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# The BHWP Messenger

*Culturally relevant, evidence-based, and trauma-informed behavioral health and wellness resources for schools, staff, students, and families*

## Supporting Students in the Classroom

By BHWP Senior Project Director Lori King and BHWP Education Specialist LaVonne Vayder

Creating a supportive learning environment for students is important for building or encouraging emotional and academic development. Effective strategies for student success should focus on empowering and engaging students and fostering the development of problem-solving skills. Here are several strategies educators can use in the classroom to prepare for positive behavior management.

- Take time to learn about the students and provide support.
- Connect with students outside of class in healthy and productive ways.
- Encourage free time and other activities for engagement in the classroom, such as reading, arts and crafts, or building objects using building blocks or rocketry.



Students develop an awareness of adults and their responses to behavior. It is important for adults to consistently model behavior that creates a calm environment and shows empathy for students. Before reacting and interacting with youth, adults should consider the following strategies:

- Do the opposite of your first reaction.
- If you feel compelled to lecture a student regarding their behavior, take a moment for silence.
- If you want to change behavior, first evaluate your behavior.
- Demonstrate and model positive and effective behavior.



For example, if a student complains about another student taking their seat at the lunch table, how would you respond? What problem-solving strategies would you encourage? Look for ways to encourage or ensure positive reinforcement outweighs punishment. Try the following dialogue:

- “That sounds like it bothers you.”
- “What do you think you should do about it?”
- “I may have some ideas.”

The adult should encourage the student to come up with their own solutions. Try not to solve the problem for the student; and always, remain within the parameters of student safety.

A student’s emotional and academic development depends on creating a “growth mindset.” Dr. Carol Dweck, a motivation researcher, defines a growth mindset as the belief that intelligence can be developed and improved over time through effort and achievement. To meet this critical development milestone, adults who work with students should look for ways to empower, engage, and encourage problem-solving in students.

## Cultural Connections

**Cultural Connections** are monthly videos focused on various wellness topics and rooted in Indigenous culture.

**Cultural Connections: The Breath of Life** is a narrative by Dave Brave Heart, a Lakota elder. He shares his journey of resilience as he faces life’s challenges and a terminal illness. He draws strength and courage from his indigenous cultural practices.



[Click here](#) to watch the video on the BHWP YouTube channel, produced and narrated by the BHWP team.



## BHWP CEU Webinar Series

The BHWP continuing education unit (CEU) webinar series is tailored especially for those in behavioral health-related roles, but any staff can attend. CEUs will be available for any licensed behavioral health professional (LPCs, LMFTs, LCSWs, etc.) and will provide opportunities for behavioral health skill-building and obtaining training hours toward continued licensure. For information regarding the upcoming webinars or to register, please [click here](#).

## Upcoming CEU Webinars

- May 13, 2022:** Ethics (6 CEUs)
- August 12, 2022:** Educators and Secondary Trauma (3 CEUs)

## Virtual Talking Circles: May 3 and May 19, 2022

BHWP continues to offer two virtual Talking Circles each month. This month, virtual Talking Circles will occur on **Tuesday, May 3, and Thursday, May 19, 2022**. Both sessions will begin at **1:30 p.m. Pacific, 2:30 p.m. Mountain, 3:30 p.m. Central, and 4:30 p.m. Eastern**. Virtual Talking Circles are available to all staff or employees from Bureau-operated schools (BOS), Tribally-controlled schools (TCS), Navajo District schools, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), Haskell Indian Nations University (HINU), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and employees within any BIE department. To register for Talking Circles in May, [click here](#).

## Wellness Wednesday: Supporting Students in the Classroom, Part 2

The next Wellness Wednesday webinar will be held **May 11, 2022**. The topic is “**Supporting Students in the Classroom, Part 2**.” It will focus on strategies and tools for strength-based and trauma-informed classroom management. Rebecca Marquardt and LaVonne Vayder, both former educators, will facilitate the webinar along with BIE Student Health Program Specialist Teresia Paul.

To register, please [click here](#) to visit the event page. After registering for this event, you will receive a confirmation email with the meeting link to join via Zoom and add the webinar to your calendar. **Note:** You may need to check your email inbox folders, including the spam or junk folder. Webinar start times are **1:30 p.m. Pacific, 2:30 p.m. Mountain, 3:30 p.m. Central, and 4:30 p.m. Eastern**. We look forward to seeing you there!





## In Case You Missed It!

We appreciate everyone who attended **Wellness Wednesday: Supporting Students in the Classroom, Part 1** in April. If you were unable to participate, [click here](#) to watch the recording on the BHWP YouTube channel.

## Meet a member of our BHWP Team

**Rebecca (Becky) Marquardt, BHWP Project Specialist**

*"Aanii, Waab Shik Mong Goonz n' dizhnikaaz. Ojibwe n' do, O-mong n' dodem miinwaa Baawting n' doonjibaa."*

Greetings! My Ojibwe name is Little White Loon. I am Ojibwe, Loon Clan from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan (the place of the rapids), and an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

I am a BIE BHWP Education Specialist and I serve as Project Manager for the National Indian Education Study. My background is in education with a master's degree in special education. I spent four years teaching special education for kindergarten through eighth grade at the Ojibwe Charter school on the Bay Mills Indian reservation. Then, I spent seven years in the classroom teaching elementary education on the Menominee Indian Reservation.

I have the honor of working on a team with backgrounds in education and culture. We work with school staff to enhance their classroom behavior management strategies while also providing insights and tools to strengthen their approach to working with students.

I value the opportunity to work with tribal youth. I have coached basketball for many years, from grade four through college. My recent coaching stint was for Team Wisconsin, a girls' 14U team, during the Indigenous Games and we won gold! One of my favorite ways to reenergize myself is being on the basketball court, whether coaching, playing, or having fun with my kids.

I get my energy from my five beautiful kids, ages 2, 3, 5, 5, and 6. They inspire me daily to be a better mom and person. My kids remind me what it is like to be excited to learn every day. They also remind me that sometimes you just need to laugh. Putting a smile on someone's face





or making them laugh is priceless. In our downtime, we enjoy being outside, being active, and enjoying the fresh air. Being outdoors really helps my family by enhancing our moods, improving focus, and maintaining a positive outlook. Most importantly, it helps strengthen our bond as a family.

### Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) is an evidence-based, trauma-informed training designed to teach participants how to assist a youth experiencing a mental health or substance misuse crisis. Participants will learn about risk factors, warning signs for mental health, addiction concerns, strategies on how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to find resources. To date, BHWP has trained over 500 individuals in YMHFA.

YMHFA training is available to all staff or employees from BOS, TCS, Navajo District schools, SIPI, HINU, TCUs, and employees within any BIE department. Upon successful completion of all course work and post-assessments, participants will receive a YMHFA certificate from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

[Click here](#) to contact BHWP for upcoming trainings or to schedule a training for your school.

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### Subscribe to our YouTube Channel



Subscribe to the BHWP YouTube channel and receive updates when Wellness Wednesday webinars and Cultural Connections videos are released each month. Please click the “SUBSCRIBE” image above to visit our YouTube page and subscribe.

We welcome your suggestions for The BHWP Messenger.  
Contact us at [biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com](mailto:biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com)