



Work2BeWell Monthly Newsletter

December 2025

December can feel like a full-on pressure cooker. Between finals, college applications, holiday plans, and financial stress, it's no wonder so many teens feel stretched thin. The world seems to say "finish strong!"... but what if we also made space to finish kind?

This month isn't just about wrapping up the year. It's also about wrapping yourself in care. Whether that means setting boundaries, taking a study or work break, making extra space to take care of yourself, or reaching out when things feel heavy, small steps make a big difference.

Work2BeWell is here to help you find calm in the chaos, with tools and resources to support your emotional wellness during one of the busiest seasons of the year. As we move toward 2026, let's remember: progress isn't about perfection—it's about balance, growth, and taking care of you.

How Are You #Working2BeWell?

**"You are allowed to be both a masterpiece
and a work in progress at the same time."**

— Sophia Bush

American actress, activist, and producer



WORK2BEWELL



Providence

Actress and activist Sophia Bush, is known for using her voice to promote kindness, confidence, and self-care. At Work2BeWell, we believe her message perfectly captures what wellness is all about—celebrating who you are right now while continuing to grow, learn, and care for your mental health. And, it's a great reminder as we move through finals, holidays, and the new year—there's no need to have it all figured out. You can be proud of who you are and still be growing.

Work2BeWell Action Tip for December: The 2-Minute Reset

Feeling stressed by school, work, family, finances, or the holidays? Try this quick reset:

1. Pause what you're doing and put down your phone.
2. Breathe in for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 6.
3. Stretch your arms overhead or roll your shoulders.
4. Think of one thing you're proud of today—big or small.

You just gave your brain a mini recharge! Small resets like this keep stress from building up and help you stay balanced through the chaos.

What You'll Need for December



New W2BW Module: Pack Your Calm with "My Wellness Backpack"

When stress hits—whether it's finals, family pressure, or the rush of the holidays—having the right tools makes all the difference. That's where the My Wellness Backpack module comes in. It helps you build your own personal "backpack" of coping skills and mental health resources you can reach for anytime, anywhere.

From breathing exercises and journaling ideas to grounding techniques and self-care checklists, this module gives you practical ways to manage stress before it piles up. Think of it as your go-to kit for balance and emotional resilience—so you can handle what's ahead and take care of yourself in the process.

Just like Sophia Bush's reminder that you're both a masterpiece and a work in progress, My Wellness Backpack helps you honor where you are today while giving you tools to keep growing stronger.

Click Here to Access:

[W2BW's My Wellness Backpack](#)



Talk2BeWell Podcast: "When Life Changes: How to be There"

Life is full of change — new schools, new friends, coming out, loss, family moves, breakups — and sometimes it feels like everything's shifting all at once. Check out our new podcast where Dr. Robin Henderson, Work2BeWell's Chief Clinical Officer and Chief Executive, Behavioral Health for Providence Oregon, talks with three of our National Student Advisory Council teens, Harper from Iowa, Niyu from Georgia, and Dominic from Georgia. In this episode, we'll talk about how to be there for the people we care about when life gets hard. Because being a good friend doesn't mean having all the answers — it's about showing up, listening, and learning how to support each other through the ups and downs.

[Episode 156: When Life Changes: How to Be There](#)

Interested in listening more? Here are some past T2BW episodes dealing with topics related to dealing with stressful situations to check out:

[Ep 102: Coping with College Application Stress](#)

[Ep 104: Anticipating Holiday Stress](#)

[Ep 105: Managing Financial Stress](#)

[Ep 106: Does Your Family Stress You Out?](#)

[Ep 109: Testing Stress](#)

Each T2BW episode opens the door to meaningful conversations amongst peers and amplifies teen voices and perspectives. Through open, honest conversations, we help students connect with one another and work towards breaking the stigma around mental health.

Want to easily find episodes to accompany lesson plans and activities? Check out this ready to go list of all the [T2BW Episodes categorized by W2BW Curriculum!](#) This list is a great resource for Wellness Rooms!

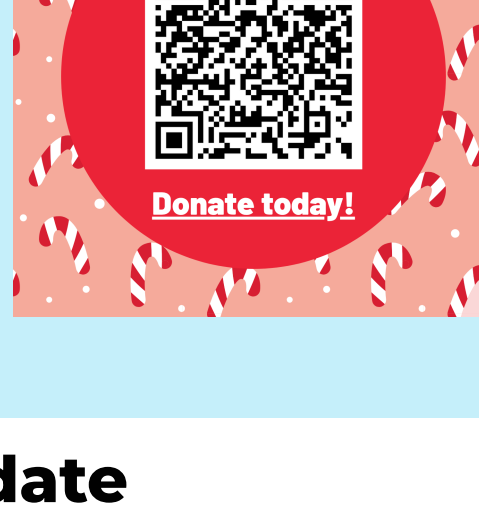
From Our Program Director

Stronger Together: 2025 in Reflection

This year has been one of incredible growth, connection, and impact at Work2BeWell. We are now home to **nearly 100 student-led clubs across 3 countries**, inspiring conversations about mental wellness every day. As of November, we've had the privilege of presenting to **over 21,000 students**, welcomed **over 76,000 visitors** to our website with **over 4,000 resource downloads**, and reached **over 215,000 people** through our social media platforms. None of this would be possible without our National Student Advisory Council—the heart of our movement—whose dedication, leadership, and compassion guide everything we do. As we look toward the future, our focus remains on expanding access, supporting teen voices, and continuing to offer all of our resources **completely free**. To sustain this momentum, we're asking for your support. As the end of the year approaches, **every donation—no matter the amount—directly helps us empower more teens with clinically-vetted tools and community support**. Contributions are tax-deductible and deeply appreciated.



Sara Freauf



Donate today!

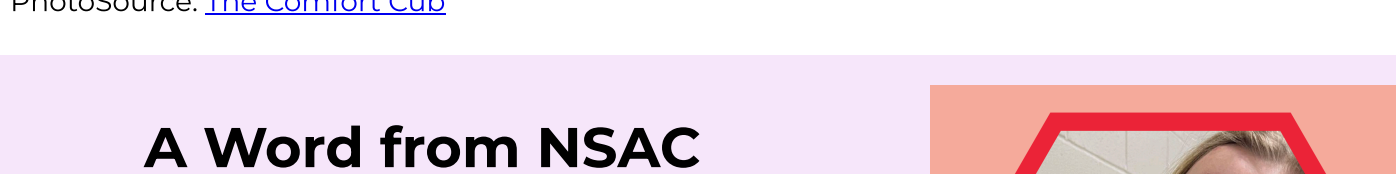
Partnership Update

Partners in Comfort: Work2BeWell x The Comfort Cub

During a season when stress, loss, and change can feel especially heavy, **The Comfort Cub** and **Work2BeWell** share one mission: helping people heal through compassion and connection.

The Comfort Cub, a therapeutic weighted bear created to ease the pain of grief and anxiety, offers a simple yet powerful reminder—you're not alone, and comfort is something you can hold onto. Pair that with **Work2BeWell's focus on teen mental health education and accessible wellness tools**, and together we're building spaces where emotional support is real, tangible, and available to everyone.

This partnership embodies what the holidays—and our mission—are all about: caring for yourself, supporting others, and finding moments of calm even in the most stressful seasons. For more information about The Comfort Cub, please visit www.thecomfortcub.org/.

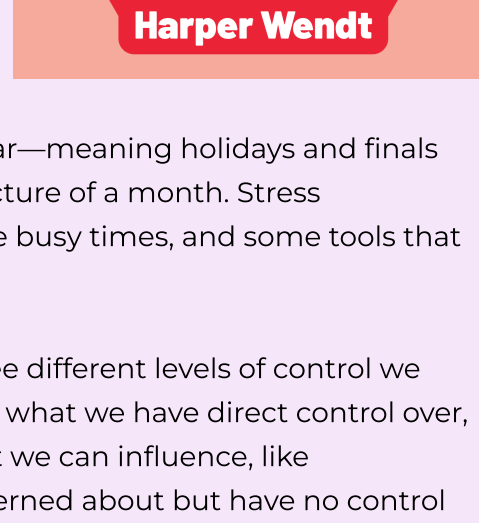


PhotoSource: The Comfort Cub

A Word from NSAC

National Student Advisory Council

Finding Peace in What You Can Control



Harper Wendt

In many places around the world, December is the end of the year—meaning holidays and finals and endless stress as we try to wrap up our year into a perfect picture of a month. Stress management and self-care are especially important during these busy times, and some tools that can aid in this reduction of stress are the Circles of Control.

The Circles of Control are three different rings that represent three different levels of control we have over things in our lives.¹ As expected, the innermost circle is what we have direct control over, like our thoughts and reactions. The middle ring represents what we can influence, like relationships, and finally, the outermost ring is what we are concerned about but have no control over. Identifying what elements of our lives fall into each circle is a great exercise to use when you are feeling overwhelmed and stressed, but utilizing the Circles of Control extends beyond simple organization of thoughts and tasks.

When we use the Circles of Control to recognize the components of our stress, we can also begin to implement practices into our lives to reduce stress at the root, especially when examining the Circle of Concern. Often, when looking at the Circle of Concern, we fail to remember that the items in our Circle of Concern are just that: only concerns, and out of our control. Looking at these items with mindfulness and reminding ourselves that we cannot change them on our own can empower us to focus on what we can control: our reactions to these events. Practicing gratitude and mindfulness aids in the regulation of these reactions and emotions that various concerns elicit.

As someone who often finds difficulty in letting go of things I cannot control, I see the Circles of Control as helpful reminders of how to find peace in times of stress. This December, as you face various stressors and close out the year, I encourage you to focus on what you can control and release your concern over what is not in your control, whether it be an incoming grade or the changing weather. It's okay to let go.

¹Reference article: <https://youthfirstinc.org/focus-on-your-circle-of-control/>

Harper Wendt (she/her) is a first-year member of the Work2BeWell Education Team and a junior at Ballard High School in small town Iowa. Harper's passion for helping others began with her involvement as a youth philanthropist for Blank Children's Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, and this passion has helped her evolve into the eager mental health advocate she is today. Outside of Work2BeWell, Harper serves as Historian for the Ballard High School Student Council, along with being the flute section lieutenant in the Ballard High School Band. She loves to volunteer at her local library and participates in speech and theater through her school. Harper also enjoys raising animals such as pigs and sheep on her family's farm. Harper Works2BeWell by listening to music, journaling, and spending time with her friends and family.

Club Spotlight

Eaglecrest High School, Colorado "Spreading Kindness, One Clip at a Time"



These clips don't just decorate backpacks—they remind everyone that we all need a little extra care sometimes. Kindness Clips are proof that small, intentional acts can ease stress, strengthen community, and remind us to finish kind, not just finish strong.

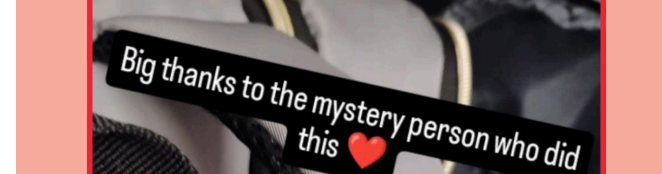
As we close out the year, take a cue from Eaglecrest: wrap your school—and yourself—in kindness.

To access the full instructions for the [Kindness Clips activity](#), check out the pdf under the Activities section on our W2BW Resources page!

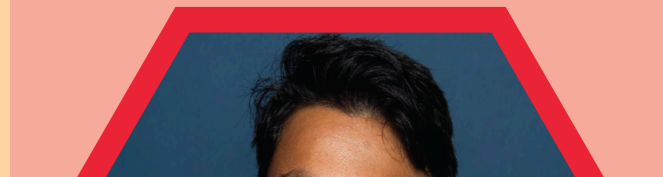
Want your club to be featured? Send your info and pictures to support@work2bewell.org!

In a season filled with deadlines, decisions, and high expectations, one Work2BeWell club has proven that even the smallest act of kindness can make a big impact.

At **Eaglecrest High School in Colorado**, students launched a project called **Kindness Clips**, turning ordinary clothespins into tiny tokens of encouragement. Each clip is decorated with uplifting messages like "You are enough," "Keep going," or "Tomorrow needs you." During passing periods, students quietly attach the clips to backpacks or lanyards, sparking smiles and small moments of connection throughout the day.

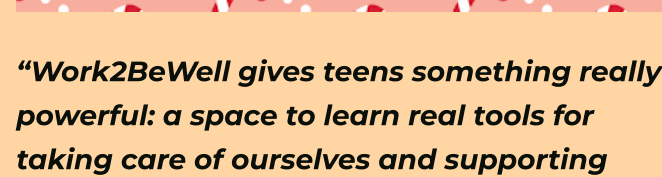


Testimonials



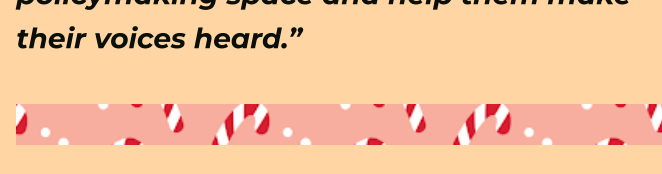
Ayaan Moledina

Ayaan Moledina, 16, from Austin, Texas, is making powerful strides in mental health advocacy through legislative action. He collaborates with youth nationwide to craft bills introduced in state legislatures and Congress, inspired by real teen experiences on issues like safe firearm storage, social media policy, 988 awareness, and anti-bullying. Work2BeWell is proud to have Ayaan on the Activation Team and excited to see his continued impact in mental health advocacy.



"Work2BeWell gives teens something really powerful: a space to learn real tools for taking care of ourselves and supporting others. It shows that mental health isn't just about talking, it's about taking action and building a culture of care. If I could tell others one thing about work2bewell, it would be that wellness starts with connection - when we look out for each other, we all grow stronger. Be kind to one another and support your peers even when it's not easy or required."

I am extremely passionate about this issue because of my personal experiences with mental health and suicide attempts. I have come into direct contact with the crisis systems which I seek to improve. Oftentimes, lawmakers leave people out of conversations even if they are the ones who have experienced these issues! That's why I seek to bring young people into the policymaking space and help them make their voices heard."



Your Voice Helps Shape

Our Future

As we close out an incredible year of growth, we want to thank you for being part of the Work2BeWell community. Your feedback helps us keep improving and creating resources that truly support student mental health and wellness.

Have you explored one of our **Work2BeWell modules**? Take a few minutes to share your thoughts—the survey is quick, but your input makes a lasting impact. (Be sure to select the correct module title!)

Thank you for helping make us even better—and for being part of a community that's building a healthier, more compassionate future together.



tinyurl.com/yymfax7u

Are you a high school athlete? Your experience matters!

W2BW is looking for HS students who are sports athletes to complete a survey. This survey is about how sports fits into your life—school, friends, stress, and everything in between.

The goal is to help adults better understand what sports is really like for students so we can build healthier, more supportive teams and communities.

If you are willing to help us out, [THIS SURVEY](#) should take about 5 minutes to complete. Thank you for sharing your perspective.

WHERE TO FIND US THIS MONTH!

Dates / Location

December 5-7
Grand Rapids, MI

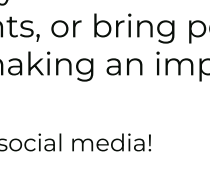
Event

National Conference on Student Activities (NCSA) hosted by National Association for Student Activities (NAASA)

TESTIMONIALS

WORK2BEWELL Providence

Your Impact, Your Story



How are you using W2BW resources to make a difference in your school or community? Have they helped you start conversations, plan events, or bring people together around mental health? We'd love to hear how you're making an impact!

[Share your story with us](#) and be featured in an upcoming newsletter or on social media!



WORK2BEWELL