



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

ARE YOU OK?

This is a question that we ask all too often ask but do not want the true or drawn out answer. Getting back into the swing of things and getting back into the new school routine, no matter what way the kiddos are being educated, and you as well adjusting to work and yet another routine and/or worry, makes you wonder "Am I ok?" That is normal and typical because of all the uncertainty and turmoil

we have gone through. Finding out if you are ok and actually getting told you are, is so vitally important. Plain and simple, it's ok to not be ok. It's fine to feel inadequate, overwhelmed or find that you are barely hanging on anytime of the day or week. Those feelings are completely and totally normal.

Making decisions about what you and your family are going to do during this time causes stress and anxiety. Not knowing whether or not to send your children back to school, can you juggle the remote learning, can you afford the pay changes to the switch of hours and the list goes on, is unsettling. Then add in the extra voices you hear from the media, neighbors, friends and family that are saying what you should and should not do. Chil-

dren thrive in a socially-connecting environment, and they need to engage with others to learn socially-acceptable behaviors and expectations. With that being said, the flip side is your child's social and emotional growth is stalled by an overabundance of stress and anxiety. Even if they are not directly involved, they feed and feel your tensions.

So, what is one to do? First, try to make a list of stressors that you can and cannot control. Try not to allow yourself to be consumed by those that you have no control over. Next, decide what is best for you and your family. Nobody other than yourself has any idea what you and your family need and what will be helpful better than you. Be kind, express yourself in an assertive and respectful way with your decision, but remember others are fighting a battle you cannot see as well.

Cheryl's Corner of Caring

"You can't calm the storm, so stop trying. What you can do is calm yourself. The storm will pass."

ARE YOU OK?

Take time to talk to your kids about their fears and concerns, let them be heard and validate them. Remember their concerns are not yours, but they are real to them. Give grace to each other now that school has started and things are so different. Each one of you needs to understand that it's ok to fall apart, it's ok to have lots of emotions and not be able to put them into words or even truly understand why you are feeling this way. Give yourself time and allowance for changing your mind; maybe you start one way and discover it is not working, then change.

Once again, only you know how to measure success in you. Remember, you can always reach out when you are struggling, when you feel totally overwhelmed and when you feel you are losing control. Because sometimes we all need that person to listen, validate and help with perspective. Because in all this craziness and confusion sometimes having someone listen to you when they ask, "Are you ok?" is all anyone really needs and wants. This is an act that can even be done while social distancing.

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



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Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,
Lincoln & Yuma

For additional support during
the COVID-19 Pandemic you
can call Centennial's
**COMMUNITY
SUPPORT LINE**

You can do this by calling your
nearest Centennial office:

Akron - 970.345.2254

Burlington - 719.346.8183

Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183

Elizabeth - 303.646.4519

Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924

Holyoke - 970.854.2114

Julesburg - 970.474.3769

Limon - 719.775.2313

Sterling - 970.522.4392

Wray - 970.332.3133

Yuma - 970.848.5412

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

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