



CHAPMAN  
UNIVERSITY

Attallah College of  
Educational Studies

# Mental Health Toolkit

For Parents or Guardians of High  
School Students

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# What is Mental Health?<sup>1</sup>

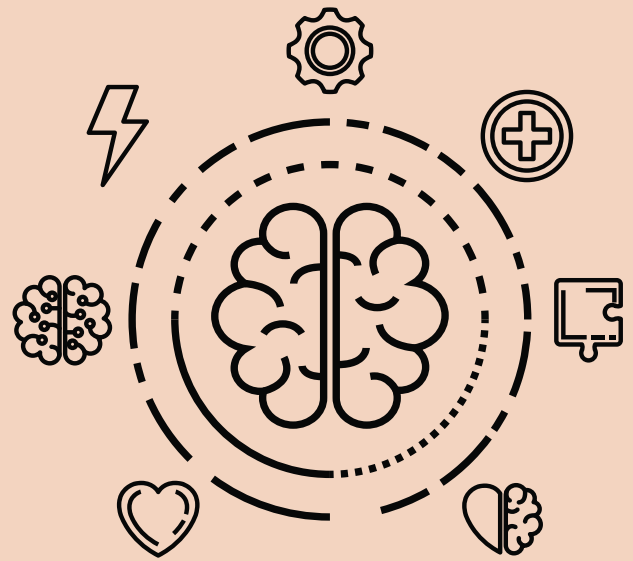
Mental health is not limited to our brain health. It includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellness and health. Mental health can influence our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Your child's mental health determines numerous things such as: how they cope with stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Having good mental health is important throughout our entire lives.



<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, June 28). *About mental health*. <https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm>

# Mental Health & Mental Illness

Both mental health and mental illness can impact people's thoughts, feelings, and actions. However, mental illness has a significant effect. Poor mental health can lead to mental illness. Everyone experiences mental health and mental illness differently, and it is best to think of it as a spectrum.<sup>1</sup>



Mental Health Spectrum<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> American Psychiatric Association. (2018, August). *What is Mental Illness*. <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/what-is-mental-illness>

<sup>2</sup> Delphis. (2020, June 30). *The Mental Health Continuum is a Better Model for Mental Health*. <https://delphis.org.uk/mental-health/continuum-mental-health/>

# Addressing Mental Health Early



Recent data has shown the importance of addressing mental health as soon as possible. **Risks are increased for high school students because rates of mental health diagnoses increase as students become older.**<sup>1</sup>

- The average age of onset of mental health disorders is **18 years old.**<sup>2</sup>
- Between 2007 and 2012, the rate of children who have been diagnosed with either anxiety or depression rose from **5.4% to 8%.**<sup>3</sup>
- Students between the ages of 6 and 17 with mental, emotional or behavioral concerns are **3x** more likely to repeat a grade.<sup>4</sup>
- High School students with significant symptoms of depression are more than **twice as likely** to drop out compared to their peers.<sup>5</sup>
- Over **50%** of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities ages 14 and older drop out of high school.<sup>6</sup>
- Students with emotional and behavioral disabilities have the **highest dropout rate** of any disability group.<sup>6</sup>
- Suicide is the **second-leading** cause of death for adolescents and young adults between the ages of 15 and 24.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ghandour, R. M., Sherman, L. J., Vladutiu, C. J., Ali, M. M., Lynch, S. E., Bitsko, R. H., & Blumberg, S. J. (2019). Prevalence and treatment of depression, anxiety, and conduct problems in US children. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 206, 256-267.

<sup>2</sup> Solmi, Md., Radua, J., Olivola, M., Croce, E., Soardo, L., de Pablo, G. S., ... & Fusar-Poli, P. (2021). Age at onset of mental disorders worldwide: large-scale meta-analysis of 192 epidemiological studies. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 1-15.

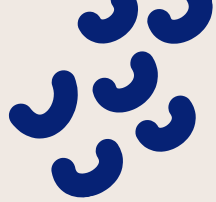
<sup>3</sup> Bitsko, R. H., Holbrook, J. R., Ghandour, R. M., Blumberg, S. J., Visser, S. N., Perou, R., & Walkup, J. T. (2018). Epidemiology and impact of health care provider-diagnosed anxiety and depression among US children. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics: JDBP*, 39(5), 395.

<sup>4</sup> Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB).

<sup>5</sup> Dupéré, V., Dion, E., Nault-Brière, F., Archambault, I., Leventhal, T., & Lesage, A. (2018). Revisiting the link between depression symptoms and high school dropout: Timing of exposure matters. *The Journal of Adolescent Health : Official publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 62(2), 205-211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2017.09.024>

<sup>6</sup> Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health. (2005/2006). *National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs*. Portland, OR: The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (CAHMI). [childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=1099&r=1](http://childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=1099&r=1)

<sup>7</sup> Miron, O., Yu, K. H., Wilf-Miron, R., & Kohane, I. S. (2019). Suicide rates among adolescents and young adults in the United States, 2000-2017. *JAMA*, 321(23), 2362-2364.

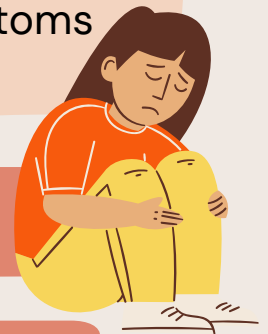


# Mental Health Red Flags<sup>1</sup>



It is normal for your teenager's behavior to change as they continue to develop. However, there are some behaviors you want to keep an eye out for.

Each condition has its own set of unique symptoms, though symptoms often overlap. Common signs and/or symptoms can include:



Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks

Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities



Excessive use of alcohol or drugs



Significant weight loss or gain

Trying to harm or end one's life or making plans to do so

Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits



**NOTE:** Various cultures or communities might view these signs differently based on their beliefs and experiences. They are not one-size-fits-all.

<sup>1</sup> National Alliance on Mental Illness. (n.d.). *Mental health by the numbers*. Retrieved October 2, 2021, from <https://www.nami.org/mhstats>

# Risk Factors<sup>1</sup>



Certain factors may increase your child's risk of developing a mental illness, including:

- A history of mental illness in a family member
- Stressful life situations, such as financial problems, a loved one's death, or a divorce
- An ongoing (chronic) medical condition, such as diabetes
- Brain damage as a result of a serious injury (traumatic brain injury), such as a violent blow to the head
- Traumatic experiences, such as physical or sexual assault
- Use of alcohol or recreational drugs
- Childhood history of abuse or neglect
- Few friends or few healthy relationships
- A previous mental illness



Mental illness is common. About 1 in 5 adults has a mental illness in any given year. Mental illness can begin at any age, from childhood through later adult years, but most cases begin earlier in life.

**If you think your student may hurt themselves or attempt suicide, get help right away:**

**Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.**

Call a suicide hotline number. In the U.S., call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) or use its webchat on [suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat).

Suicidal thoughts and behavior are common with some mental illnesses. Seek help from your primary care provider and school staff.

# Mental Health Myths & Facts

**Myth:** Mental Health is a sign of weakness or laziness.<sup>1</sup>

**Fact:** There are many factors that impact your child's mental health, such as biological factors, environmental factors and social support.



**Myth:** Children and adolescents don't experience mental health problems, it is just a phase, or they are being moody.<sup>2</sup>

**Fact:** Children and adolescents' mental health should not be dismissed. If your child's mental health needs are not addressed, it can develop into later life problems.



**Myth:** I can't do anything for my child with a mental health problem.<sup>3</sup>

**Fact:** Friends and family are important influences. They can reach out and help their child learn about mental health and access related services



<sup>1</sup> Mears, K. (2017, February 6). *Your child's mental health: Myths and facts*. John Hopkins Medicine. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/articles/your-childs-mental-health-myths-and-facts>

<sup>2</sup> Mental Health Gov. (2017, August 29). *Mental health myths and facts*. <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/mental-health-myths-facts>

<sup>3</sup> Mental Health First Aid. (2021, January 26). *Breaking down common mental health misconceptions*. <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/external/2021/01/breaking-down-common-mental-health-misconceptions/>



# Cultural Diversity

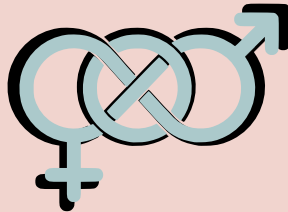
## What is it?<sup>1</sup>

- Cultural diversity is also known as "Multiculturalism."
- It is a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups.
- It acknowledges and values socio-cultural differences.
- Cultural diversity encourages and enables cultural contributions which empowers all.

## Culture can include...



**Language**



**Gender Identity**



**Beliefs**



**Food**



**Music**



**Race**



**Values**

## Why does it matter?<sup>2</sup>

**Culture** plays a key role in how individuals perceive and experience mental illness, including whether they choose to seek help and who they turn to for that support.

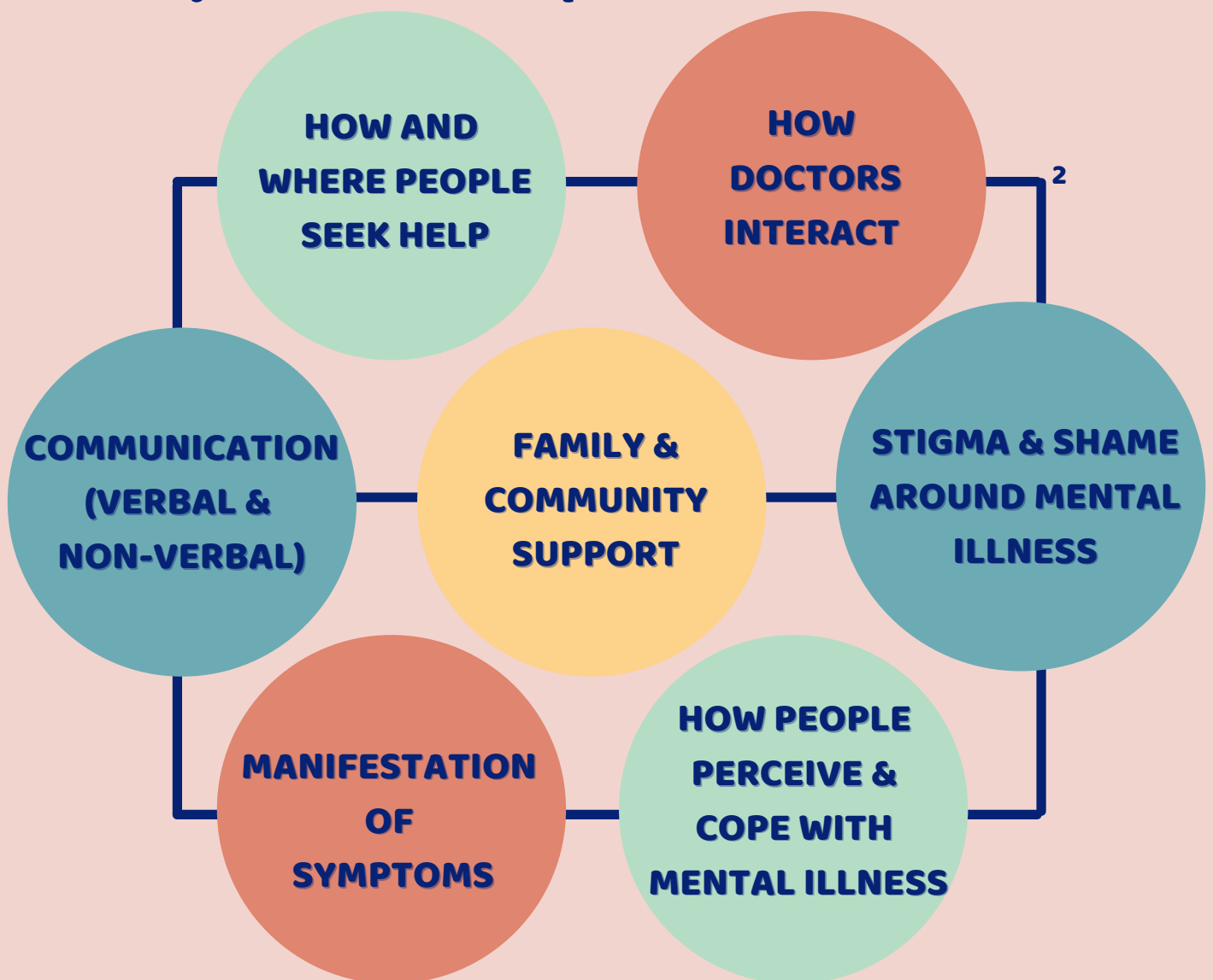
People from ethnic and cultural communities are, in general, **less likely** to receive mental health services, and those who are in treatment often receive poorer-quality care.

<sup>1</sup> Mental Health First Aid (2019, July 11). *Four Ways Culture Impacts Mental Health*. Retrieved October 3, 2021, from <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2019/07/four-ways-culture-impacts-mental-health/>

<sup>2</sup> Each Mind Matters. (n.d.). *Diverse communities*. Retrieved October 4, 2021, from <https://www.eachmindmatters.org/mental-health/diverse-communities/>

# Cultural Diversity

## Ways culture impacts mental health<sup>1</sup>



### Cultural Stigma

For many cultures, there is a growing stigma around mental health, and mental health challenges are considered a weakness and something to hide. This can make it harder for those struggling to talk openly and ask for help.

### Community Support

Cultural factors can determine how much support someone gets from their family and community when it comes to mental health. Due to existing stigma, minorities are sometimes left to find mental health treatment and support alone.

### Understanding Symptoms

Culture can influence how people describe and feel about their symptoms. It can affect how open they choose to be about their symptoms.

### Resources

When looking for mental health treatment, you want to talk to someone who understands your child's cultural experiences and concerns.

<sup>1</sup> Mental Health First Aid (2019, July 11). *Four Ways Culture Impacts Mental Health*. Retrieved October 3, 2021, from <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2019/07/four-ways-culture-impacts-mental-health/>

<sup>2</sup> Project LETS. (n.d.). *Race and Mental Health* [Clip art]. Retrieved October 4, 2021, from <https://projectlets.org/race-and-mental-health>

# Common Diagnoses and Concerns<sup>1</sup>

The following is a non-exhaustive list of symptoms and behaviors related to some common mental health diagnoses. It is normal for your child to experience symptoms (e.g., feeling worried or sad) sometimes. These examples are **not enough** to diagnose your child; however, they are a good starting point for you to look for any concerns.

## WHAT<sup>2</sup>

### What is depression?

Depression is a mood disorder identified by a depressed mood (e.g., sadness) and a loss of interest in enjoyable activities. Intense sadness can last for long periods.

### What is anxiety?

Anxiety is identified by excessive worry that does not stop about daily activities or future events. Anxiety is often related to tensing up muscles and being on constant alert.

### What is Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)?

ADHD is identified by difficulty maintaining focus or attention; having too much energy or moving and talking more than a normal amount; and difficulty with self-control.

### What is conduct disorder?

Conduct disorder is identified by a continuing pattern of aggression; violating rules or ignoring social norms; theft; or destroying property.

## HOW<sup>2</sup>

### How can depression affect my child?

- Becoming irritable or annoyed
- Feelings of sadness, emptiness, or hopelessness
- Weight change (loss or gain)
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Difficulty focusing or concentrating

### How can anxiety affect my<sup>2,3</sup> child?

- Worrying excessively about doing well
- Trouble focusing task at hand
- Always on the lookout for danger
- Avoidance and school refusal

### How can ADHD affect my child?

- Often loses school supplies
- Avoids doing work that requires much focus such as homework
- Disorganized
- Easily distracted by unrelated thoughts
- Taps hands or feet a lot

### How can conduct disorder affect my child?

- Aggressive towards people or animals (e.g., bullying or physical fights)
- Cannot follow rules (e.g., staying out past their curfew)
- Destroyed property
- Dishonesty
- Engages in theft

## WHAT<sup>2</sup>

### What is anorexia nervosa?

Anorexia nervosa is an eating disorder identified by extremely low body weight, extreme fear of weight gain, and a distorted view of their weight or body shape.

### What is bulimia nervosa?

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder identified by eating much more than average in a short amount of time and often involves behaviors of hiding weight gain such as vomiting, working out too much, or fasting.

## HOW<sup>2</sup>

### How can anorexia nervosa affect my child?

- Extreme weight loss
- Frequently skipping meals
- Badly formed perception of their body image
- Worried about eating in public
- Difficulty with self-control

### How can bulimia nervosa affect my child?

- Does not stop eating until they are uncomfortably full
- Eating large amounts even when not hungry
- Negative feelings about their body weight, body shape, and food
- Tries to hide when binge eating

## What can I do to help my child?

### The 3 Be's<sup>4</sup>

#### Be aware

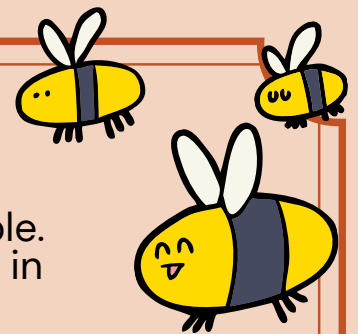
You know your child best. Your observations are valuable. Try to recognize any symptoms or changes in behavior in your child.

#### Be available

Some teens want to know someone is there to listen and hear them. Plan a set time to listen to your child's experiences and concerns.

#### Be resourceful

If you have further questions or concerns, you can reach out to your school-based mental health professionals, including the school counselor, school psychologist, or social worker, for more information and resources.



<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization (2020, September 28). *Adolescent mental health*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>

<sup>2</sup> American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>

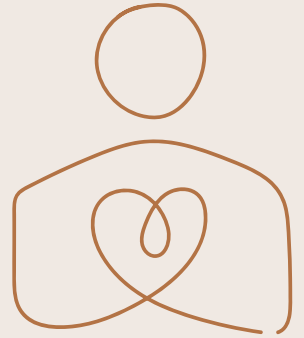
<sup>3</sup> Miller, C. (2021). *How anxiety affects teenagers*. Child Mind Institute. <https://childmind.org/article/signs-of-anxiety-in-teenagers/>

<sup>4</sup> RAND Corporation. (2018). *Cognitive behavioral intervention for trauma in schools*. <https://cbitsprogram.org>

# Why Should Schools Promote Mental Health?

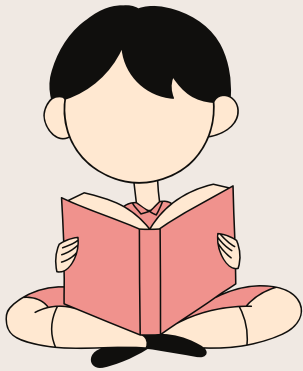
## Schools provide accessibility to services<sup>1</sup>

- Students spend a significant amount of time at school each day, providing access to school-based mental health services.
- Students often only receive mental health services at school.
- For example, 60% of adolescents between 12–17 years old with a major depressive episode did not receive services in 2019. Out of the students who did receive mental health services, two-thirds did so only at school.<sup>2</sup>



## Good mental health promotes learning & wellness<sup>1</sup>

- Good mental health contributes to social, emotional, and behavioral wellness, allowing students to thrive within and outside of school.
- Mental health and social-emotional support have been shown to allow students to succeed academically.



## Ideal environment<sup>1</sup>

- School-based mental health professionals have established relationships with students and parents. Many students feel safe and supported talking with a familiar and caring adult.
- School-based mental health professionals are equipped to provide access to community resources.



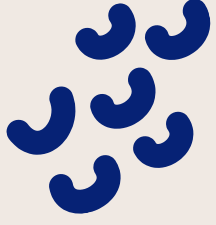
## Improves school culture<sup>1</sup>

- Mental health services improve the physical and psychological safety of students and schools, which leads to improvements in overall school culture.



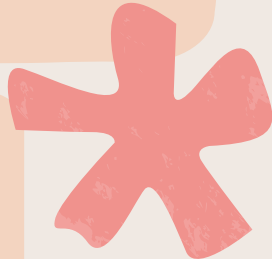
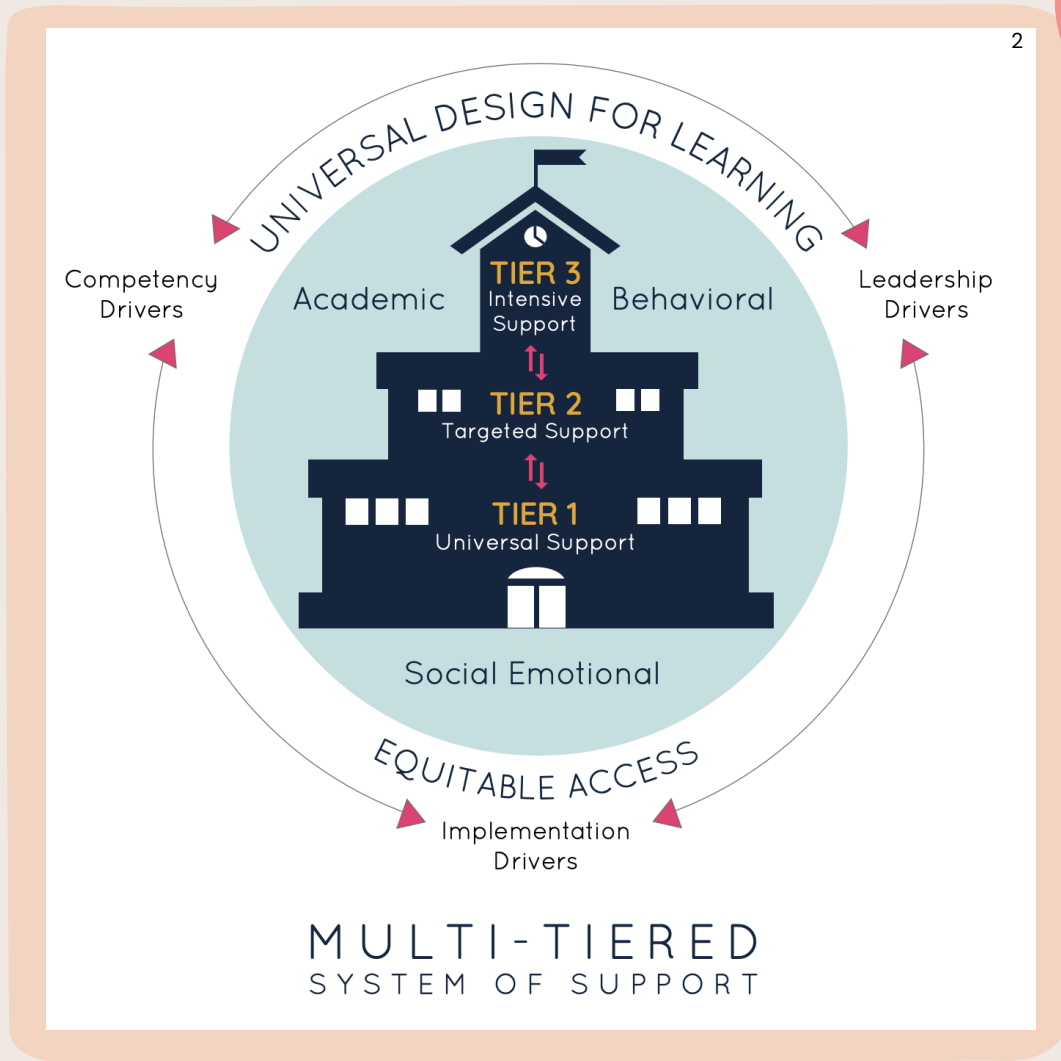
<sup>1</sup> National Association of School Psychologists. (2021). *Comprehensive school-based mental and behavioral health services and school psychologists*. <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/mental-health/school-psychology-and-mental-health/comprehensive-school-based-mental-and-behavioral-health-services-and-school-psychologists>

<sup>2</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2020). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29393/2019NSDUHFFRPDFWHTML/2019NSDUHFFRO90120.htm>



# MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

In order to provide a continuum of services from prevention to intervention, schools may utilize a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) which follows the public health model to provide evidence-based interventions and support for all students.<sup>1</sup>



Tier 1 reinforces positive behaviors for the entire student population through universal primary prevention. Tier 2 provides secondary preventative measures for targeted students who did not respond to primary prevention. Tier 3 offers intensive individualized support for students who did not respond to primary prevention or secondary preventative measures.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> August, G. J., Piehler, T. F., & Miller, F. G. (2018). Getting “SMART” about implementing multi-tiered systems of support to promote school mental health. *Journal of School Psychology, 66*, 85–96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2017.10.001>

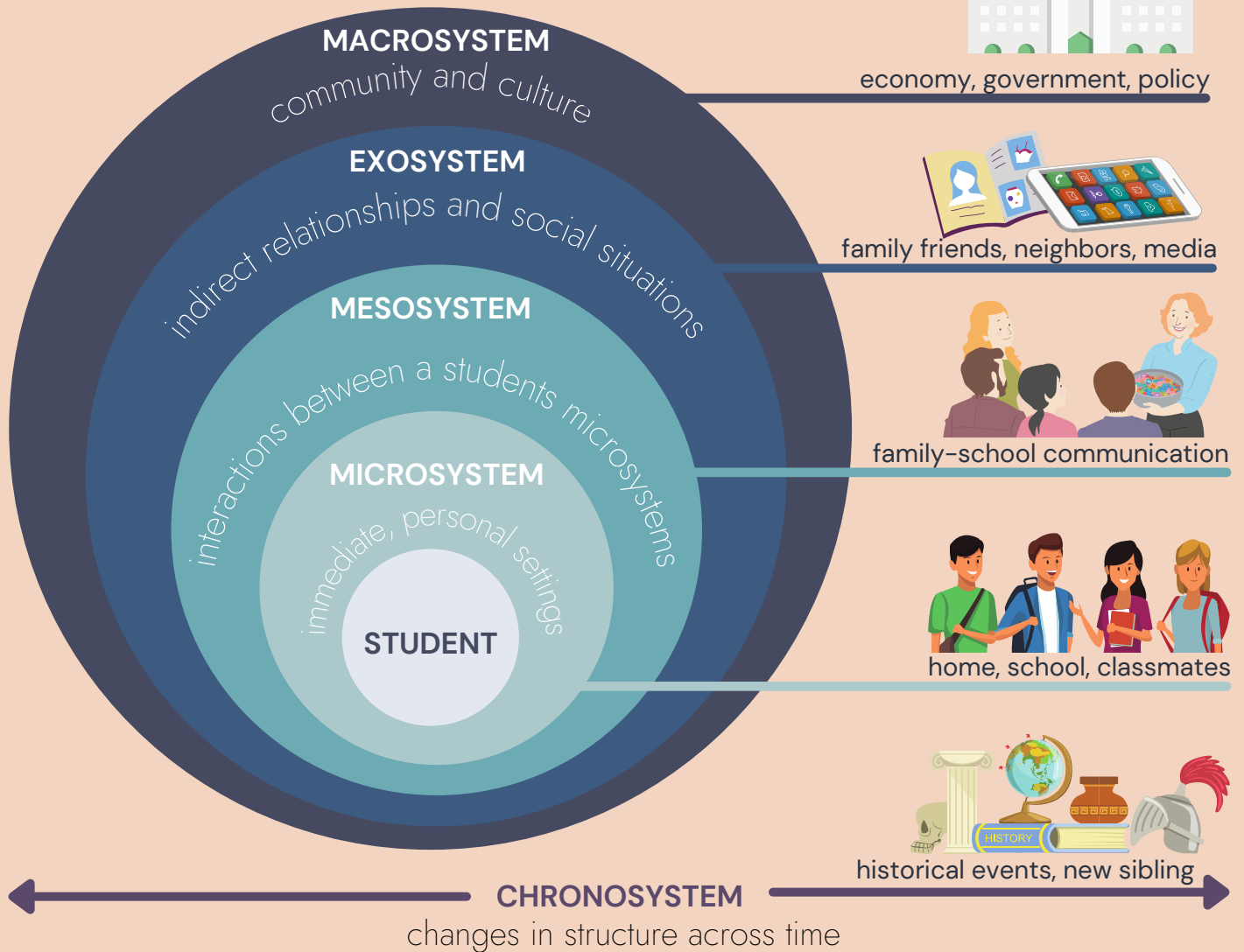
<sup>2</sup> Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (n.d.). *Tools & Resources. Tools & Resources – Systems for Student Success Office*. Retrieved October 11, 2021, from <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/tools-resources.html>.

<sup>3</sup> McIntosh, K., Filter, K. J., Bennett, J. L., Ryan, C., & Sugai, G. (2009). Principles of sustainable prevention: Designing scale-up of School-wide Positive Behavior Support to promote durable systems. *Psychology in the Schools, 47*(1), 5–21. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20448>

# A Systems Approach to Mental Health

## Understanding Ecological Systems

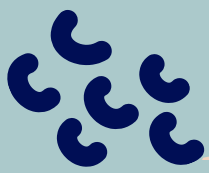
Within ecological models of development, your child's success is supported by multiple **tiers of influence.**



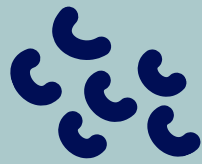
Considering interactions within and between different systems in students' lives can help guide mental health support.<sup>1</sup> The social, economic, and cultural environments that people are exposed to influence mental health. It is important to help strengthen students' psychological wellness by minimizing school, community, and family stressors and maximizing protective factors.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Doll, B., Spies, R., & Champion, A. (2012). Contributions of Ecological School Mental Health Services to Students' Academic Success. *Journal of Educational & Psychological Consultation*, 22(1-2), 44-61.

<sup>2</sup> Eriksson, M., Ghazinour, M., & Hammarström, A. (2018). Different uses of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory in public mental health research: what is their value for guiding public mental health policy and practice?. *Social Theory & Health*, 16(4), 414-433.



# Screening

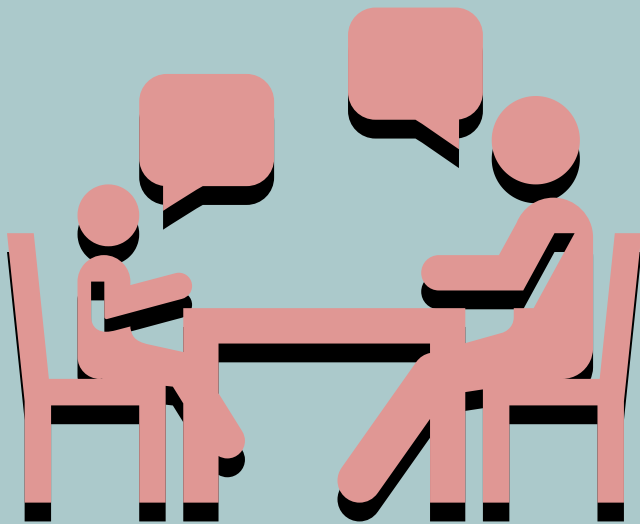


## What is it?<sup>1</sup>

- School mental health screening is defined as the use of a systematic tool or process to identify the strengths and needs of ALL students.
- It is used to identify students who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing social, emotional, and/or behavioral difficulties.
- Using screening as an early identification strategy detects the onset of challenges early so that they can be addressed before they escalate.
- Screening measures can also ask students about their well-being, positive mental health, life satisfaction, school belonging, social determinants, and adverse early life experiences.



**SCREEN**



**INTERVENE**

## Why Screen?<sup>1</sup>

- Can help promote comprehensive school mental health strategies to provide the appropriate supports for ALL students.
- Mental health screening is a proactive approach to gathering valuable information for planning and implementing prevention and early intervention strategies before problems develop or worsen.
- It identifies concerns specific to certain grades and classrooms.
- Identifies students with the highest well-being and those at risk for mental illness or harm to self or others.
- Improves access to mental health support.

## Screening Tools<sup>2</sup>

- Behavior and Emotional Screening System (BESS)
- Behavior Intervention Monitoring Assessment System (BIMAS)
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)



**REFER**

<sup>1</sup> National Center for School Mental Health. (2020). *School mental health quality guide: Screening*. University of Maryland School of Medicine. Retrieved October 16, 2021, from <https://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/media/SOM/Microsites/NCSMH/Documents/Quality-Guides/Screening-1.27.20.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Jenkins, L. N., Demaray, M. K., Wren, N. S., Secord, S. M., Lyell, K. M., Magers, A. M., Setmeyer, A. J., Rodelo, C., Newcomb-McNeal, E., & Tennant, J. (2014). A critical review of five commonly used social-emotional and behavioral screeners for elementary or secondary schools. *Contemporary School Psychology, 18*(4), 241–254. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-014-0026-6>



# Progress Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

Progress monitoring is when teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, and other school staff use various tools to track students' performance and goals.

Progress monitoring tools are used at each tier level to see if students are responding to the implemented interventions, supports, and strategies and if any changes are needed.



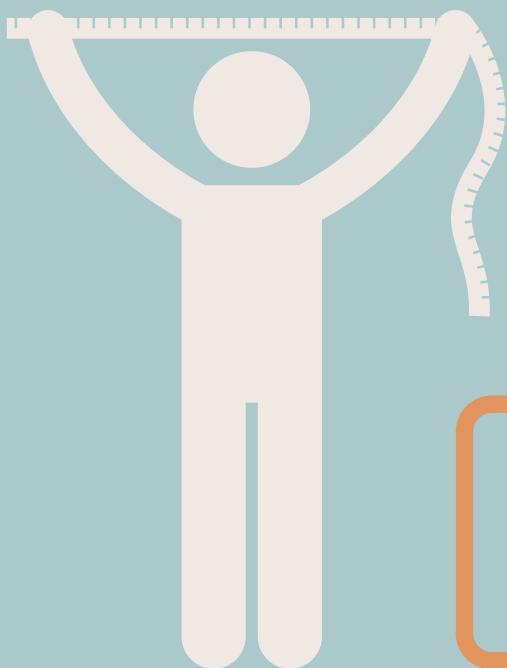
## Progress Monitoring Tools<sup>2</sup>

- Rating Scales
- (Behavior and Emotional Screening System, Brief Progress Monitor)
- Scaling Questions (“on a scale from 1 to 10, how do you...”)
- Student’s Records (attendance, discipline, test scores)
- Student’s Work (homework, schoolwork)

<sup>1</sup> Dexter, D.D., & Hughes C. (n.d.). *Progress monitoring within a response-to-intervention model*. RTI Action Network. <http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/research/progress-monitoring-within-a-rti-model>

<sup>2</sup> McGill R., Kennedy K.S., & Busse R.T. (2016). Data-based decision making in school counseling: Utilizing multiple single case indicators to evaluate interventions. *The Practitioner Scholar: Journal of Counseling and Professional Psychology*, 5(1), 104-12. <http://www.thepractitionerscholar.com/article/view/15972/10380>

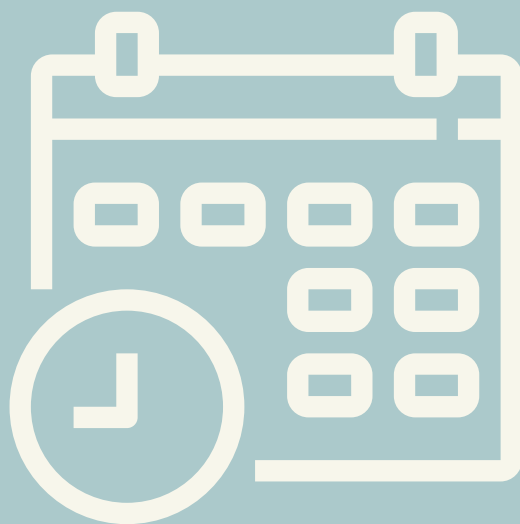
# Questions parents can ask about progress monitoring<sup>1</sup>



**What are my child's goals and how will they be measured?**

**How often will my child's progress be measured?**

**When can I expect progress reports for my child?**



**What can I do to help keep track of my child's progress?**

# Who Can Help At My Child's School?

## School Counselor<sup>1, 2, 3, 4</sup>

- Expert in supporting academic achievement, career planning, college planning, and the social-emotional needs of all students
- Screen for mental health symptoms and behaviors
- Provides direct services (e.g., short-term group or individual counseling, crisis intervention, and social-emotional curriculum) and indirect services (e.g., referrals to outside providers for long-term counseling and consultation)



## School Psychologist<sup>1, 3, 4, 5</sup>

- Expert in mental health, learning, special education services, and behavior
- Knowledgeable in mental health supports; behavioral and academic interventions; crisis prevention and intervention
- Provides comprehensive assessments for diverse learners; consults with teachers, administrators, and families to create effective learning solutions; short-term counseling and mental health resources for families

## School Social Worker<sup>1, 3, 4</sup>

- Expert in individual, familial, school, and community factors that affect a student's mental health and learning
- Knowledgeable in cultural and community norms of students and families; crisis intervention; community services; and mental health initiatives
- Provides access to community resources; case management; and outside provider referrals



1 Aragon, J., Arellano, L. M., Brazzel, P., Cárdenas, J., Catalde, T., Cottrill, M., Giambona, M., Manos, S., McMillian, K., Parsons, J., Peevy, J., Pianta, R., Schroeder, M., Sopp, T. J., Strear, M., Thomas, S., Topalian, J., Uresti, A., Weglarz, L., Whitson, L., & Zavalza, O. (2020). Fostering the whole child: A guide to school-based mental health professionals. *California Association of School Psychologists*. <https://casonline.org/pdfs/publications/SBMHP%20Guide%20Book%20v4.pdf>

2 Christian, D. D., & Brown, C. L. (2018). Recommendations for the role and responsibilities of school-based mental health counselors. *Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy and Evaluation*, 1(1), 26-39. <https://doi.org/10.25774/nmfk-y245>

3 California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (2020). *Pupil personnel services credential for individuals prepared in California*. [https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl606c.pdf?sfvrsn=48a2868d\\_0](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl606c.pdf?sfvrsn=48a2868d_0)

4 Cowan, K. C., Vaillancourt, K., Rossen, E., & Pollitt, K. (2013). A framework for safe and successful schools [Brief]. National Association of School Psychologists. <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>

5 National Association of School Psychologists. (n.d.). *Who are school psychologists?* <https://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/who-are-school-psychologists>

# Who Can Help At My Child's School?



## School Nurse<sup>1,2</sup>

- Health expert in child development, nutrition, first-aid, and health education
- Collaborates with medical providers, students, and families to address the health needs of students and coordinate care for students
- Provides direct care to students, such as giving medication; vision and hearing screening; health education; and access to health insurance

## Principal and Vice Principal<sup>3</sup>

- School administrators with expertise in school and district policy; and supporting the development of students, staff, and positive school climate and culture
- Knowledgeable in leadership; prevention and intervention activities to address needs, such as bullying; community partnerships; and educational programs
- Provides staff training and support; collaborate with the school district for mental health resources; and crisis response plans



## Teacher<sup>4</sup>

- Experts in supporting all students in learning, subject matter, and creating effective and supportive learning environments
- Knowledgeable in the academic curriculum; lesson plans; teaching strategies and tools to address diverse learners' needs; and students' backgrounds
- Provides social-emotional curriculum and use data to inform student progress

\*This is a general overview of the roles of each individual in the school. These roles may differ at each school.

1 Buswell, S. A., Chau, E., Combe, L. G., Cowan, T., Fekaris, N., Hinkson, E., Lechtenberg, J. (2018). *The role of the 21st century school nurse*. National Association of School Nurses. <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-role>

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). *School nurses help keep students healthy*. [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/features/school\\_nurse.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/features/school_nurse.htm)

3 Sutchter, L., Podolsky, A., Kini, T., & Shields, P. M. (2018). *Learning to lead: Understanding California's Learning System for School and District Leaders [Technical Report]*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED594687.pdf>

4 California Department of Education & Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2012). *Continuum of teaching practice*. [https://www.sdcoe.net/human-resources/teacher-prep/Documents/CSTP\\_Continuum\\_of\\_Teaching\\_Practice.pdf](https://www.sdcoe.net/human-resources/teacher-prep/Documents/CSTP_Continuum_of_Teaching_Practice.pdf)

# Legal and Ethical Information

Your child does not have to face their mental health struggles alone. Schools can help! There are guidelines in place to keep you and your family's information safe.

## Confidentiality<sup>1</sup>

School-based mental health professionals can discuss broad summaries of your child's progress in counseling.

Some topics that must remain confidential include:

- Sexual health (Birth control, STD, etc.)
- Drug use (substance abuse, can refer them out)
- Sexual Identity



Confidentiality means that whatever is talked about during counseling, stays in counseling unless: Your child is **hurting themselves, someone is hurting them** or **they are planning to hurt others** or if they give permission to tell a trusted adult.

## Informed Consent<sup>2</sup>

Schools should provide you the opportunity to provide informed consent about the goals, duration, techniques, and risks of your child's intended counseling program. In some cases, your informed consent will be required such as in the case your child receiving ongoing counseling services at school.



## What kind of information should be involved in informed consent?<sup>2</sup>

Informed consent will include:

- The reason counseling services was recommended
- Counseling goals
- Frequency and duration of counseling services
- The format, technique and method proposed
- Anticipated benefits
- Possible risks
- Alternative to the services proposed



# Legal and Ethical Information

If you have a fear that the information your child shares during counseling will be shared, no need to worry, there are laws that protect your family's privacy. However, there are special circumstances where information has to be shared.



## Mandated Reporting<sup>1</sup>

There is a legal obligation to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to authorities.

We are not trying to get your child in trouble. The purpose of reporting is to keep your child safe and to get whatever help is needed.

## HIPAA<sup>2</sup>

**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996:** The HIPAA Rules are designed to protect the privacy of your child's identifiable health information. Specific health information will not be shared without a completed Release of Information.



## FERPA<sup>3</sup>

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**  
This protects your child's educational records (Example: grades, attendance, address, birthday)  
You and relevant educational stakeholders have access to your child's education records.



<sup>1</sup> Plotts, C. A., & Lasser, J. (2020). School psychologist as counselor: A practitioner's handbook. National Association of School Psychologists.

<sup>2</sup> Health information Privacy. (2020, June 4). *Information Related to Mental and Behavioral Health, including Opioid Overdose*. <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/mental-health/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> Tarasevich, S. L., Fertman, C. I., Delgado, M. M. (2013). Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Health. United States: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

# School Policy

## Why is School Policy on Mental Health Important?<sup>1</sup>

- 50% of all mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24.
- Inadequately addressed mental illness can lead to dropout, substance use, arrest, incarceration and early death.
- School-based mental health services reduce barriers to youth and families getting needed treatment and supports

## School Policy in California<sup>2</sup>

- In 2004, the California Mental Health Services Act was passed to transform the public mental health system for all students in California
- This act is centered around student-centered mental health systems, cultural competence, community support, service integration and a focus on wellness

## Effective School Policy<sup>3</sup>

An effective school policy on mental health should include:

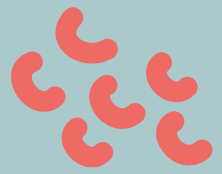
- Policy Statement
- The Policy Scope
- The Policy Aims
- Key Staff Members
- Teaching about Mental Health
- Support at School
- Policy Review
- Identifying Needs and Warning Signs
- Confidentiality
- Whole School Approach
- Working with Parents
- Supporting Peers
- Training

<sup>1</sup> Collier, E. (2020). *School mental health policy template*. Retrieved October 10, 2021, from <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/school-mentalhealth-policy/>

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Education. (2020, February 12). *Mental health services act*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/cefmentalhealth.asp>

<sup>3</sup> NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness. (n.d.). *Mental health in schools*. Retrieved October 14, 2021, from <https://www.nami.org/Advocacy/Policy-Priorities/Improving-Health/Mental-Health-in-Schools>.

# Frequently Asked Questions



How is the school's mental health team different from community-based therapy?<sup>1</sup>

The school's mental health team does not provide long term mental health therapy at school. The team can collaborate with parents and community agencies to support the student.



Should I speak with a school counselor, school psychologist or school social worker about concerns for my child?

The school mental health team works together to best support your student. We recommend starting with your school counselor, who can provide additional necessary referrals and resources.

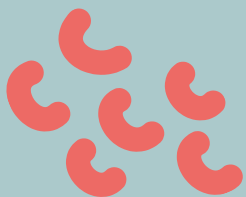


What is the difference between a school psychologist and child clinical psychologist?<sup>2</sup>

The term "child psychologist" refers to doctoral-level clinical psychologists who specialize in children. "School psychologists" bridge psychology and education to address school-related issues, including those that concern children, teachers, families, and schools.

How do I connect with the school counselor or school psychologist?

- Search the school website
- Refer to school's directory for staff and faculty
- Contact school via phone or email



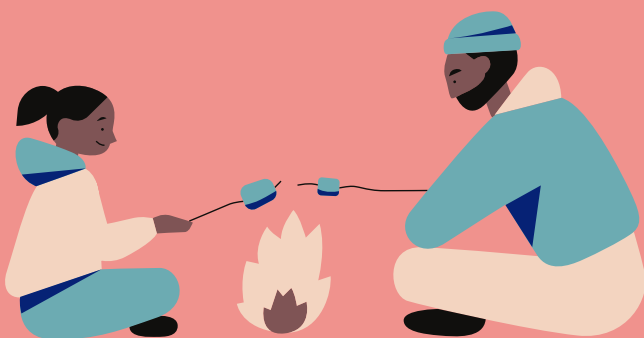
<sup>1</sup> American School Counselor Association (n.d.). *The school counselor and student mental health*. Retrieved October 23, 2021, from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-Student-Mental-Health>

<sup>2</sup> National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). (n.d.). *A career in school psychology: Frequently asked questions*. Retrieved October 26, 2021, from <https://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/selecting-a-graduate-program/a-career-in-school-psychology-frequently-asked-questions>





# Practicing Positive Psychology and Wellness with your Child



# Positive Psychology?

## What is it?<sup>1</sup>

Positive psychology is the scientific study of positive life experiences and personal traits. In this approach, emphasis is placed on the “good” things that define human experience.



Positive psychology explores:

- Positive states of being (e.g. joy)
- Personal traits (e.g. talents)
- Positive relationships (e.g. friendships)
- Positive institutions (e.g. school)



## What does it focus on?<sup>1</sup>

Rather than focusing on the things in someone’s life that are going wrong or need fixing, it concerns itself with:

- What strengths does this person have?
- What is going right in this person’s life?

## Why is it important?

This positive mindset leads to feelings of optimism, which can greatly improve one's outlook on life. This can lead to a more meaningful and fulfilling life for your child.

# Practicing Positive Psychology

---

1

## Gratitude Journal:<sup>1</sup>

Have your child write down 3 things or people they are grateful for each night



2

## Practicing Kindness:<sup>2</sup>

Brainstorm with your child ways to express kindness

Encourage your student to do one kind act each day this week



3

## Best Future Self:<sup>2</sup>

Encourage your child to write down how they imagine themselves in the future

- What would they be doing?
- How would they be spending their time?
- What would they be feeling?
- What would people notice about them?



<sup>1</sup> Kennon, M. S. & Lyubomirsky, S. (2006). How to increase and sustain positive emotion: The effects of expressing gratitude and visualizing best possible selves, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1(2), 73–82. DOI: 10.1080/17439760500510676

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, K. E., & Bardi, A. (2010). Acts of kindness and acts of novelty affect life satisfaction. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 150(3), 235–237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224540903365554>

# Wellness<sup>1</sup>

## What is it?

Wellness is the act of intentionally practicing healthy habits to attain better physical and mental health outcomes so that instead of just surviving, you're thriving.

Wellness is different from health. The difference between health and wellness is that health is the goal while wellness is the active process of achieving it. You cannot have health without first achieving wellness.



Educating your child about wellness practices creates positive behavior changes. Developing community and establishing a sense of belonging are important in encouraging student educational success.

## Why is it important?

Wellness practices have been shown to:

- Help you live longer
- Prevent illness
- Aid recovery



# Practicing Wellness<sup>1</sup>

1

## Physical Wellness:

- Involve your child in sports/extracurricular activities
- Practice healthy nutrition habits at dinner time



2

## Mental Wellness

- Encourage your child to read
- Practice mindfulness with your child (see video below)

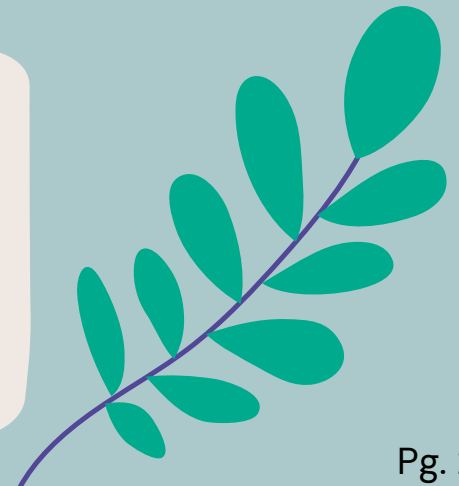


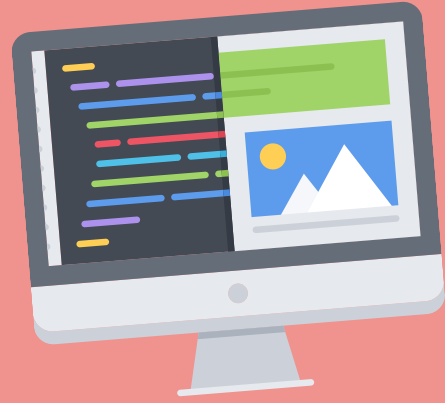
Link: [Guided meditation for high school students](#)

3

## Social/Emotional Wellness:

- Spend time in outdoor spaces as a family
- Encourage your child to spend time with friends outside of school





# **Mental Health Checklists, Tools, & Resources**



# Mental Health Checklist



Family support is crucial for your child's mental health. Below are ways for you, as a parent, to "check in" with your child.

## *Everyday I will:*

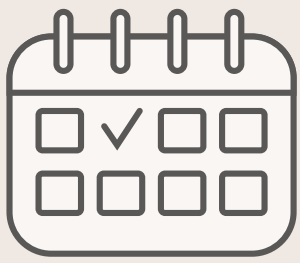
- Make sure my child is staying active  .....
- Ensure my child is getting adequate sleep  .....
- Make sure my child is eating healthy meals
- Do a brief check-in with my child after school

## *Once a week I will:*

- Plan a family activity, like a hike or museum  .....
- Set weekly goals with my child  .....
- Discuss with my child the highs and lows of the week, during dinner

## *Once a month I will:*

- As a family, take a 1-day social media break  .....
- Volunteer as a family  .....
- Host a monthly celebration dinner to celebrate victories of the month



# Monthly Family Activities

Below are ideas that you can do with your family! Feel free to use these suggestions or come up with some of your own.

August

Get outdoors



September

Attend a sporting event



October

Family game night



November

Movie night



December

Volunteer as a family



January

Cook a meal together



February

Meditate together



March

Trivia night



April

Plant something



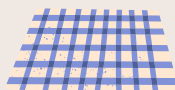
May

Bowling night



June

Family picnic/BBQ

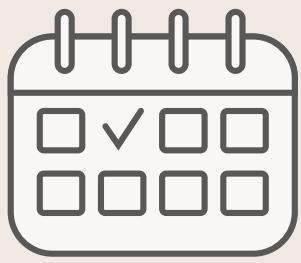


July

Go to the beach







# Monthly Family Activities

Fill out activities that you and your family can enjoy together ! Make sure to ask all family members for ideas.

August

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September

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October

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November

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December

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January

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February

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March

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April

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May

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June

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July

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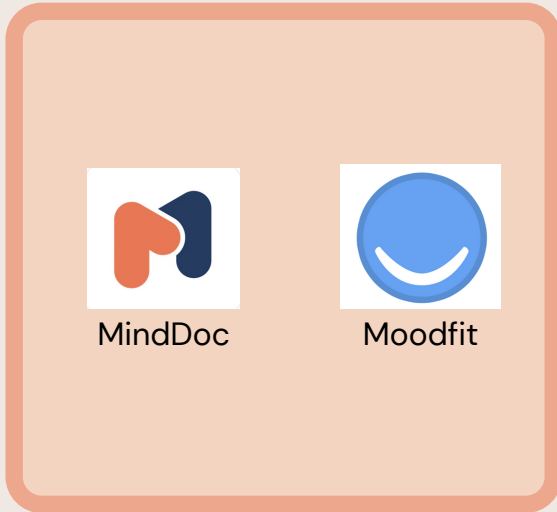
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# Tools & Resources

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## Mental Health and Wellness Apps



### Mental health & Mood Tracker

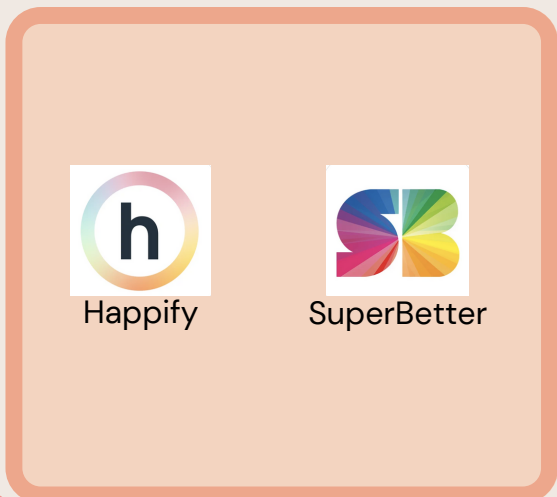
MindDoc and Moodfit are phone apps that track mood, mental health wellness, and habits.

They also provide some tips to increase mental-health well-being. They are great tools for informal at-home progress monitoring.



### Mindfulness Exercise & Meditation

Shine, Mindshift-CBT, UCLA Mindful, and Headspace provide various mindfulness exercises (deep breathing, imagery) and guided meditation. The activities are used to address anxiety, stress, and worry. Shine offers guided meditation specifically for BIPOC. Mindshift provides guided meditation that addresses anxiety. They are great apps to use to practice mindfulness with your child.



### Wellness Games

Happify uses the science behind cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness, and positive psychology to develop games and activities. The creators designed the app to help individuals overcome stress, worry, and life challenges. SuperBetter has a set of activities and games to help individuals build resilience.



# Tools & Resources

## Mood Enhancing Prescription

The Mood Enhancing Prescription is a useful and time-efficient tool that can be used to help your child identify and plan their daily activities. This outline can be developed collaboratively to clearly specify self-regulatory activities your child should pursue.

Other significant persons in your child’s life may also be able to play a role (e.g. family member, teacher, school counselor, coach, neighbor, etc.). It is a good idea to ask your child about who else can help out.



There are many things you can do to help your mood. Sometimes, these activities by themselves will make you feel better. Some additional help (such as psychotherapy or medications) may be needed. This is your prescription for what you can do to help your mood. For each activity, write in your plan (include what you will do, how often, and with whom).

ACTIVITY	PLAN
EXERCISE	
EATING WELL	
SLEEPING WELL	
PROBLEM-SOLVING	
BEING SOCIALLY ACTIVE	

# Resources



## National Resources



**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**  
**[nami.org](http://nami.org)**

Educational mental health resources for parents and more.

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

**[samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)**

Find treatment facilities and programs, mental health [data](#), and more.

**National Federation of Families**  
**[ffcmh.org](http://ffcmh.org)**

Advocacy opportunities and mental health resources for parents.

## Orange County Resources



**NAMI Orange County**  
**[namioc.org](http://namioc.org)**

Provides family support groups, no-cost education programs for family members of youth experiencing mental health challenges, family friendly events, and more.

**Western Youth Services**  
**[westernyouthservices.org](http://westernyouthservices.org)**

Provides school-based services, parenting classes, educational workshops, family therapy, Medi-Cal outpatient clinic services, evaluation, and more.

**Child Guidance Center**  
**[childguidancecenteroc.org](http://childguidancecenteroc.org)**

Provides Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the Our Strong Families Strong Children Program (for military families), and more.

**Casa de la Familia**  
**[casadelafamilia.org](http://casadelafamilia.org)**

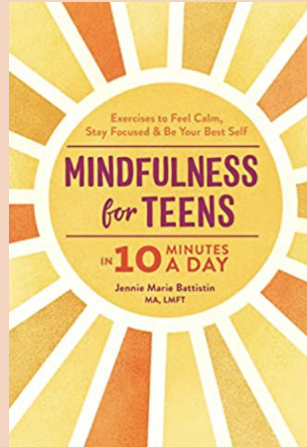
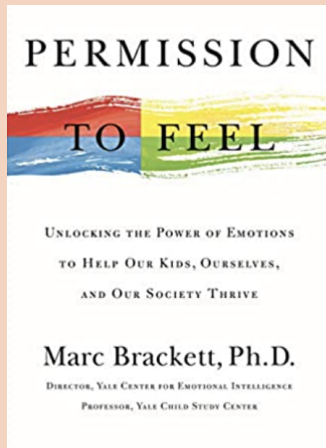
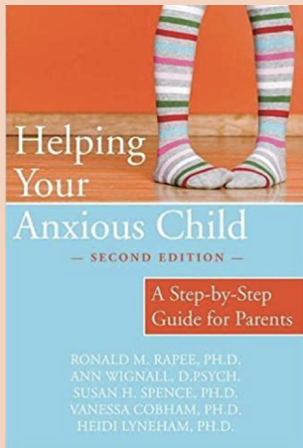
Provides individual counseling, family counseling, group counseling, support groups, advocacy, weekly youth workshops, crisis intervention, and more.

**Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance**  
**[ocapica.org](http://ocapica.org)**

Provides wraparound services, short-term mental health counseling for families, Parent Child Interaction Therapy, and more.

# Resources

## Books & Reading Materials



1. *Helping your Anxious Child* – Ronald M. Rapee
2. *Permission to Feel* – Marc Brackett
3. *Mindfulness for Teens* – Jennie Marie Battistin

**Parent Handbook on  
Childhood and Teen  
Depression**  
[erikaslighthouse.org](http://erikaslighthouse.org)

**COVID-19 Resources for  
Families**  
[ffcmh.org/covid-19-resources-  
for-parents](http://ffcmh.org/covid-19-resources-for-parents)



## Helplines and Hotlines

### Orange County Crisis Prevention Hotline

**877-727-4747**

- 24/7 multilingual hotline
- Can also provide help with survivor grief or loss

### Human Options Hotline

**949-737-5242 or 877-854-3594**

- 24/7 bilingual hotline
- Shelter for battered women and their children

### National Suicide Prevention Hotline

**1-800-273-8255**

- 24/7 hotline
- For individuals in suicidal crisis or emotional distress

### Call "211" Orange County

Receive free information about community based programs including:

- Food security
- Homeless shelters
- Legal services
- Transportation
- Connections with Family Resource Centers

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National

**Helpline: 1-800-662-4357**

- Free 24/7 helpline for information and treatment referrals for families experiencing mental health and substance abuse disorders
- Available in English and Spanish

This Mental Health in Schools Toolkit was produced by Chapman University M.A. in School Counseling and Ed.S. in School Psychology graduate students for use in schools and by the community. It is not for commercial sale, in part or in whole.

For more information about Chapman University's M.A. in School Counseling and Ed.S. in School Psychology programs, visit [Chapman.edu/education](https://www.chapman.edu/education).



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