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SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS' MENTAL HEALTH

NAVIGATE COLUMBUS WITH YOUR KIDS

For many children and teens, summer is eagerly anticipated as a time when school ends and schedules become more open. However, this unstructured time can be challenging for some without the structure and social environment school provides. School is where children connect with friends and receive support from teachers and staff, making it harder to maintain those relationships once classes are over.

One effective way to encourage children to socialize and stay engaged during the summer is by participating in enjoyable activities. This not only helps them make new friends who share similar interests but also strengthens existing friendships from school. Initially, children may need encouragement to try new activities and step out of their comfort zones. It's important to listen to their

concerns and collaborate to find activities that are both enjoyable and safe, considering their diverse interests and hobbies.

Here are some engaging activities in Columbus to consider:

- [Franklinton Farms Learning Garden](#): Teatime every Thursday!
- WOSU: [Second Saturday Kids Days](#)
- We Amplify Voices: [Free Art Workshops](#)
- National Veterans Memorial Museum: [Free Yoga and Jiu Jitsu](#)
- [Wexner Center for the Arts](#): Free Admission Sundays
- Columbus Museum of Art: [Free Admission Sundays](#) and Discounted Tickets
- [Columbus Museum of Art](#): Kids Open Studio, Sensory Hours, Home School Workshops, and more!
- [Franklin Park Conservatory](#): Free Community Days the First Sunday of the Month
- Franklinton Arts District: [Free Franklinton Fridays](#)
- [Columbus Metropolitan Library Culture Pass Program](#): Free Admission to Columbus museums, sports, musical performances, and more!
- [5Life Rock Climbing Gym](#): Discount Days for Families, Seniors, Students, BIPOC, LGBTQ+
- Art of Yoga: [Donation-Based Yoga Classes](#)
- [Columbus MetroParks: Events & Activities](#)
- [Rise Up CBUS Events](#): Enjoy Free Food, Music and Connect with Neighbors!
- Columbus Recreation & Parks Community Centers: [Free Community Events](#)
- Kaleidoscope Youth Center: [LGBTQ+ Resources and Free Events for Youth & Families](#)

- Royal Oak Chess: [Free Community Open Play](#)
- [Free & Low-Cost After School & Summer Programs](#)
- [Disability-Friendly & Sensory-Friendly Activities](#)

During rainy days when kids are indoors, it's important to [limit screen time](#), which can impact adolescent mental health negatively. Linked here are some great [ideas to keep them engaged](#). Whether they enjoy sports or prefer reading in a hammock, encourage children to spend more time outdoors with friends and family, rather than indoors with screens.

For information on community programs, free resources, and special opportunities for families, check out [The Children's Advocacy Project for Kids](#) (CAP4Kids). Additionally, ThriveOn offers access to [Bloom: Supporting You in Growing Kids' Mental Well-Being](#). It's free, confidential, and designed for busy working parents and caregivers to help support children's mental well-being.

[To start with Bloom, click here](#) and register your account using code **BLFC01**.



FIREWORK SAFETY FOR THE FAMILY

ENSURING A SAFE AND FUN CELEBRATION

Each year as the Fourth of July approaches, fireworks fill the sky with stunning displays. While they bring joy, they also come with risks. Understanding firework safety is key to keeping celebrations fun and safe. Below are tips for this coming holiday to help you enjoy the day safely.

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF FIREWORKS?

If not handled properly, fireworks can cause burns and eye injuries in kids and adults. The best way to protect your family is not to use any fireworks at home, instead, [attend public fireworks displays](#) and leave the lighting to the professionals.

Regardless, fireworks are prohibited in many areas, so before using them at home make sure to check with your local police department first.

FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS

If fireworks are legal in your neighborhood, keep these [firework safety tips](#) in mind:

- Kids should never play with fireworks. If you give kids sparklers, make sure they keep them outside and away from the face, clothing, and hair. Sparklers can reach 1,800°F (982°C) – hot enough to melt gold.
- Buy only legal fireworks (legal fireworks have a label with the manufacturer's name and directions; illegal ones are unlabeled), and store them in a cool, dry place. Never try to make your own fireworks.
- Always use fireworks outside and have a bucket of water and a hose nearby in case of accidents.
- Point fireworks away from homes, and keep away from brush and leaves and flammable substances. The [National Fire Protection Association](#) estimates that local fire departments respond to more 50,000 fires caused by fireworks each year.
- Steer clear of others setting off fireworks. They can backfire or shoot off in the wrong direction.
- Never throw or point fireworks at someone, even as a joke.
- Don't hold fireworks in your hand or have any part of your body over them while lighting. Wear eye protection, and don't carry fireworks in your pocket – the friction could set them off.
- Light one firework at a time (not in glass or metal containers), and never relight a dud.
- Don't allow kids to pick up pieces of fireworks after an event. Some may still be ignited and can explode at any time.
- Soak all fireworks in a bucket of water before throwing them in the trash can.
- Think about your pet. Animals have sensitive ears and can be very frightened or stressed by the Fourth of July and other big celebrations. Keep pets indoors to reduce the risk that they'll run loose or get injured.

IF AN INJURY HAPPENS

If a child is injured by fireworks, immediately go to a doctor or hospital.

If an eye injury happens:

- Don't touch or rub your eyes, as this may cause even more damage.
- Don't flush the eye out with water or try to put any ointment on it.
- Cut out the bottom of a paper cup, place it around the eye, and get medical care right away.

If someone is burned:

- Remove clothing from the burned area.
- Call your doctor immediately or 911 if burn area is extreme.

Remember that while fireworks are meant to be enjoyed, your enjoyment will be even greater knowing your family is safe. ThriveOn wishes everyone a safe and happy Independence Day!



JOIN THRIVEON FOR THE 6TH ANNUAL FRANKLIN COUNTY 5K & THRIVEON CHALLENGE!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13

We are thrilled to invite all Franklin County Cooperative employees and their eligible dependents (spouses/domestic partners and children) to participate in the 2024 Franklin County 5k & ThriveOn Challenge on Sunday, October 13th! Participants can choose between in-person or virtual options. In-person perks include free flu vaccines, a mini farmer's market, and healthy snacks. During registration, participants will have the option to choose if they want to receive swag. If you want swag, be sure to register by July 31st.

For more information about the 5k, including a race timeline, visit runsignup.com/franklincounty5k.

ATTEND AN UPCOMING WEBINAR

Join us every month for a series of engaging educational webinars brought to you by Franklin County Cooperative and ThriveOn, featuring a diverse range of topics including nutrition, financial support, health-related discussions, and much more from our trusted vendors.

OhioHealth Healthy Lifestyle Programs

The Non-Diet Approach to Health

Thursdays, July 11-25 | 5-5:45pm | Complete 2 of 3 sessions for credit

Dive into how to leave the cycle of dieting and fuel your body with nutritious foods that also satisfy! Learn to identify what a non-diet approach looks like, discover practices to promote your health over a lifetime and gain freedom from the restrictive nature of diet culture.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

Menopause Info Session and Q&A with Dr. Koffler

Thursday, July 25 from 11:30am - 12:30pm

Menopause can be a challenging and confusing process to navigate. Join obstetrician-gynecologist, Dr. Elizabeth Koffler as she shares valuable insight into the intricacies of menopause. Together, hear evidence-based recommendations and expert advice on transitioning into this new stage of life, leaving you feeling empowered and confident. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more and participate in a Q&A session at the end. Join in person in Meeting Room A on the 1st floor of Government Tower (369 S. High St) or register to join virtually.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

EAP Group Sessions

Building Resilience in Traumatic Times

Tuesday, July 30 from 1-2pm

Understanding trauma's profound effects on our well-being is crucial for supporting ourselves and others. This training will cover what trauma entails, its impact on individuals, and how to recognize its signs. Participants will learn coping strategies and trauma-informed responses to create safe, supportive environments in both professional and personal settings.

[JOIN THE MEETING >](#)

[DOWNLOAD WORKBOOK >](#)

Phone: 614-525-3948

Email: ThriveOn@franklincountyohio.gov

ThriveOn
Your Health and Wellness Program

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING INSIGHTS

Preventing Burnout - Burnout is at an all time high since 2021 with longer hours, continued COVID health concerns and increased demands at home. This latest information shows human services, education, and first responder employees are at an even higher risk. Burnout happens over time as a gradual process – like filling a bucket one drop at a time, or exposure to a prolonged response to a chronic stressor. It can be challenging to manage all the demands of life, but there are proactive steps you can take including understanding burnout and why it happens.

Burnout happens when 3 things occur:

1. Feeling tired with lack of energy, hard to concentrate/focus
2. Feeling a heightened mental distance from a job or feeling negative, irritable or cynical towards that environment
3. Feeling a lack of competence and successful achievement in one's work and perceived lack of impact for another person/event/program/specific outcome

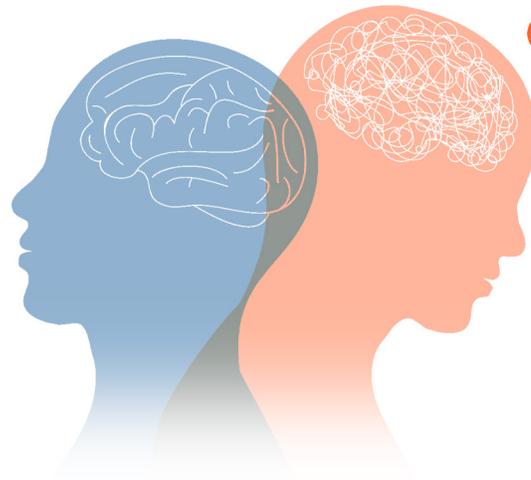
**Nearly 3 out of 5 employees reported the negative impact of work-related stress and feeling some form of burnout*

Physical impacts of Burnout:

1. Lack of energy and unable to be productive in job duties
2. Changes in sleep patterns
3. Headaches, stomach or intestinal problems
4. Back, neck or motor issues

How to Manage Burnout:

1. **Avoid self-medication:** Resist using alcohol or drugs to cope.
2. **Communicate and adjust:** Discuss workload with supervisors and seek adjustments. Regular check-ins help maintain control.
3. **Build support:** Cultivate positive relationships at work for support.
4. **Take breaks:** Take short breaks throughout the day for renewal.



5. **Self-care:** Eat well, stay hydrated, and exercise. Spend breaks outdoors if possible.
6. **Celebrate small wins:** Find meaning in daily accomplishments.
7. **Create a supportive culture:** Participate in group activities like volunteering.
8. **Organize workspace:** Personalize your workspace with meaningful items.
9. **Know limits:** Seek help if needed.
10. **Set boundaries:** Separate work and personal time to maintain balance.

Keep Swimming –

Valerie Schenk-Greil LPCC, LICDC, NCC



As a member of the Franklin County Cooperative, you have access to several confidential and free resources designed to support you in various aspects of life. One invaluable resource is Valerie Schenk-Greil, your dedicated EAP Consultant through Optum. Valerie is available to help you navigate challenges such as work-life balance, parenting and family concerns, depression, anxiety, stress, and more.

*Your discussions with Valerie are completely confidential and incur no cost to you. You can reach out to her by calling the Onsite EAP and Health Engagement Nurse Support Line at **614.525.6773**, emailing valerie.schenk-greil@optum.com, or [booking an appointment](#).*