

# Nurse's Notes

by Marie Angell Habershaw BSN, RN

This month, I am choosing to write about something other than Covid-19! February is typically the month where I focus on heart health, in our Health lessons at school, as well as fund raising for the American Heart Association. This year, because of the pandemic, not much is typical, but here is to trying to stay the course!

**National Wear Red Day** is February 5, 2021. The American Heart Association says that while nearly 80% of cardiac events can be prevented through modest changes to diet and lifestyle, heart disease continues to be the No. 1 killer of women. Nearly 45% of all women age 20 and older have some form of heart disease! So this year the AHA is calling a CODE RED to alert us to how serious this problem is.

Living within a pandemic has caused an increase in stress, anxiety and hypertension - all contributors to heart disease. But the good news is that we can turn this around - adding small changes to our daily lives can help us with this. Our children can practice these ideas with us and will benefit when they see us making positive changes. Here are some ideas to get us started, and work on our mental health at the same time.

## Practice Gratitude

We all know that we can benefit from a sense of increased positivity. Here are some ways that the AHA says can jumpstart us!

Start your day with celebrating your progress on something you do for you - a new hobby, a special interest. Jot down why this helps you.

Think about three things you like about yourself, write them down and think about how this makes you feel.

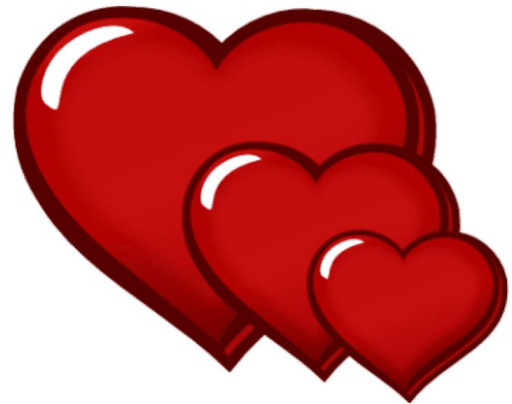
Take a minute to look around you - notice something that makes you smile, a view, your child playing, a kind person.

If your day is frustrating, and whose isn't right now, take a mental pause - think about the things that you have to be grateful for.

Appreciate someone else - we all have people in our lives who are gifts to us. Let them know it!

Think about planning something for after the pandemic - hope helps us stay positive!

For more info on heart health, visit the AHA website and join Healthy for Good. [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) And remember to join in this year's **National Wear Red Day!**



As always, if I can be of any help to you, feel free to email me at [mhabershaw@iccatholicschool.org](mailto:mhabershaw@iccatholicschool.org)

Take care and stay safe!