

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

This is the **4th of 4 messages** you will receive from us throughout the month of May related to mental health awareness and how to support the well-being of our children and adolescents. In this final message, we would like to share an Information Brief titled "*School-Based Mindfulness Interventions*". This resource provides readers with information on what mindfulness is and how it can be used in school settings. Readers will gain an understanding of how to develop school-based mindfulness interventions that benefit students' mental health, physical and behavioral health, and academic success. Finally, this brief provides suggestions for planning, selecting, and implementing a mindfulness program.

### Pocket of Excellence: Red Flags Program

The **Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success** recently recognized the *Red Flags Program* as a **Pocket of Excellence** in Ohio. Introduced in 1998, *Red Flags* is a framework and toolkit for mental health education that focuses on recognition of the signs of depression and early intervention. The current updated *Red Flags* materials shift the focus from mental illness to mental health by emphasizing mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and appropriate early intervention. Additionally, *Red Flags* supports the development of a school specific protocol to assist students in accessing help the help they need. Mental health literacy allows the entire school community to appreciate that mental health is an essential part of overall well-being. Like physical health, mental health must be cared for in order to be maintained. *Red Flags* clarifies the concept that positive mental health not only improves learning, but is essential to educational success. By being embedded in the culture of the school, *Red Flags* fosters mental health promotion; that is, the encouragement and regular practice of positive mental health habits. Finally, the school specific protocol enables teachers, parents, and students to quickly access professional help based on the resources available to the individual school district and community. *Red Flags* website, [redflags.org](http://redflags.org), has helpful materials for teachers, parents and students, and a special section for schools implementing the Red Flags Framework. The Red Flags Principles, Framework and Toolkit Description have been provided in the attached PDFs. For more information contact, Penelope Frese at (234) 380-2449.

For more information about Ohio's Pockets of Excellence, please contact **Kathy Oberlin**, director of the **Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success**, at [oberlink2@gmail.com](mailto:oberlink2@gmail.com) or (330) 697-3899.

Ohio's Project AWARE team includes partners in 3 county Educational Service Centers.

If you are from those local areas and want more information, please contact:

**Cuyahoga County ESC:** Mary Wise; (216) 901-4201; [mary.wise@esc-cc.org](mailto:mary.wise@esc-cc.org)

**Warren County ESC:** Vycki Haught; (513) 379-2310; [vycki.haught@warrencountyesc.com](mailto:vycki.haught@warrencountyesc.com)

**Wood County ESC:** Angela Patchen; (419) 354-9010 x228; [apatchen@wcesc.org](mailto:apatchen@wcesc.org)

### Additional Resources

SAMHSA's *Living in the Now: Mindfulness in Behavioral Health*:

<http://blog.samhsa.gov/2014/07/24/living-in-the-now-mindfulness-in-behavioral-health/#.VV0jDPiViko>

APA's "What are the Benefits of Mindfulness":

<http://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/07-08/ce-corner.aspx>

