



Work2BeWell Monthly Newsletter

June 2026

June is a reminder that every person deserves to feel seen, valued, and safe being exactly who they are. During PRIDE Month, we celebrate the courage it takes to show up authentically in a world that sometimes pressures people to hide parts of themselves. Identity is personal, powerful, and constantly growing, and there is no single "right" way to be you. Whether you're still figuring yourself out, proudly expressing who you are, supporting friends, or simply learning more about others, Work2BeWell values creating spaces where everyone belongs.

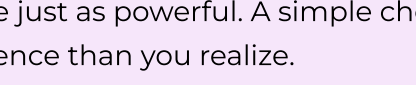
For teens, feeling accepted and connected can have a huge impact on mental health. Research consistently shows that supportive friendships, trusted adults, and inclusive communities help lower feelings of isolation, anxiety, and hopelessness. PRIDE Month is not only a celebration but also a reminder that kindness, respect, and acceptance matter every single day. At Work2BeWell, we believe every identity deserves dignity, support, and the freedom to thrive.

How Are You #Working2BeWell?

"There's nothing wrong with you for being who you are."

- Billie Eilish

American singer-songwriter

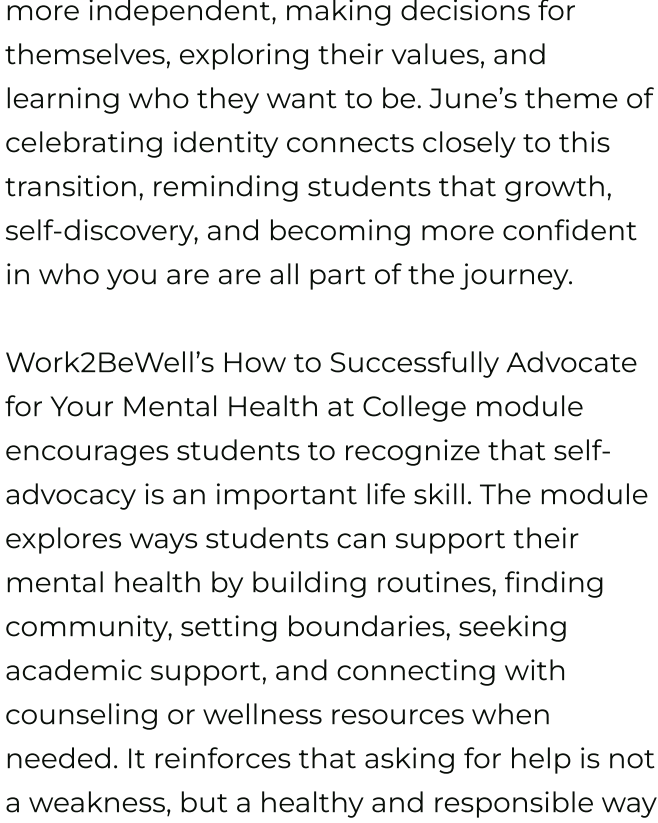


As Billie Eilish said, "There's nothing wrong with you for being who you are." That message reflects the heart of PRIDE Month, recognizing that every identity deserves respect, acceptance, and the freedom to exist without apology. For many teens, growing into who you are can feel exciting, confusing, empowering, or even overwhelming at times. But no one should feel pressured to hide parts of themselves to fit in or feel accepted. Authenticity matters, and it's supportive communities that can help people feel safer, stronger, and more connected.

Try This for May: Find or create a "safe space."

A safe space can be a trusted friend, supportive adult, club, online community, creative outlet, or even a quiet place where you can recharge and be yourself without judgment. Feeling accepted for who you are helps reduce stress and strengthens emotional well-being. And remember, BEING that safe space for someone else can be just as powerful. A simple check-in, kind comment, or act of inclusion can make a bigger difference than you realize.

What You'll Need for June



Becoming You: Advocating for Yourself in College and Beyond
Graduating from high school and stepping into college, trade school, or a new chapter of life is more than just a schedule change — it's a major identity shift. Students are no longer simply "high schoolers." They are becoming more independent, making decisions for themselves, exploring their values, and learning who they want to be. June's theme of celebrating identity connects closely to this transition, reminding students that growth, self-discovery, and becoming more confident in who you are are all part of the journey.

Work2BeWell's How to Successfully Advocate for Your Mental Health at College module encourages students to recognize that self-advocacy is an important life skill. The module explores ways students can support their mental health by building routines, finding community, setting boundaries, seeking academic support, and connecting with counseling or wellness resources when needed. It reinforces that asking for help is not a weakness, but a healthy and responsible way to care for yourself during times of change.

Every student's experience and support needs are different. Some students may benefit from accommodations, peer support groups, therapy, tutoring, or affinity spaces that help them feel connected and understood. The module helps students reflect on what support looks like for them personally while encouraging compassion and respect for the experiences of others.

As students prepare for life after high school, Work2BeWell reminds them that there is no single path to success or belonging, and that learning to advocate for yourself is part of becoming who you are meant to be.

Click Here to Access:
[How to Advocate Successfully for Your Mental Health at College](#)



Talk2BeWell Podcast: "Stride with Pride in 2026"
This Pride Month, we're continuing the conversation on mental health in the LGBTQ+ community by discussing potential hardships people in the community face, and how to handle them. Check out our new podcast where Dr. Robin Henderson, Work2BeWell's Chief Clinical Officer and Chief Executive of Behavioral Health for Providence Oregon, talks with a few of our current and past NSAC members, Lauren C. from New York, Finn Jacobson (2018-2019, from Oregon), and Billie Henderson (2018-2019, from Oregon).

In this episode, together, they explore how people build confidence, cope with challenges, and create supportive circles that uplift and empower. It's about embracing who you are, finding your voice, and knowing there's a community that stands with you every step of the way.

Episode 176: Stride with Pride in 2026
Interested in listening more? Here are some past T2BW episodes celebrating and exploring individual identity:

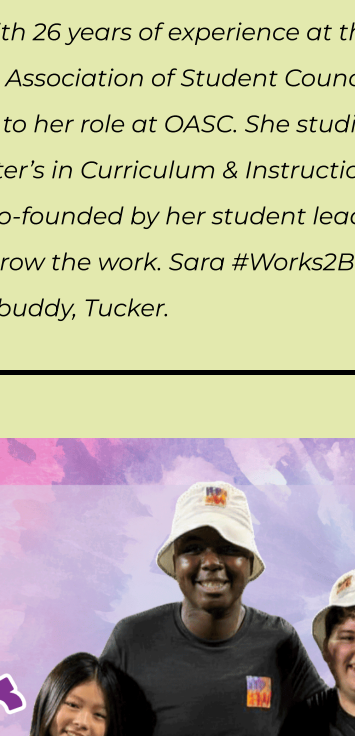
- [Ep 40: Transgender Day of Visibility](#)
- [Ep 57: LGBTQ+ and Mental Health](#)
- [Ep 75: How to Be an Ally](#)
- [Ep 111: Healthy Ways to Express Yourself](#)
- [Ep 113: Honor Every Body](#)
- [Ep 141: Growing Pains: "I'm Not A Kid Anymore"](#)
- [Ep 149: PRIDE 2025](#)

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!](#) It's a great resource for Counseling Offices and Wellness Rooms!

From Our Executive Director

"The Future is Bright: NSAC Applications Continue to Grow"



This year, Work2BeWell received an incredible 174 applications for our 2026-2027 National Student Advisory Council (NSAC) representing 30 states, 7 countries, and 1 U.S. territory. Nearly half of all applications came from Georgia, California, Washington, and Texas, showing the continued growth of youth mental health leadership across the country and beyond.

While we are excited about the growth and reach of the NSAC, what impacted us most were the stories, ideas, passion, and vulnerability students shared throughout the application process. Students trusted us with personal experiences, hopes for their communities, and visions for a world where mental health conversations are more open, supportive, and stigma-free. We do not take that lightly.

With limited spots available, selection is never easy. However, one thing remains true: there is a place for everyone in the Work2BeWell community. Whether selected for the NSAC or not, every student who applied demonstrated courage, leadership, and a desire to make a difference in the lives of others. We are incredibly proud of each and every applicant and grateful for their willingness to use their voices to support mental wellness and advocacy.

To all who applied: thank you for showing up, sharing your stories, and believing in the power of young people to create change. The future is brighter because of you.

Sara Freauf (Niles) is an educational and leadership development consultant with 26 years of experience at the national and international levels. She served as Executive Director of the Oregon Association of Student Councils (OASC) from 2010-2020 and spent ten years teaching math and leadership prior to her role at OASC. She studied math education at Montana State University (Go Bobcats!) and earned her master's in Curriculum & Instruction with an emphasis in ESL/ELL from Portland State University. Work2BeWell was co-founded by her student leaders in 2018, and she is proud to continue working alongside them as they lead and grow the work. Sara #Works2BeWell by prioritizing time with friends and family and enjoying long walks with her fur buddy, Tucker.



Check Out Our New Wellness Wear Today!

Trusted Resource

Supporting Every Story: Why the "Be There Certificate" Matters

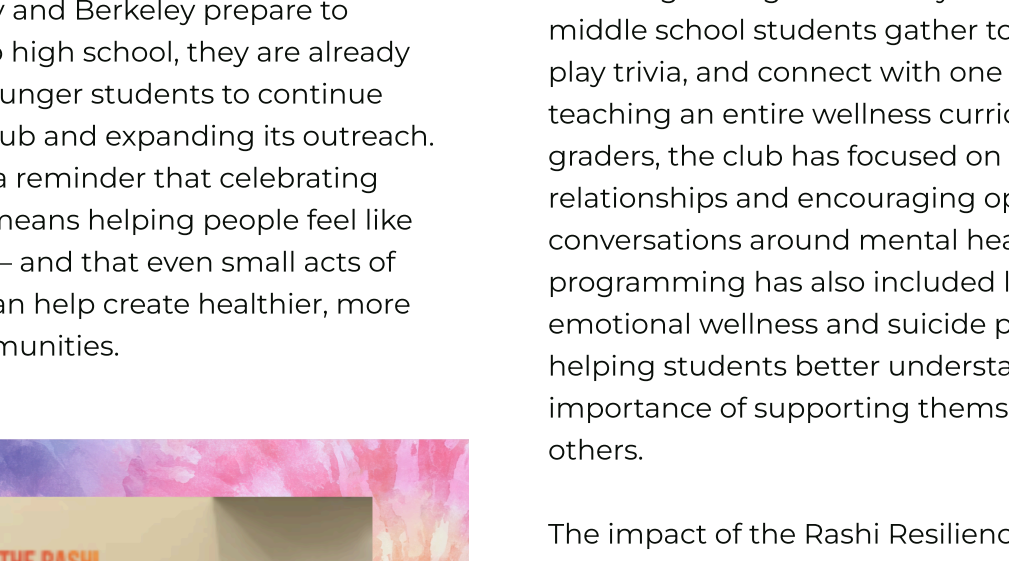
As students grow, change, and discover more about who they are, having supportive people around them can make a huge difference. June's Work2BeWell theme of celebrating identity is about recognizing that every person deserves to feel valued, respected, and supported for who they are. One powerful resource helping teens build those skills is the [Be There Certificate](#) from [Born This Way Foundation](#) and [Jack.org](#).

The Be There Certificate is a free, self-paced online mental health course designed to help teens and young adults learn how to safely support someone who may be struggling with their mental health. Through Be There's "5 Golden Rules," participants learn how to recognize when someone may need support, listen without judgment, understand their role, and connect others to trusted help and resources. The course is available in English, French, and Spanish and was created specifically to make mental health support skills more accessible for young people.

What makes the Be There Certificate especially meaningful for June's theme is its focus on empathy, connection, and understanding. Every student's experiences, background, identity, and mental health journey are different. The course encourages teens to approach others with kindness instead of assumptions and reminds participants that supporting someone does not mean "fixing" them. It means showing up, listening, and helping them feel less alone.

Work2BeWell supports the Be There Certificate because it helps create healthier, more inclusive communities where students feel safe being themselves. Mental health conversations can feel difficult, especially during times of change and self-discovery, but resources like this help teens build confidence in supporting both themselves and others. By learning how to "be there" for one another, students help create school and community environments where everyone feels more connected, accepted, and supported.

For more information about or to earn your own [Be There Certificate](#), please visit <https://bornthiswayfoundation/current-programs/be-there-certificate/>.



Meet Work2BeWell's NEW National Student Advisory Council Leads and Co-Leads for 2026-27

ACCESS TEAM

LEAD Sara H. Crofton High School Crofton, Maryland	CO-LEAD Lauren C. Sumner High School Lincolndale, New York	CO-LEAD Aditi E. Panther Creek High School Carey, North Carolina	CO-LEAD Adriel T. University Gardens High School San Juan, Puerto Rico
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ACTIVATION TEAM

LEAD Srika B. Sharon High School Sharon, Massachusetts	CO-LEAD Joy O. Penn Hills Senior High School Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	CO-LEAD Emanuel P.O. Central High School Carrollton, Georgia	CO-LEAD Anushka V. Carroll Senior High School Southlake, Texas
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EDUCATION TEAM

LEAD Logan E. Pinecrest Academy Soan Canyon Las Vegas, Nevada	CO-LEAD Emelia A. Discovery High School Lawrenceville, Georgia	CO-LEAD Maya I. Mountain View High School Vancouver, Washington	CO-LEAD Harper W. Ballard High School Huxley, Iowa
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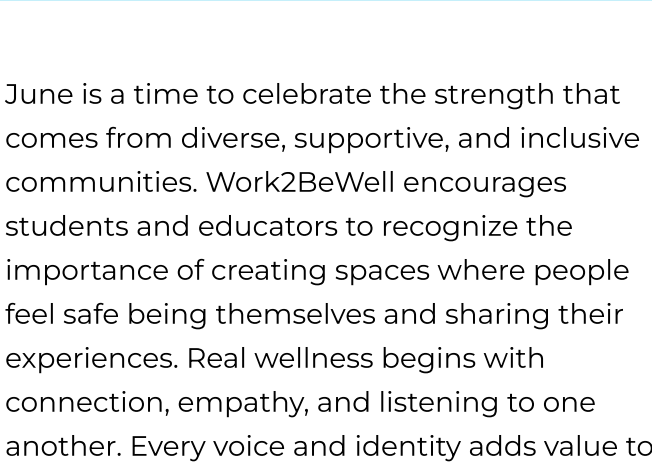
Club Spotlight

The Rashi Resilience Club
The Rashi School, Dedham, Massachusetts
"Building Community Through Connection"

From organizing community breakfasts where middle school students gather to share food, play trivia, and connect with one another, to teaching an entire wellness curriculum to sixth graders, the club has focused on building relationships and encouraging open conversations around mental health. Their programming has also included lessons on emotional wellness and suicide prevention, helping students better understand the importance of supporting themselves and others.



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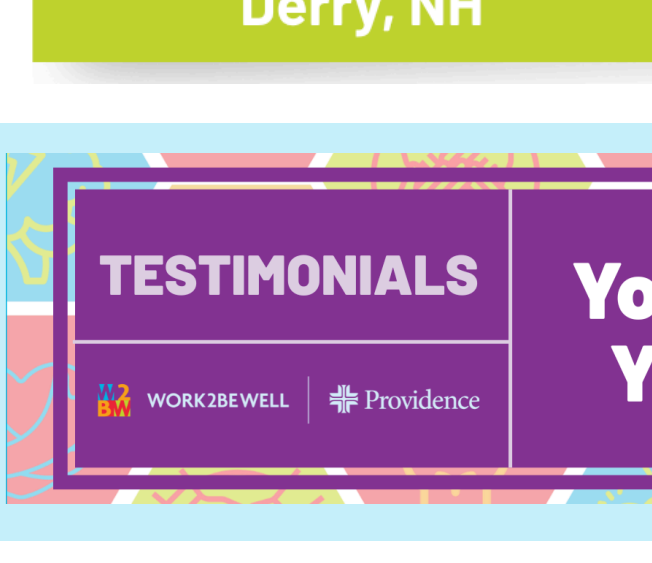


The impact of the Rashi Resilience Club has already been felt throughout the school community. What began with a few student leaders has grown into a well-supported initiative embraced by both students and adults. As Liv and Berkeley prepare to transition into high school, they are already mentoring younger students to continue leading the club and expanding its outreach. Their work is a reminder that celebrating identity also means helping people feel like they belong — and that even small acts of connection can help create healthier, more resilient communities.

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

Testimonials



Dyna Benmerabet

"What stayed with me the most from an exchange program abroad was not only the workshops or the activities, but a simple late night dialogue with mentors and peers. For the first time, I felt genuinely heard, understood, and emotionally safe. It was such a small moment, yet it changed something deeply inside me. I remember thinking: why shouldn't young people in my own community experience this, too? That feeling became the beginning of everything.

When I came back to Algeria, I started thinking about creating a space where students could speak openly about their emotions without fear of judgment. A space where mental health would not be treated as a taboo or something "imaginary," but as something real and important. That is when the idea of starting a Work2BeWell club first came to life.

Soon after, I discovered Work2BeWell, and from the very beginning, I was welcomed with kindness, encouragement, and genuine support. Their resources did not just help me organize activities, they helped me understand how to create meaningful conversations and lasting impact. Using their educational curriculum gave me the tools to approach mental health awareness in a structured and effective way.

Through this initiative, I was able to organize workshops, including dialogue sessions focused on mental health awareness.

We talked about emotions with them, and why it is important to advocate for emotional well-being just as much as physical health, using the educational modules of Work2BeWell. We also created writing circles where students could express thoughts they often keep hidden, and moments of empowerment where young people were reminded that their voices matter and deserve to be heard.

What moved me the most was seeing people slowly open up. "Too sensitive," not weak, and most importantly, not alone. In a society where these conversations are not always avoided, creating even a small safe space felt meaningful.

The goal was never to "fix" people or eradicate mental health problems. It was simply to make them feel seen, understood, and valued. To remind them that their emotions are valid, that vulnerability should not be shameful, and that empathy can truly change the way we support one another as a community.

Beyond the projects themselves, the people behind Work2BeWell had a profound impact on me personally. From Sara, the founder, to the members of NSAC, every interaction with them felt encouraging and understanding. They supported my ideas, and continuously reminded me that young people are capable of creating real change. The values promoted by Work2BeWell really reinforced my commitment to youth empowerment and to advocating for causes that genuinely matter to me. Because at the end of the day, I believe there is always value in standing up for something meaningful, it's always worth it, especially when it helps others feel a little less alone."

Dyna Benmerabet is an Algerian high school student in her senior year. She is a Youth Ambassador with the U.S. Department of State, an Erasmus+ Alumni, participating in European Union programs, and is an active volunteer in her community. Alongside her community work, Dyna is also a dedicated kickboxing athlete who competes at the national level. Her passion for education, youth empowerment, and mental health awareness led her to create a Work2BeWell club to break the stigma about mental health issues in Algeria, helping students feel understood and heard. She's someone who puts her energy into the causes she truly believes in.

To begin the survey, scan the QR code or enter the link below.

tinyurl.com/yymfax7u

WHERE TO FIND US THIS MONTH

Dates / Location	Event
June 18-21 Derry, NH	Work2BeWell Team Leads Retreat
June 22-24 Derry, NH	VISION National Conference for Student Council Leaders

TESTIMONIALS **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

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