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Statement from Burlington Mayor Meed Ward: The Importance of Practicing Self-Care and Staying Connected

Burlington, Ont. – Jan. 28, 2021

There is no question the past 11 months have taken a significant toll on the mental health of the members of our community, regardless of their age. Burlington City Council has recognized this reality from the moment the pandemic crossed our borders and, as a result, mental health has been at the forefront of our considerations in decision-making, along with the need to keep our residents safe while balancing the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Today is Bell Let's Talk Day. It is crucial we remain hopeful that better days are ahead; and indeed, we are seeing this with the rollout of vaccinations. These are extremely tough times that have taken a toll on many of us and I know we are all struggling. I cannot express how grateful I am to our resilient community for continuing to do your part to keep yourself and those around you healthy – both physically and mentally.

I encourage our residents to make that extra bit of effort to not only look after others, but yourselves as well. Continue to reach out to your loved ones, family, friends and colleagues – not just today, but every day. Remaining emotionally connected is more important now than ever. Joining a virtual book club, having a video call over dinner, streaming a group fitness class or just picking up the phone and calling someone are but a few ways we can practice self-care and stay connected.

Also take the time to get out for some fresh air and exercise. The City of Burlington has kept our parks, toboggan hills, rinks, dog parks and more, open for use by members of your family while staying 2m/6ft. apart from those outside of your household. We encourage you to get outside and enjoy some physical activity safely as it's an important part in fostering good mental health.

Our Burlington COVID-19 Task Force has compiled a list of mental health supports and resources at www.burlington.ca/en/your-city/covid-19-community-resources.asp.

If you need to speak to someone about your mental health, or that of a family member, coworker or friend, there is help through:

- National Suicide Prevention Line: 1-800-273-TALK;
- Kid's Help Line: 1-800-668-6868;

- Crisis Outreach and Support Team ([COAST](#)): 1-877-825-9011;
- Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566;
- Alcoholics Anonymous Halton: 905-845-5900.

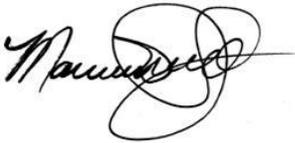
[Wellness Together Canada](#) also offers free supports, such as information and practical tools to feeling better, self-guided programs, peer-to-peer support and confidential sessions with social workers, psychologists and other professionals. Immediate supports are also available by phone and text for those without Internet access:

- Adults – Text WELLNESS to 741741;
- Youth – Text WELLNESS to 686868;
- Front-Line Workers – Text FRONTLINE to 741741.

Supporting each other through good mental health and well-being will help us all get through this together.

Be kind. Stay safe. Stay healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marianne Meed Ward', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
City of Burlington

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