

## Welcome to the Hub

The Hub, our new HCZ Emotional Wellness Headquarters brings you the Heads Up newsletter focusing on mental health resources and our HCZ Emotional Wellness Pillars:

1. **Empowered Community**
2. **Self-Awareness**
3. **Knowledge**
4. **Healthy Connections**



**The Hub Team**  
**Duanna McClendon (L)**  
**Emotional Wellness Coordinator**  
**Kelsie Bonaparte, MSW (R)** Emotional  
**Wellness Specialist**

## International Boost Self-Esteem Month

February is “International Boost Self-Esteem Month.” These affirmations are centered around having a purposeful and successful new year with high self-esteem:

1. I don't let fear stop me from trying new things.
2. I'm healthy and make the best decisions for my body.
3. I choose to get rid of old negative habits and embrace new positive ones.
4. The best is yet to come and today will be the best day I've ever had.
5. I am free to create my OWN reality.
6. I am ready to show the world who I am and what I have to offer.
7. I am committed to the possibility of my own success.
8. I choose to take responsibility for my own happiness.
9. I take my goals seriously.
10. I am making space for more success to come into my life.



**Kelsie Bonaparte, MSW**  
**Emotional Wellness Specialist**

## Letter from the Emotional Wellness Specialist

It is an organizational priority at HCZ to create a culture that supports mental health and emotional well-being. Around us, our society is increasing awareness of cultural competence, managing trauma, and designing workspaces that will strengthen our community.

As a Harlemite, social worker and well-being advocate, I feel this role is special because I understand the importance of implementing a wellness shift within our urban environments. As a member of the Emotional Wellness Initiative team, it is my goal to help change the narrative by carefully considering the needs of HCZ and create a trauma-informed, holistic and effective approach to mental health that is beneficial to the entire organization. I am excited to continue researching and planning to build a solid foundation that will assist us in being our best selves to best serve.

Moving forward, we are making the commitment to a broader vision of wellness a strategic priority. For example, we will be building partnerships with local mental health providers to build out comprehensive programming and provide resources. We will continue to conduct emotional wellness trainings for all HCZ staff and begin hosting workshops based on requested topics. Also, there will be new offerings and benefits for staff. It is essential that we take advantage of these opportunities and encourage staff feedback so that we can continue to improve. I'm very excited for what's to come and hope that you all join me on the journey to be well.

## Students' Corner

This fall, the Emotional Wellness Team hosted a Teen PSA Contest. This was an opportunity for students to submit any form of original advertisement that inspires their peers and community to become actively interested in their emotional well-being. Our grand prize winner, Toree from P.S. 76, wrote a poem about bullying.



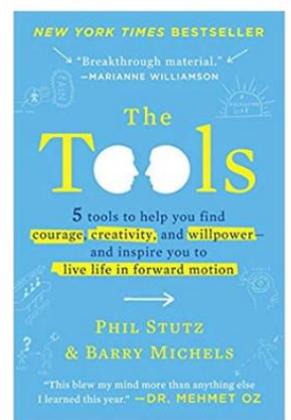
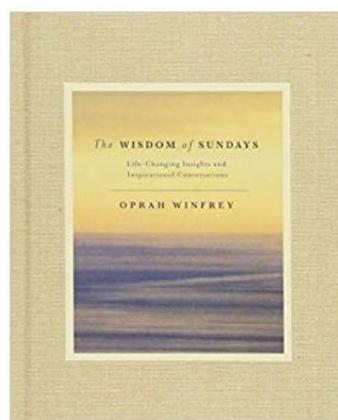
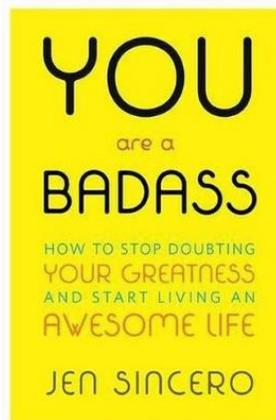
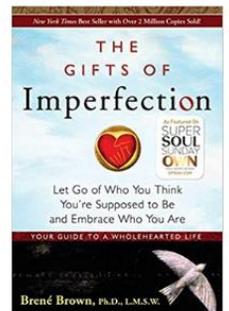
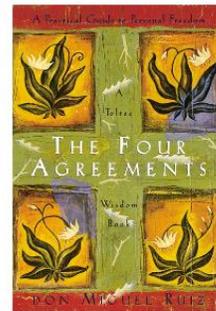
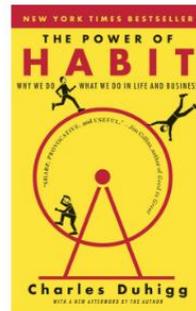
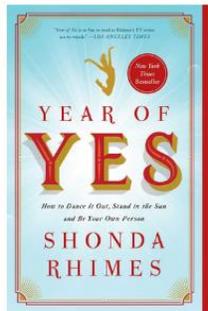
Above: Toree, Grand Prize Winner Performing "The Reason Why" at P.S. 76

### "The Reason Why" by Toree from P.S. 76

Have you ever noticed a little girl?  
Sitting in the corner talking to herself, you may have judged her, called her "crazy" but have you really got to know who she really is lately?  
She's just a girl that's having a hard time, she just wanted to be okay during her lifetime.  
But what you don't see is a girl that's "crazy," that's "weird," you don't see that she needs help and she's not really there.  
She's over here hurt with a knife in her back and a gun to her head, this time she is thinking about ending it all.  
You crack jokes instead.  
But when she finally puts the arrow in her bow, that's when you stop laughing and pay attention to what she said.  
Now you see that she was more than a quiet girl in the corner, she was yelling out while still trying to hide under the covers.  
How would you feel sitting in a corner by the wall, crying out for help with nobody answering your call when you are going through it all?  
I am her best friend, seen her at her worst.  
You don't want to be that somebody on that floor.  
Stop closing the door on the convo about emotions and realize that there are people out here posing.  
We are here for you even if you don't see your light, and...  
Yes baby,  
It does shine bright.

## Books Recommendations for Self-Care and Building a Relationship with Yourself

As we are navigating this world and working towards being our best selves, sometimes we can use a little guidance to help us along the way. You can never go wrong with self-help books to teach, coach, confirm, motivate, inspire and move in forward motion. Please check out the suggested books:



## Wellness Journey Series

WJS provides HCZ employees guidance on the journey to emotional wellness and the process of emotional healing.

**Q: What does it mean to be well?**

A: To be well means to be able to find peace in the midst of chaos. It means to be mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally whole.

**Q: How do you make sure that you are well?**

A: I make sure that I'm well by cutting anything out of my life that brings negative emotions or disrupts my peace. I surround myself with those who add value to every aspect of my life.

**Q: What would you tell others about starting a wellness journey?**

A: The real growth happens when you're alone, and no one is watching. Life will hurt you, burn you, and sometimes make you question your worth, but there's power in being able to stand still and appreciate the beauty of life even in those moments. Prayer works.

**Q: When did you decide it was time to make a change?**

A: I always feel it's time to make a change. No matter where I am in life, I'm never comfortable, which is why it's difficult to pinpoint when I felt that way.

**Q: What are your top three values and how do they align with your everyday life?**

A: Mental wellness, honesty and love. These three values are applied to everything I do. I make sure there is truth and intention in all of my actions. I make sure to not only love those around me, but to also love myself.

**Q: If you can tell your HCZ community one thing, what would you say?**

A: TAKE BREAKS! They are necessary, and they are deserved.

**Q: Who inspires you and why?**

A: The person I once was inspires me to be better every day. Watching her growth helps me remember there is no such thing as limits.

**Q: Are you currently working on a goal?**

A: My goal is to be able to find joy and maintain peace.



**Alia Pierre, Performing Arts Teacher  
Promise Academy II  
Upper Elementary**

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## The Importance of Mentorship

1. Set expectations together in the very beginning.
2. Take a genuine interest in your mentee as a person.
3. Know when to wait before giving advice.
4. Improve your emotional intelligence.
5. Don't assume anything about your mentee - ask.
6. Be honest and forthcoming about mistakes you've made.
7. Celebrate their achievements.
8. Give more than you ask for.
9. Seek out classes or projects related to skills your mentee wants to develop.
10. Lead by example.

Everyone needs a mentor figure to guide and stimulate personal and professional growth. Many of us have taken on the role as a mentor- as teachers, counselors, colleagues and peers. Here are some tips to be a phenomenal mentor:



Wellness Challenge- 2019						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Have an early night.	Meditate for 10 minutes. <i>*Try the journey meditation app</i>	Eat/drink healthy today.	Compliment someone.	Write down 3 things you are grateful for.	Try a new workout.
Watch a funny movie.	Practice being present	Try a cup of herbal tea.	Get crafty! Mindfully color, paint or draw.	Stretch for 10 minutes.	Learn/ try something new.	Send an encouraging text to someone.
Rest and refuel.	Try a yoga class. <i>*PAII 5:30PM (Weight room)</i>	Organize your workspace.	Do a random act of kindness.	Make a list of goals.	Write down 3 things that were great this week.	Try a new recipe.
Unplug from social media.	Listen to your favorite music.	No complaint day.	Write down 5 things you love about yourself.	Read an inspiring book.	Pamper Yourself.	Spend quality time with loved ones.
Journal your thoughts.	Drink more water.	Listen to a positive podcast.	Take the stairs.	Donate 3 things you no longer use.	Talk to a friend.	

## The Hub Reminders:

Remember we HCZ Emotional Wellness Department provides meditation sessions every Thursday and Friday for staff. Check it out!

We are now recruiting for the Peer Emotional Wellness Ambassadors. The ambassadors are a team of leaders committed to the emotional wellness, positive mental health and a desire to make an impact within the HCZ community and among their peers.

Benefits and Duties include, but not limited:

- Emotional Wellness Trainings
- Project Competition
- Advocate to improve the culture and health at HCZ
- Develop leadership and interpersonal skills
- Fun incentives and prizes

Please encourage your students to apply for the position and spread the word.

**For any questions, concerns or more information:**  
emotionalwellness@hcz.org

## HCZ Emotional Wellness Resources

**NYC Well Talk. Text. Chat. 24/7:** Your connection to free, confidential mental health support. Speak to a counselor via phone, text or chat and get access to mental health and substance misuse services, in more than 200 languages, 24/7/365. [Click Here for Website](#)

**The National Child Traumatic Stress Network:** A network to raise the standard of care and improve access to services for traumatized children, their families and communities throughout the USA  
[Click Here for Website](#)

Article: **“What Exactly is Well-being?”**  
[Click Here for Article](#)

TED Talk: **“The Surprising Science of Happiness”**  
[Click Here for TED Talk](#)

**Greater Good Magazine Science Based Insights for a Meaningful Life:** This site reports on groundbreaking research into the roots of compassion, happiness, and altruism  
[Click Here for Website](#)