108. Make your own stained glass drawings with Crayola

Your students can check out Ms. Huber's google classroom to see many cool things to do, learn about or to use to cope!

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vSMKer3dWvdXMgM3d3sdf\\_nnsAKWIHjsrXeGtWCtcqkIQdmqao7b5gVQAUT16Nk1p9kED56KcuAqH0b/pub?](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vSMKer3dWvdXMgM3d3sdf_nnsAKWIHjsrXeGtWCtcqkIQdmqao7b5gVQAUT16Nk1p9kED56KcuAqH0b/pub?)



# Relationship Check-up

QUESTIONS

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate our relationship?

Do you feel appreciated? What things do I do that make you feel that way?

When do you feel the most connected to me?

Is there anything you need/want/desire from me?

Anything you want more of? Less of?

Is there anything that you want that you're embarrassed to ask for?

What do I do that frustrates or annoys you?

Is there anything you would like me to apologize for?

Are you receiving enough affection from me?

What quality time activities would you like to put on the calendar?

Is there anything else you'd like to discuss?



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## Relationships- Cont. from pg. 1

know that chaos often happens before those “perfect pictures” in trying to get the “perfect picture”, especially with kids, so no worries! We are all in this together!

In our area, people are busy! We run, run, run with kids doing numerous activities. How many parents do you hear talking about being a “cab driver”? I am one of them. At what cost? Are we really balancing the relationships in our life with all the running? Are you balancing the different goals and thinking about the “teams” in your life as opposed to focusing only on individual goals? How can you balance it more?

Valentine’s Day is one of those days that people love or really hate with few in between. Considering Valentine’s Day, maybe we should make February a month to think about our relationships and how we can nurture them? Maybe we should use this holiday to reexamine our relationships every year? We become busy and often get caught in pushing relationships to the side! This year, we have all been stuck in a pandemic lifestyle at home and less involved. Are your relationships better, worse or the same? Why? At some point, we will find things opening more again. Many of us want “our life back”. Do you want it the way it was, or would you like to make some changes? It might be wise to start thinking about what that would look like and how you would like to change. What can you change now to strengthen your relationships? We all can work toward this. None of us are perfect. Why not start with some agreed upon relationship goals in your family today?



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## More resources that you may find helpful!

The Parent Resource Center (PRC) is excited to offer access to their library resources.

Their library is open for pick-up, on Wednesdays, by appointment only, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

### From Chaos to Calm: Strategies for Families to Create Calm and Confidence in the Midst of Chaos and Uncertainty: A Webinar for Families

Presented by Corinne Coppola, M.A., and Well-Being Professional.

Friday, February 12, 2021 10 – 11:30 a.m.

[Register for From Chaos to Calm: Strategies for Families to Create Calm and Confidence in the Midst of Chaos and Uncertainty: A Webinar for Families](#)

### Encouraging Positive Behaviors at Home Series

- 02/18/21: Teaching your Children to Follow Directions
- 03/18/21: Effectively Communicating with Your Child
- 4/22/21: Minimizing Prompts and Maximizing Your Child's Independence

Thursday February 18, 2021, 10 - 11:30 a.m. and 6:30 - 8 p.m.

[Register for Teaching Your Child to Follow Directions](#)

### Strategies to Support Social Emotional Learning at Home: A Webinar for Families

Join FCPS Social Worker, Jeanne Veraska & FCPS School Psychologist, Lisa Phifer for this important webinar.

February 17, 2021 6:30 - 8 p.m. or February 19, 2021 10 - 11:30 a.m.

[Register for Strategies to Support Social Emotional Learning at Home: A Webinar for Families](#)

### Is it Over Yet? How to Help your Child Cope with the Pandemic and the Eventual Return to Normalcy: A Webinar for Families

Friday, February 26, 2021 10 – 11:30 a.m.

[Register for Is it Over Yet? How to Help your Child Cope with the Pandemic and the Eventual Return to Normalcy: A Webinar for Families](#)

**For more social-emotional resources and lessons please visit the LS Clinical Team's website (see the link below works best in Google Chrome):**

<https://sites.google.com/view/liberty-ms-clinical-team/mental-wellness-topics>

\*\*some new videos added\*\*



[Sounds and Music](#)

[Meditation and Grounding Exercises](#)

[Visual Relaxation](#)

[Live Animal Cams](#)

[Yoga](#)

[Something Interesting](#)

[Pixar Short Film: La Luna](#)

[Pixar Short Film: Piper](#)

[Pixar Short Films: Day and Night](#)

[Pixar Short Films: Partly Cloudy](#)

[Art and Creativity](#)

[Games and Puzzles](#)

**LOVE IS NOT BY SAYING  
I LOVE YOU, ITS ABOUT  
CARE AND ATTENTION  
WHICH PROVES THAT  
YOUR LOVE IS REALLY  
TRUE.**

THISISLOVTELEIFEQUOTES.COM

## 50 Things To Do With Your Kids Indoors

1. BUILD A FORT
2. MANICURE/PEDICURE
3. BOARD GAMES
4. TREASURE HUNT
5. BAKE
6. LIGHT BRITE
7. DRESS UP
8. HAVE A DANCE PARTY
9. READ
10. MAKE YOUR OWN PICTURE BOOK
11. PERSONALIZED TREASURE BOXES
12. INDOOR/BACKYARD PICNIC
13. PUZZLES
14. WRITE TO GRANDPARENTS OR A SENIOR CITIZEN
15. DIY KARAOKE
16. MEDITATE
17. "ME" PORTRAITS
18. PLANT A GARDEN
19. HIDE AND GO SEEK
20. START LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE
21. PARACHUTE!
22. DIY MADTLIBS
23. MAKE A LEGO MOVIE
24. HAVE A FANCY TEA PARTY
25. PAPER AIRPLANE COMPETITION
26. HOPSCOTCH
27. LAVA FLOOR!
28. MAKE YOUR OWN FORTUNE TELLER
29. VIRTUALLY TOUR A NATIONAL PARK
30. GUESSING GAME/I SPY
31. BALLOON VOLLEYBALL/TENNIS
32. PUT ON A PLAY
33. INDOOR OLYMPICS
34. COLORING PAGES
35. CHOREOGRAPH A DANCE
36. CHARADES
37. MAKE FINGER PUPPETS
38. CARD GAMES
39. MAKE FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS
40. WRITE A STORY TOGETHER
41. YOGA FOR KIDS
42. MAKE HOMEMADE (& NONTOXIC!) PLAYDOUGH
43. PUT ON A MAGIC SHOW
44. BOWLING WITH CUPS
45. LIST THE THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT YOURSELF
46. TEACH YOUR PET A NEW TRICK
47. CROSSWORD PUZZLES
48. SHADOW PUPPET SHOW
49. JOURNAL/DRAW WHAT YOU'RE FEELING
50. MAKE A SCHEDULE!

### Try these activities for your student!

⇒ Liberty Middle School Afterschool Program

<https://libertyms.fcps.edu/activities/after-school-program>

⇒ Fairfax County Park Authority Programs

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

### Resources:

If you or someone you care about is in crisis, please call [911](tel:911) or access one of the mental health resources below:

- ⇒ *Reach out to a trusted adult (parent, counselor, teacher, coach, etc.); <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk>*
- ⇒ *Text NEEDHELP to 85511 for the [Crisis Link](https://www.needhelp.org) Hotline at or call them at 703-527-4077*
- ⇒ *Chat online with a specialist at [CrisisChat.org](https://www.crisischat.org) or [ImAlive.org](https://www.imalive.org)*
- ⇒ *Call an emergency mental health center at 703 573-5679 (Merrifield Center), 703-536-2000 (Dominion Hospital), or 703-289-7560 (INOVA emergency services)*
- ⇒ *CR2 – 844-627-4747*
- ⇒ *Go to the nearest emergency room at your local hospital*

Call 911

# Valentine's Day Activities!



Place new or old peeled crayons into a silicone mold. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes at 250 degrees. After 10 minutes, check your crayons. As the crayons melt, they'll fill the mold and you may need to add a few more pieces. Add the pieces carefully and continue to bake until they're fully melted. Let cool completely before popping them out.

## Angie's family tradition for Valentine's Day!!

Our Valentine Dinner has all heart shaped dishes. One of our favorites is below!



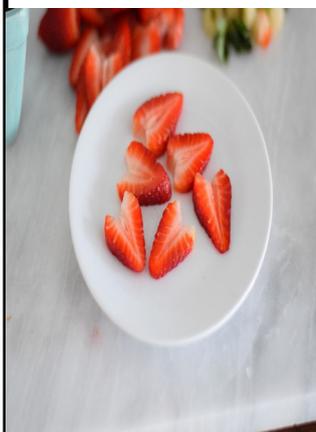
The kids love helping to make **heart shaped pizza!**



Use any pizza dough that you like. Shape it into a heart shape and follow the baking instructions. Top it with your favorite toppings! Enjoy!!

The kids enjoys making all heart shaped dishes!

**Why not cut fruit and veggies into heart shapes! They are more fun to eat that way!**



## Heart Shaped Cinnamon Rolls!

Follow the directions on the package with only changing the shape!



Counseling is often a good approach to help people to work through struggles that they are having in their life. Many feel comfortable with the idea of counseling and many do not feel comfortable. One of the benefits of counseling is that it can help you to find solutions or to problem solve more quickly than without it. However, some still may not be comfortable and to add to the challenges of becoming comfortable with the idea of counseling, during COVID, it is difficult to find counselors who are not meeting virtually, as some do not feel comfortable with meeting virtually. A good alternative is to use journaling. Here are some journal prompts for February.



## JOURNAL PROMPTS FOR RELATIONSHIPS

1. What qualities are you drawn to in others?
2. What draws others to you?
3. What does being a friend mean to you?
4. What does being in a relationship mean to you?
5. What did you think the perfect relationship would look like when you were younger? How is that different from how you picture it now?
6. What relationships are you most grateful for in your life?
7. What does connecting with another person feel like to you?
8. What element of yourself do others love that surprises you the most?
9. How has what you look for in a partner or friend changed over time?
10. What does family mean to you?
11. What do you wish your closest friends knew about you?
12. Do you have a relationship that has fallen away that you wish you still had? What happened? What would happen if you reached out to them?
13. Are you the same person in all of your relationships? Why or why not?
14. Do you like being part of a team? Why or why not?
15. Are you giving or getting more from your relationships right now?
16. What assumptions are you making about your partner or friend right now?
17. How would you define a successful relationship?
18. How can you show up more in your relationships today?
19. How often do you say "I love you"? Why?
20. What was a time that a friend or partner made you feel exceptionally special?
21. How often are you fully present in your relationships?
22. What qualities of your partner or close friends do you brag to others about?
23. When was a time you felt insecure in a relationship? What happened? What did you do?
24. What is hard about being in close relationships?
25. What is your love language? What is your partner's love language?
26. Are you an over-sharer or an under-sharer in your relationships?
27. Who has a relationship that you admire? What do you admire about it?
28. What do you do when you have a conflict with others?

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