



Work2BeWell Monthly Newsletter

August 2026

There's something about August that feels different. Summer starts to wind down, backpacks come back out, alarms get set a little earlier, and suddenly everyone is asking the same question: "Are you ready for school?"

The truth is, "ready" can mean a lot of different things. Maybe you're excited to see your friends again. Maybe you're nervous about new classes, a new school, or finding your place. Maybe you're hoping this year feels different than the last one. Or maybe you're carrying things from the summer that no one else can see. Whatever you're bringing with you, know this: you don't have to have everything figured out before the first day.

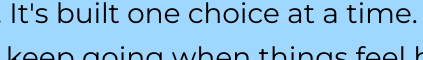
The beginning of a new school year isn't about becoming a completely new person. It's about recognizing that every new chapter gives us another opportunity to learn, grow, reconnect, and discover more about ourselves. Every friendship begins with a conversation. Every accomplishment starts with showing up. Every act of courage starts with a first step...even if it's a small one.

How Are You #Working2BeWell?

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."

— Simone Biles

American Olympic Gymnast



Olympic gymnast Simone Biles captured that idea perfectly when she said, "The best way to predict your future is to create it."

We love this reminder because your future isn't decided by one test, one mistake, one difficult year, or one opinion from someone else. It's built one choice at a time. Every time you choose kindness, ask for help, try something new, or keep going when things feel hard, you're creating the person you're becoming.

This month, we invite you to think about what beginning means for you. Maybe it's raising your hand more often. Joining a club you've always been curious about. Reaching out to someone who looks like they could use a friend. Or simply giving yourself permission to start fresh after a difficult season.

You don't have to reinvent yourself.

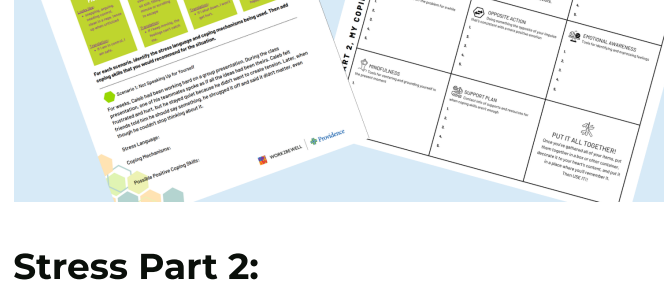
You just have to take the first step

In August, Try This:

- **Choose One Word:** Instead of creating a long list of resolutions, choose one word that you want to guide your school year—Courage. Kindness. Balance. Growth. Joy. Write it somewhere you'll see it often.
- **Be the First Hello:** One smile, one introduction, or one invitation to sit together can completely change someone's day. Belonging often begins with one person making the first move.
- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Every beginning is made up of small moments. Celebrate showing up, asking for help, trying something new, or simply making it through your first week.
- **Give Yourself Grace:** Not every beginning feels exciting, and that's okay. Growth isn't about being perfect. Growth is about continuing to move forward, one step at a time.

Here's to fresh starts, new opportunities, and the courage to begin. Wherever this school year takes you, remember: you don't have to have the whole journey figured out. You just have to begin.

What You'll Need for August



Stress Part 2: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies

What is your stress trying to tell you?

The beginning of a new school year often brings new opportunities...and new stress. Whether it's balancing classes, friendships, sports, family expectations, or simply adjusting to a new routine, stress is a normal part of life. The question isn't if you'll experience stress, but how you'll respond to it.

In Stress Part 2: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies, students discover that stress often speaks through automatic reactions called Stress Languages: Fight, Flight, Freeze, and Fawn. Through relatable, real-life scenarios, participants learn to recognize these patterns in themselves and others while exploring healthier ways to respond.

Students don't just learn about stress. In this module, they practice working through situations they may actually face, from feeling left out and falling behind in school to relationship conflicts, family expectations, and carrying everyone else's problems. Together, they identify unhealthy coping mechanisms and replace them with healthy coping skills like mindfulness, emotional awareness, self-soothing, opposite action, and building a personal support plan.

As you begin a new school year, remember that you can't always control stressful situations—but you can learn new ways to respond. Sometimes the best new beginning isn't changing your circumstances. It's discovering healthier tools to help you navigate them.

The goal of Stress Part 2 isn't to eliminate stress. Rather, it's to help students recognize their automatic reactions, understand what those reactions are trying to communicate, and build healthier habits one choice at a time. Because sometimes the most important beginning isn't a new class schedule or a new semester.

It's discovering that you have more choices than you realized.

Click Here to Access:
[W2BW's Stress Part 2: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies](#)



Talk2BeWell Podcast:

"Permission to Begin Again: A Fresh Start for a New School Year"

As one school year ends and another begins, it's easy to focus on what didn't go the way you hoped. But every new school year offers something powerful—a chance to begin again. 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 NSAC members, Jose from Georgia, Vivian from Washington, and Aryan from Connecticut.

In this episode, NSAC students talk about letting go of past mistakes, embracing new opportunities, setting healthy intentions instead of unrealistic expectations, and giving yourself permission to grow one day at a time. Because a fresh start isn't about becoming someone new—it's about becoming more of yourself.

[Episode 180: Permission to Begin Again: A Fresh Start for a New School Year](#)

Interested in listening more? Here are some past T2BW episodes that touch on growth, transitions, and new chapters:

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

[Ep 160: New Year, New Goals: Making Resolutions That Stick](#)

[Ep 166: You Don't Have to Bloom on Anyone Else's Timeline](#)

[Ep 170: Spring Time Habits That Actually Improve Your Mood](#)

[Ep 171: Blast from the Past: NSAC Alumni and How They #Work2BeWell](#)

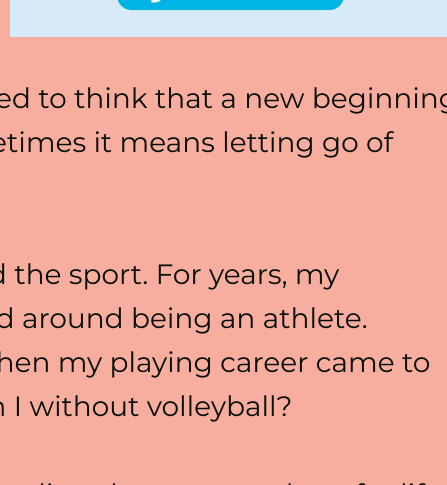
[Ep 173: Live Your #W2BW Summer](#)

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

From Our Marketing & Communications Specialist

"Starting Over Doesn't Mean From Scratch: The Person You Become Stays With You"



New beginnings are exciting, but they are also uncomfortable. I used to think that a new beginning meant starting something better. What I have learned is that sometimes it means letting go of something you love before you're ready.

As a former Division I volleyball player, my identity was built around the sport. For years, my schedule, goals, friendships, and even the way I saw myself revolved around being an athlete. Volleyball wasn't just something I did; it was a part of who I was. When my playing career came to an end, I found myself asking a question I never expected: Who am I without volleyball?

That transition wasn't easy. There wasn't a final lesson or a perfect ending that prepared me for life after college athletics. Instead, there was uncertainty. I had to learn how to create a new routine, set different goals, and discover passions outside of competing on the court. There were moments where I missed the structure, the adrenaline of game days, and the sense of belonging that comes with being part of a team.

But new beginnings have a way of revealing opportunities you never knew existed. When I became a member of the team here at Work2BeWell, I realized that many of the lessons volleyball taught me had been preparing me all along. Leadership, resilience, discipline, and the ability to work alongside people with different strengths became some of my greatest assets. The competitive drive that once pushed me through early morning workouts now motivates me to make an impact through my career in marketing, communications, and mental health advocacy.

Today, I have the privilege of mentoring teens, creating content, and continuing to coach volleyball. While my role has changed, my purpose hasn't. Instead of measuring success by volleyball, I now measure it by how I impact others.

Looking back, I realize that endings and beginnings often exist at the same time. Closing one chapter doesn't erase everything that came before it; it builds the foundation for what comes next. The person I became through athletics didn't disappear when I stepped off the court.

If you're standing at the beginning of something new, know that it's okay if it feels uncertain. Growth rarely happens in places that feel comfortable, and the next chapter may become the one that shapes you in ways you never imagined.

Tyra Schaub is an Associate Marketing and Communications Specialist with Providence Behavioral Health and Work2BeWell, where she develops strategic marketing initiatives and digital communications while overseeing the Access Team of the National Student Advisory Council (NSAC), mentoring teen leaders in content creation and social media strategy. She joined Work2BeWell in 2025 and is passionate about empowering young people through meaningful digital engagement and youth-led advocacy. She works closely with teen leaders to amplify their voices and create content that inspires conversations around mental health and well-being. A former NCAA Division I student-athlete, Tyra began her collegiate volleyball career at Gonzaga University before finishing at Portland State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. Throughout high school and college, she was deeply involved in leadership, mentorship, and student engagement, these experiences continue to shape her collaborative and people-first approach to her work. Outside of Providence and Work2BeWell, Tyra serves as the Head Volleyball Coach at her local high school, where she enjoys mentoring and developing athletes both on and off the court. Tyra #Works2BeWell by coaching volleyball, cooking, trying new restaurants, and spending quality time with friends and family.

Check Out W2BW Wellness Wear Today!

Trusted Resource

Truth Initiative

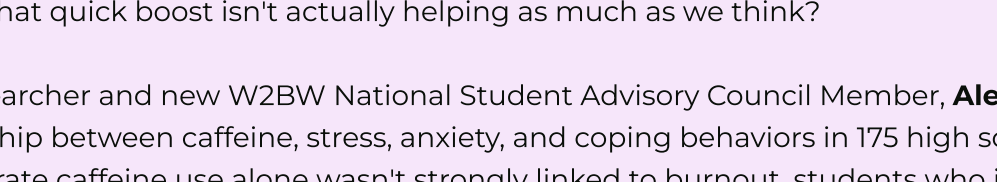
Every healthy beginning starts with knowing the facts

The beginning of a new school year often brings new experiences, new friendships, and sometimes new pressures. Whether it's navigating social situations, making independent choices, or learning how to say "no," every decision helps shape the person you're becoming.

That's why we're highlighting Truth Initiative, a trusted national organization dedicated to preventing youth tobacco use, addiction and empowering young people with science-based information about vaping, nicotine, and tobacco. Through interactive tools, quitting resources, and engaging educational content, Truth Initiative helps teens make informed choices that support their health and future.

Just like Work2BeWell believes that knowledge empowers action, Truth Initiative reminds us that every healthy choice is a new beginning. Whether you're choosing not to start vaping, supporting a friend who wants to quit, or simply learning the facts, every positive decision is a step toward a healthier future.

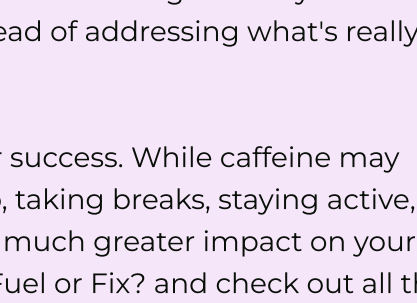
Explore Truth Initiative and discover resources that can help you, or someone you know, take the next healthy step. For more information and to explore Truth Initiative, visit: truthinitiative.org.



[Photo Source Link](#)

Fuel or Fix:

What Will Fuel Your New Beginning?



A new school year often means early mornings, packed schedules, late-night homework, and the temptation to reach for another energy drink or extra cup of coffee just to make it through the day. But what if that quick boost isn't actually helping as much as we think?

Student researcher and new W2BW National Student Advisory Council Member, **Alex Lee**, explored the relationship between caffeine, stress, anxiety, and coping behaviors in 175 high school students. While moderate caffeine use alone wasn't strongly linked to burnout, students who increased their caffeine intake during stressful periods were more likely to report higher stress and anxiety, feel dependent on caffeine, and be less likely to seek help when they needed it.

The study also found that sleep was even more strongly connected to stress, anxiety, and burnout than caffeine. Together, the findings suggest that some teens may become caught in a cycle of stress, poor sleep, increased caffeine use, and avoiding support instead of addressing what's really going on.

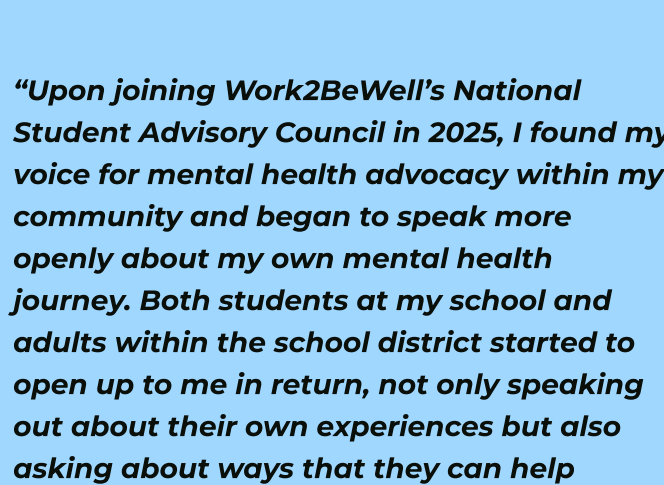
As you begin a new school year, think about what will truly fuel your success. While caffeine may provide a temporary boost, healthy habits like getting enough sleep, taking breaks, staying active, and reaching out for support when you're overwhelmed can have a much greater impact on your well-being. If you would like to review Alex's complete project, visit [Fuel or Fix?](#) and check out all the information.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aMq6B2aaMIP3xcP21qWjRX1_BBdQULn/view

This August, challenge yourself to build routines that don't just help you stay awake—they help you thrive.

Alex Lee (he/him) is a junior at Lagrange High School in Georgia and a new member of the Work2BeWell Education Team. He is passionate about making mental health education more accessible for youth in rural and immigrant communities, driven by the belief that everyone deserves to feel supported. Outside of Work2BeWell, Alex serves as President of West Georgia Key Club and is a member of the Youth Advisory Council for the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential. Through these leadership roles, he actively advocates for student wellness across the state. He has also researched how caffeine, sleep, and stress affect high school students, further strengthening his passion for improving youth mental health. Through his work with Work2BeWell, he hopes to create resources to normalize conversations around mental health and make support a reality for underserved communities. Alex #Works2BeWell by playing tennis, traveling, reading, and spending quality time with friends and family.

Testimonials



"Upon joining Work2BeWell's National Student Advisory Council in 2025, I found my voice for mental health advocacy within my community and began to speak more openly about my own mental health journey. Both students at my school and adults within the school district started to open up to me in return, not only speaking out about their own experiences but also asking about ways that they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health in our community."

Now, I continue my work with Work2BeWell because of the family this organization has given me and the purpose they provide for me every day. Getting to present at workshops for Work2BeWell has shown me the impact that my words can have on others, and meeting people from around the world who are just as passionate as I am about mental health consistently demonstrates to me that I am not alone. I am incredibly grateful for all this organization does for me, and I want to help Work2BeWell continue to take every step forward in this incredible mission of helping others."

Youth across the world can utilize the resources Work2BeWell provides to not only better their own understanding of their mental wellbeing and that of the people around them, but to also encourage members of their community to increase their understanding as well. From presentations to podcasts to clubs, Work2BeWell gives teens everywhere unique ways to get their peers talking about mental health awareness.

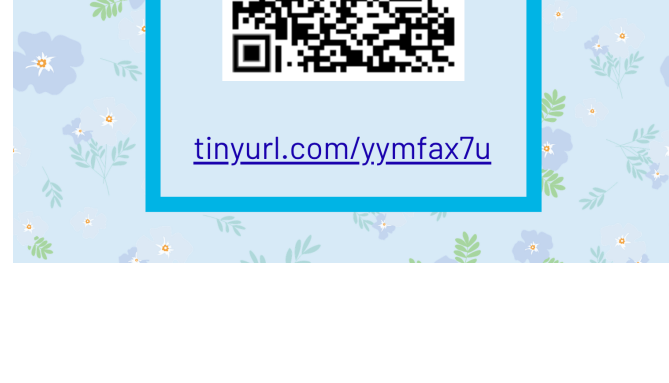
In my eyes, the most important thing about Work2BeWell is that they value the work that you do to make the world a better place. Often, when working in mental health advocacy, you know you want to make a difference but do not know where to begin. Work2BeWell has shown me that taking even the smallest steps forward to aid the world with free mental health resources makes an impact larger than you could ever know. Work2BeWell will take the first steps alongside you, and give you exactly what you need to empower others."

Harper Wendt (she/her) is Work2BeWell Education Co-Lead. From Iowa, Harper is a Senior at Ballard High School. As someone who is heavily invested in the mental health of youth around the globe, Harper hopes to help create a world where everyone feels valued as they open up about their mental health journeys and aid in providing resources to those in need. With a goal of normalizing the conversation surrounding mental health in her rural community, Harper created the first Work2BeWell club in Iowa at her school. Outside of her passion for mental health, Harper also has a love for learning, helping others, and exploring the world around her. She serves as a Student Global Ambassador for Ayusa and volunteers with various local organizations. Harper is also actively involved in her school's fine arts programs, including speech, drama, and band, and is a member of the International Therapist Society. Harper #Work2BeWell by junk journaling, running, reading, and spending time in nature!

Survey Says... Help Us Begin with You!

Every new Work2BeWell resource begins with feedback from students, educators, and advisers like you. If you've participated in one of our presentations or used one of our modules, we'd love to hear about your experience. Your input helps us improve existing lessons and shape the new resources we're creating for the year ahead.

Take a few minutes to complete our [survey](#). It only takes a few minutes, but your voice helps shape future content and ensures more stories are represented. (Be sure to select the correct module title when responding.) Every response helps us grow!



tinyurl.com/yvmfax7u



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