

The Advocate



When Kids Harm Their Bodies

When children pick at their skin or pull at their hair so much that they hurt themselves — leaving scabs or bald spots — they often say they can't stop, even if they're embarrassed or being bullied by other kids because of it. That's because doing these things makes them feel better in a hard-to-understand way. These disorders include **trichotillomania** (hair-pulling) and **excoriation** (skin-picking). Experts call them body focused repetitive behaviors (BFRBs), and kids use them to alleviate stress.

This week at childmind.org we look at a specialized behavioral therapy called **ComB**, developed for kids who have these behaviors. ComB (comprehensive behavioral therapy) combines several different kinds of therapy to divert kids from skin-picking or hair-pulling and give them other tools to manage uncomfortable feelings. BFRBs are not the same as **self-injury**, when kids cut, burn, or scratch themselves to intentionally cause pain. But self-injury is also a response to difficult feelings. And some of the same kinds of therapy that are included in ComB — **DBT** and **ACT** — are used to help kids who self-injure too.

For more information go to https://childmind.org/article/what-is-trichotillomania/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=pub-ed-nl-2024-03-05&utm_content=what-is-trichotillomania

Reminders for Volunteer Advocates!

Please remember, regular monthly visits with each child is essential for best interest advocacy. If you are having issues that are keeping you from visiting your CASA child (ren), please feel free to reach out to Cindy so that we can find an appropriate solution.

Children First!

April's CASA Connection
Foster Care 101:
What Volunteer Advocates
Need to Know
with Step Stone Family and
Youth Services
April 10 at 12 noon

The Benefits of Summer Camp

Camp provides children with a community of caring adults who nurture experiential education that results in self-respect and appreciation for human value. All of the outcomes — self-identity, self-worth, self-esteem, leadership, and self-respect — build personal competencies.

Children are at less risk at camp where they have a sense of community, develop intergenerational relationships, and learn through first-hand experiences. Trained, caring adult role models help children feel loved, capable, and included. Camp helps children grow by providing a supervised, positive environment that has safety as a primary commitment.

The American Camp Association shares the following outcomes youth experience from attending a summer camp:

Social Skills Development

- Leadership
- Communication
- Participation

Self-Respect and Character Building

- Responsibility
- Resourcefulness
- Resilience

Community Living/Service Skills

- Caring
- Fairness
- Citizenship
- Trustworthiness



To learn more about the benefits of summer camp, [click here](#). For a list of summer camps in Indiana, [click here](#).

Friendly Reminder

2024 has brought an influx of cases and kids to CASA!

**If you have time to take another case,
please reach out to Cindy at
Cindy.Verduce@allensuperiorcourt.us.**

Help us help more kids!

Celebrate April Advocate Anniversaries!

Congratulations to this month's Advocates with Service Anniversaries! Please join me in congratulating and thanking them for their service.

Special recognition to Donna Neff for 27 years of Service, Gayle Newton for 16 years, Peggy Eschenbacher for 15, Teresa Pohler for 14, Laura Rao for 11 and Karen Shadle for 10 years of service!

Andrews, Natasha	2		
		Rao, Laura	11
Sparks, Jill	2		
		Wiegerink, Paula	5
Eschenbacher, Peggy	15		
		Goodman, Julie	5
Martin, Alexandra	2		
		Neff, Donna	27
Stahl, Karen	2		
		Youn, Kay	2
Coolman, Teresa	2		
		Housel, Donell	5
Housel, Marla	5		
		Masri, Kathleen	2
Myers, Michele	5		
		Newton, Gayle	16
Shadle, Karen	10		
		Stuckey, Sarah	2
Dunn, Cheryl	4		
		Fortune, Michele	4
Pohler, Teresa	14		

Self-Care Bingo				
B	I	N	G	O
Do a random Act of Kindness Anonymously	Put a Post-it Note on my fridge with a positive message to myself	Wrote down five good things about myself	Bought myself flowers, ice cream or a small treat just because	Said NO to something I don't have time for or that doesn't serve my health
Ignored all news and political talk for ___ days	Turned on music and danced for 20 minutes for exercise	Thought of three positive things about somebody I don't like	Told the truth even though it was uncomfortable	Do something creative or artistic -- made something just because
Set a goal for a new healthy habit (fitness or nutrition goal)	Got rid of 3 items that I haven't used in a year	FREE SPACE SURVIVED	Caught myself being negative and reminded myself of 3 positive things	Cleaned out or organized a messy drawer, closet or small space
Paid attention to my water intake for an entire day to stay hydrated	Googled "meditation" and found one that I like	Tried a new hobby	VOLUNTEERED	Tried a new healthy recipe or a fruit I've never tasted
Scheduled an outing with someone I love	Went on strike for one day	Let go of a grudge	Wrote a priority list and scratched off three things I can let go	Went outside and counted all of the beautiful things I could find

TYPES OF SELF CARE

 SOCIAL activities that help nurture your relationships with others	 PHYSICAL activities that improve your physical health	 MENTAL activities that stimulate your mind
 PRACTICAL tasks that help prevent future stress	 EMOTIONAL activities that help you connect and reflect	 SPIRITUAL activities that nurture your spirit

Healthy Habit: Sound Bouncing in Nature

Try Sound Meditation when you spend time in nature. During Sound Meditation you will pay attention to the sounds in the world around you. This is a method of meditation that does not necessarily need to be practiced in nature, but it is more likely to be soothing if you do so. Sound Bouncing is one method of practicing Sound Meditation:

1. Set a timer for the length of time that you want to meditate. (You may want to try this without a timer first just to see where it leads you, but 5 minutes is a good starting point.)

Have a great self-care tip to share? Send to Cindy to spread the good news!

1. Start with your breath. Close your eyes and take 10 deep breaths and count each one. Once you reach 10 breaths, you will shift your attention to the world around you.
2. What do you hear?
3. Once you identify an individual sound, you will label it, then search for something else to hear. (Example: You hear birds, you say to yourself "birds," then you move on.)
4. Let the sounds and your labeling flow by without judgement. You can repeat the labels if you start to run out of things to "hear" and you haven't run out of time yet.
5. 6. When your timer sounds you will finish with a few deep breaths.



Save the Date

Summit on Mental Health

Tuesday, May 21st, 2024

Training Opportunities

April 17, 2024 | Webinar - Supporting Neurodiverse Youth Through Executive Function Development [Register Here](#)

April 25, 2024 | Webinar-Addressing Post-Secondary Rural Education Issues through Indiana's RECN [Register Here](#)

May 15, 2024 | Webinar - Navigating the Digital Landscape: Social Media & Youth Mental Health [Register Here](#)

MAY 16, 2024 | 12:00 PM - 01:00 PM ET | Addressing the Stigma: Youth Mental Health and Substance Use - Indiana (VIRTUAL) [Register Here](#)

May 21, 2024 | Youth Vaping: Understanding the 'Why' to Curb Use - [Indiana \(VIRTUAL\)](#)

May 21, 2024 | Great Kids Summit on Mental Health—more information to come.

June 4, 2024 | Empowering Opportunity Youth: Reshaping Futures Together - Indiana (VIRTUAL) [Register Here](#)

June 11, 2024 | Exploring Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Rural IN - Indiana (VIRTUAL) [Register Here](#)

Looking for a recording of a previous training, check www.allencountycasa.org under the "Training" tab.



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Please Share With Your Network!



You can have an impact on children's lives

Learn about volunteering as a Court Appointed Special Advocate in our FREE webinar

SIGN UP FOR THE WEBINAR

ALLEN COUNTY
CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocate
FOR CHILDREN

Upcoming CASA 101s

All held at 12 noon & 6:00 pm

April 2nd, May 7th,

June 5th, July 10th

Cindy.Verduce@allensuperiorcourt.us

For Link to Zoom Meeting

Benefits of Mindfulness & Yoga

This post was written by Marjorie Burns, MSSW, LCSW, supervisor, Dialectical Behavioral Therapist Program, Parkview Behavioral Health Institute.

The benefits of practicing yoga

Yoga is an ancient practice that is used for physical, mental and spiritual well-being purposes. Through a combination of physical postures, breathing techniques and meditation, [yoga](#) focuses on bringing harmony between your mind and body. Many people, including myself, experience a number of health benefits from regularly [practicing yoga](#) including:

- Increased flexibility, muscle strength and tone
- Improved energy and vitality
Less tension and [stress](#)
- Improved mental health and brain functioning
- Reduced inflammation
Reduced [anxiety](#)
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Better posture and body awareness

The benefits of practicing mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of being present and engaged in your thoughts, feelings and body. This involves focusing your mind on what's happening in the present moment without rushing, evaluating or judging. One of the ways

people practice mindfulness is through meditation. Studies show that mindfulness can have a positive impact on your health including:

- Reduced depression
- Reduced anxiety and [stress](#)
- Lowered blood pressure
- Improved [sleep](#)
- Reduced chronic pain
- Increased emotional regulation

How to get started with yoga and mindfulness

Within my life, I have learned the need to become in tune with myself, including looking at the external and internal stressors that are affecting my physical and mental health. With the world around us presenting constant challenges, it's more important than ever to start a healthy life initiative. Although there are multiple ways to do this, for me, mindfulness and yoga help me meet this balancing act of internal and external care. Here's some ways you can get started on incorporating it into your life too.

- **Become aware of yourself.** To make a change in your life, it's important to be open to the idea of helping yourself grow. You can start by becoming aware of your beliefs, feelings, body sensations and thoughts. By listening to your body and considering the things that you need, you'll be more in tune with your mind, body and soul. Research shows that by doing mindfulness and/or yoga, you can reach a whole new level of self-awareness while also decreasing mental health and physical symptoms.
- **Find the type that's right for you.** There are multiple types of

mindfulness and yoga, so it's important to find one that works for you. Your body type, activity level, health issues and available time should help you decide which type of practice is best. For example, for me, mindfulness exercises such as breathing and grounding are most helpful, as well as short spurts of chair yoga with music or anything involving nature. Take the time to look up the different types of mindfulness and yoga that will work with your lifestyle.

- **Make a conscious effort.**

Mindfulness is a daily practice that can come consciously or unconsciously during our daily activities. For many, a conscious mindfulness practice involves making a choice to focus on an activity or place, or putting yourself in a pose where you are only aware of the moment. For example, you may want to sit in a quiet space, focus on breathing slowly and deeply or do light stretching. Whatever you do, ensure you make it a routine so you can reap the benefits of letting all other thoughts, judgments and worries float past.

Although I am by far no expert on yoga or mindfulness, I have seen the benefits these practices can provide in one's mental and physical health. If you're interested in learning more, I encourage you to contact Parkview's health and dietitian departments and the Community Greenhouse for more information.

