

MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT

For Children

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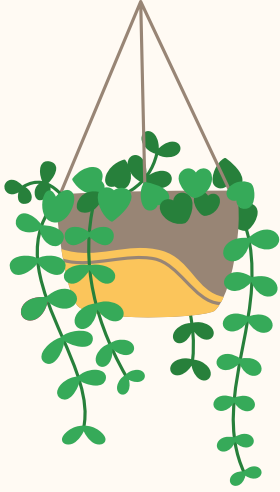


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HOW TO USE THIS TOOL KIT!

This tool kit consists of informational pages designed to be presented to young children.

However...

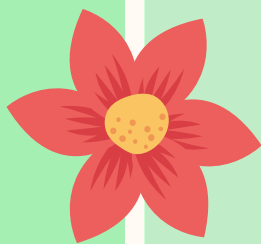
We realize mental health is a sensitive topic that should be addressed by trusted adults. So, we have included "Facilitator Guides" that provide more detailed and specific information that will be helpful in engaging young kids in conversations about mental health!

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?



*emotional,
psychological &
social
well-being*

WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT?



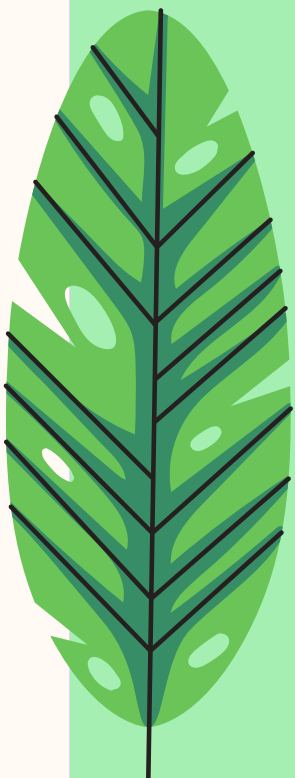
Our mental health
can affect
the way we...

think

feel

&

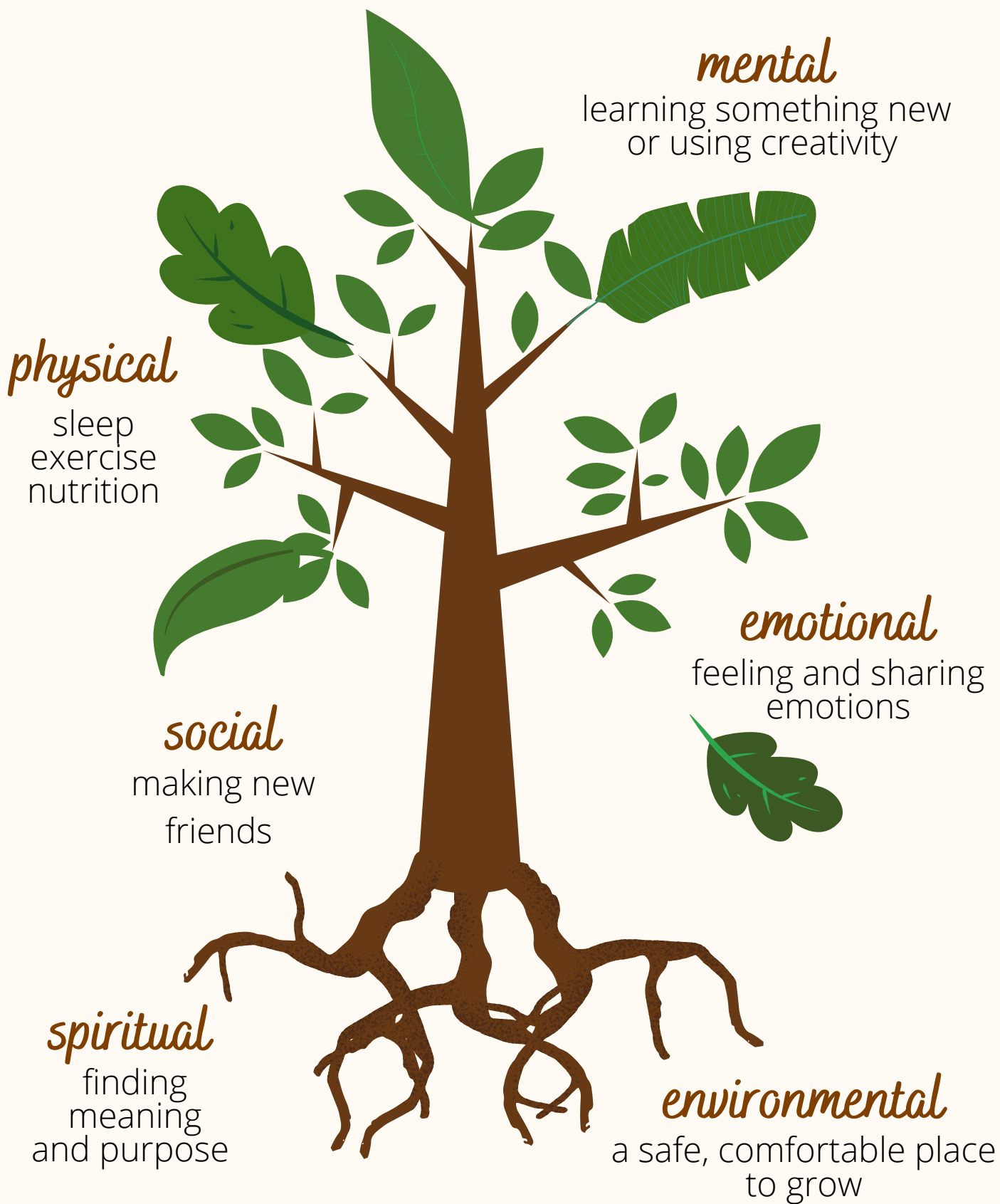
act



*Many things
can affect our
mental health,
including...*

- the way our brains work
- the events that take place while we are growing up
- our family history

WHAT DOES *Wellness* LOOK LIKE



*One out of six plants needs a little extra water,
sunshine, and soil to grow!!!*



WHAT YOU NEED TO GROW



sunlight

positivity:
seeing the
cup half full.

rainwater

having fun/
relaxing: playing a
game, drawing,
reading

soil

family and friends you can talk to
when you need help

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT



What makes me happy?



Who is there if I need help?



What am I good at?



What helps me do my best?

STOP
&
smell
the roses



Facilitator Guide: **Mental Health**

Why is Addressing Mental Health Important?

As stated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in six children aged two to eight has a diagnosis of some form of a mental health disorder. This number increases as children age and then heightens in adolescence (2019). Mental illness can alter a child's capacity to learn and develop in a healthy manner, both academically and socially. Due to the potential adverse outcomes associated with mental illness, schools need to implement evidence-based prevention and intervention programs.

Factors that influence positive mental health:

- Adequate sleep, nutrition, and physical activity
- High sense of self-worth, self-esteem, & confidence
- Loving relationships
- Effective coping skills
- Participation in enjoyable activities

Factors associated with poor mental health:

- Low academic performance
- Frequent outbursts or behavior challenges
- Somatic symptoms (i.e., headaches, stomach aches)
- Chronic absenteeism
- Sad or depressed mood

Facilitator Guide: **Positive Psychology**

Positive psychology is the continued development of positive emotions, experiences, and character traits. It values understanding a student's strengths and how it leads to living a healthier and happier life. It is more than just being "not depressed", it is about being vibrant and optimistic. To incorporate positive psychology into the life of the student, empower that student to pursue activities that lead to a holistically healthy lifestyle.

Conversation Guide Talking Points:

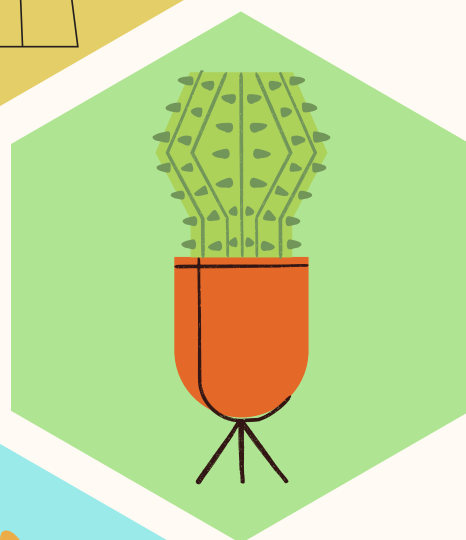
- Activities that the student enjoys doing.
- Student's strengths (be prepared to give student your perspective).
- Factors that contribute to student's happiness.
- Contributing characteristics to well-being: capacity to love, courage, interpersonal skills, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, talent, and wisdom.

Check for Comprehension

- Student does _____ for fun.
- Student thinks that their strength is _____.
- Which contributing characteristics does the student possess?
- Facilitators perspective of student's strengths are _____.



**WE ALL
GROW
DIFFERENTLY**



All are welcome here.

Culture:

It's a set of values, behaviors, or traditions that are passed down from generation to generation.

Culture includes many things...



Food



Language



Music



Beliefs &
Values



Knowledge
& Stories

and much more!



We all share similar tools such as water, food, shelter, love, and support that help us grow. Sometimes our different life experiences, cultures, identities, and traditions lead us to develop unique tools that help us grow strong!

Can you think of a unique tool that has helped you, your family, or friends?

We all grow differently!



Name:

Date:



My Favorite Tradition

Holidays celebrated in my culture

My favorite food to eat

Clothes worn in my culture

Languages my family and I speak



WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA?



Stigma: means someone is viewed negatively because of a particular characteristic, like having a mental health problem.

- Mental health stigma can make a person feel shame, fear, embarrassment, and blame.

Cultural Stigma: every culture has a different way of looking and describing mental health.

- Sometimes our culture makes it hard to talk openly about mental health.

TOGETHER WE CAN BREAK THE STIGMA!



STOP
&
smell
the roses



Facilitator Guide: **Culture & Diversity**

Why culture and diversity?

Each student's culture shapes their experiences and the way they view life. It is important to consider each student's culture when looking at mental health. Culture can include race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, and more. School counselors demonstrate cultural responsiveness by collaborating with stakeholders to create a school and community climate that embraces cultural diversity and helps to promote the academic, career and social/emotional success for all students." American School Counselor Association (2014).

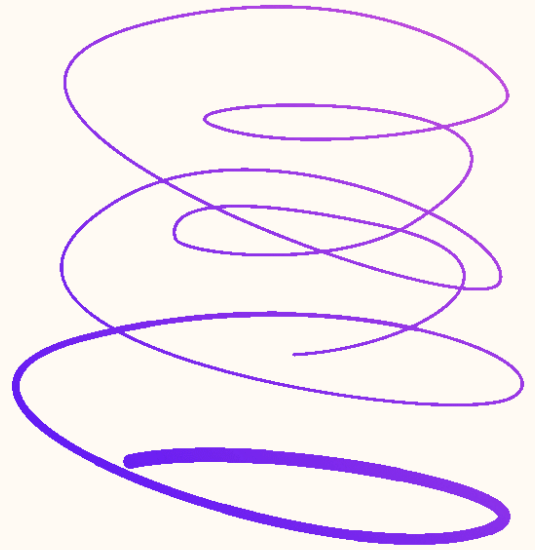
What tools are available for me?

Conversation Talking Point Guide:

- Get to know each child's family.
- Encourage the family and extended family members of the child to be involved and participate in programs and activities.
- Help children and families to meet and socialize with other families.
- Encourage families to talk about cultural diversity with their children.
- Help children understand how mental health stigma can affect others.
- Ask children and families to share how their culture defines mental health.
- Discuss ways to "break" mental health stigma with children and families.
- Facilitator should be aware of their own biases and stigmatizations.

**Reference "We All Grow Differently" worksheet for student comprehension check*

Sometimes our brain and bodies feels like this

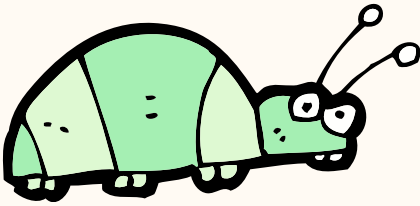


Even though we want to feel more like this



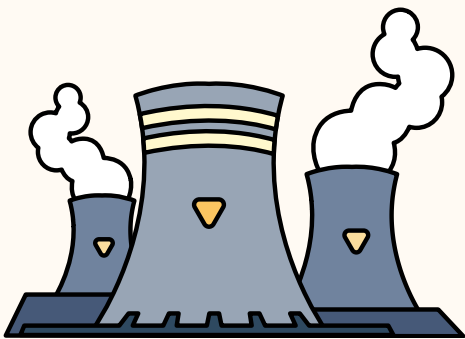
RISK FACTORS

what gets in the way of growth



Biophysical

family history of mental health,
poor nutrition, doing drugs



Psychological

seeing the glass half empty, bad
experiences, low self esteem



Social

being bullied, being hurt by friends
or family, no one to talk to when
you need help



Spiritual

feeling like you're bad and can
never be good, feeling not good
enough

RED FLAGS

what to look for



When we feel good on our way out the door, we feel good at school, too!



Missing school sometimes is normal, but students who need extra support with their mental health miss around **15 days** per year.



Let's brainstorm some ways to get everyone to school!

TOOLS TO WEED OUT RISK FACTORS & RED FLAGS

Water our Relationship Skills

- Resolving Conflicts
- Listening Actively
- Cooperating
- Teamwork
- Communicating Effectively

If we need a little extra water and sunshine, we can go to our trusted peer, the Coping Cat, for extra tools to feel safe, make friends, and do well in school!

Plant our Self-Awareness

- Identifying Emotions
- Expressing Emotions
- Breathing Exercises
- Self-Confidence
- Managing Emotions

Grow in our Decision Making Skills

- Identifying Problems
- Solving Problems
- Setting Goals
- Leadership Skills

WHAT'S A DIAGNOSIS?

When doctors tell their patients the name of the disease or disorder that they have, we call this a diagnosis!

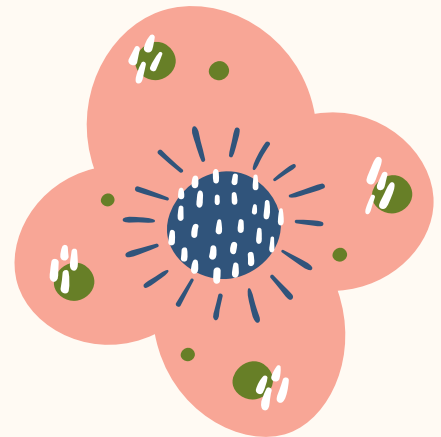


Can **YOU** think of any examples of an illness or disease that a doctor might *diagnose*?

-
-
-
-

Now let's think of some ways to make our classmates with diagnoses feel welcome!

-
-
-
-



STOP
&
smell
the roses



Facilitator Guide: **Red Flags & Risk Factors**

What are Red Flags and Risk Factors

Children who are at risk may complain about feeling sick, refuse to go to school, cling to a caregiver, or worry excessively that a parent may die. Older children may sulk, get into trouble, seem negative or grouchy, or feel misunderstood. Youth are more likely to respond to treatment if they receive it early in the course of their illness.

What should I watch for?

- Persistent anger, irritability & agitation
- Feelings of sadness and hopelessness
- Anxiety and fearfulness
- Physical complaints
- Withdrawal from family & friends
- Loss of interest/pleasure in activities
- Extreme sensitivity to rejection & failure
- Low self-esteem, guilt, feelings of worthlessness
- Trouble concentrating & making decisions
- Loss of energy/increased fatigue, Insomnia or oversleeping
- Changes in appetite & weight

When should I worry?

- Multiple symptoms appear over a long period of time
- Symptoms interfere with the child's ability to function:
 - refusal to go to school, decline in personal hygiene, grades dropping, lack of friends, troubled relationships, running away, self injury, substance abuse, talks about wanting to die/thoughts of suicide

Facilitator Guide: Common Diagnoses & Statistics

What are you likely to see?

ADHD (6.8%),
Behavioral and Conduct Problems (3.8%)
Anxiety (3%),
Depression (2.1%),
Autism Spectrum Disorder (1.1%),
Tourette Syndrome (0.2%)

How Can I Support These Students?

Accommodations

Understand:

- **15.4%** of children in elementary school struggle with a mental health disorder
- Most prevalent disorder is **ADHD**- 52% of these students also have a diagnosable conduct/behavioral disorder
- **9 out of 10** students with ADHD receive counseling support or accommodations at school
- **75%** of students who experienced **trauma** have a diagnosable mental health disorder
- Students with a mental health disorder miss, on average, **10.7-15 days of school each year**

Provide:

- lessons on **mindfulness** and deep breathing exercises
- a "**cozy corner**" space for students to calm down
- **stretch breaks** during long lessons
- **one-on-one** instruction for students who must leave the classroom to fulfill **IEP or 504 plan** activities

How Do I Explain a Diagnosis to my Students?

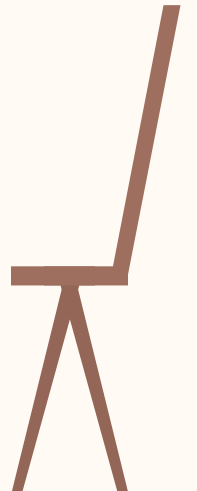
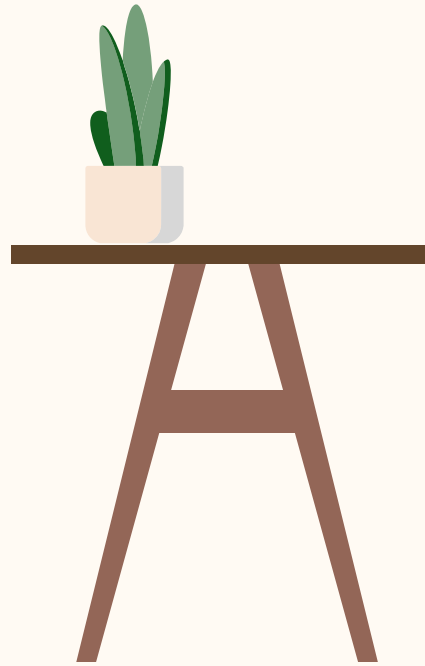
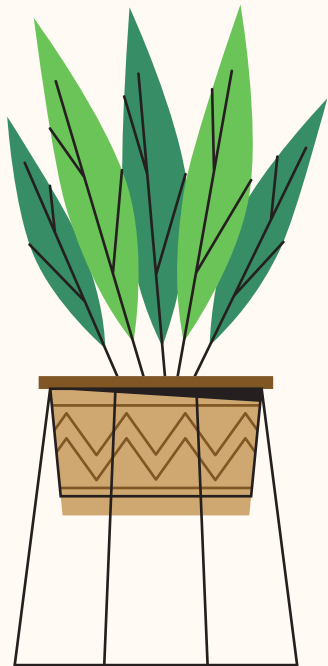
Start a Conversation:

- Provide a **simple definition**: "When doctors tell their patients the name of the disease or disorder that they have, we call this a diagnosis!"
- **Ask the students** if they know the name of any diseases or disorders
- **Explain** why it's important to **treat everyone equally**, even if they look, feel, or act different than the rest of us
- **Brainstorm** how we can make these students feel more **welcome** in the classroom

Involve Parents:

- **Ask parents** how comfortable they feel about their child sharing with classmates about their disorder
- Pitch it to parents as a way to encourage the **normalization of mental illness**

HOW YOUR SCHOOL CAN HELP





There are many adults at school who can help you grow!



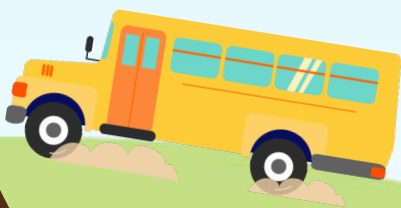
Who can help?



My **teachers** are
adults who can
always help if I am
not feeling my best
or if I am facing a
problem.



There are also other adults at my school who can help even if they are not my teacher. I just need to ask for help!



Help!



- Evaluates, tests, and creates programs to help you in school
- Creates goals with you and your parents



- Provides general first-aid
- Gives medicine to those who need it

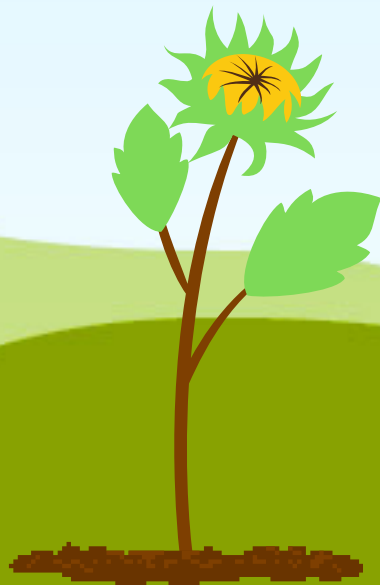


- In charge of students and faculty
- Provides resources for who to contact



- Supports you and your mental health
- Provides resources
- Helps you with academics and future planning

Asking for help does
not mean I CAN'T
grow on my own...



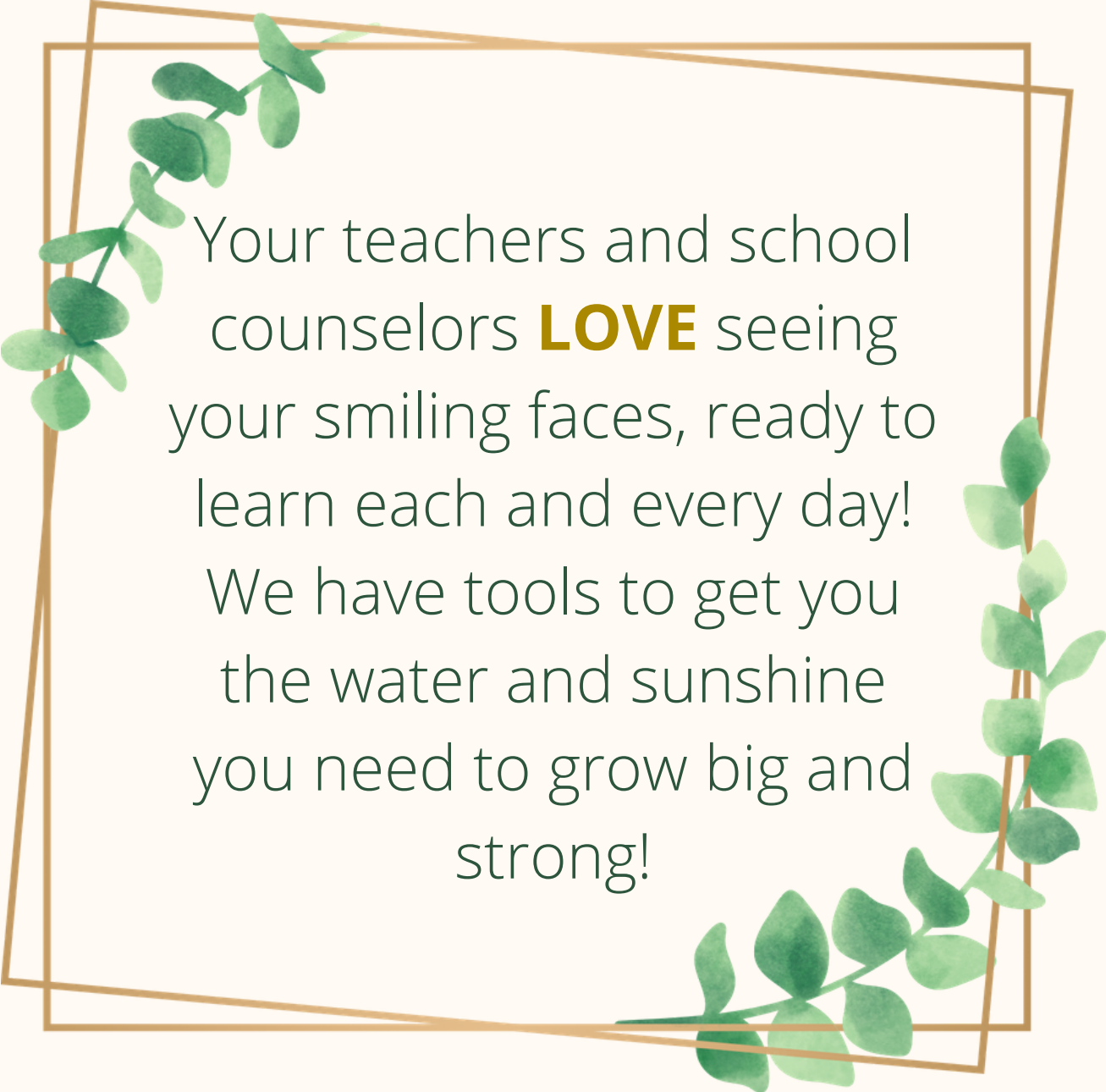
It just means I
am not alone!





SCHOOL MEMBERS

- 
- School Counselor
 - Trusted Teacher
 - School Nurse



Your teachers and school
counselors **LOVE** seeing
your smiling faces, ready to
learn each and every day!
We have tools to get you
the water and sunshine
you need to grow big and
strong!

YOUR SCHOOL IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

Tier 3

The students on this shelf are the ones that need extra water and sunshine! Your school counselors provide one-on-one sessions for these students and make sure they have everything they need to grow strong!

Tier 2

On this shelf, your school counselors work with smaller groups of students who need a little more support! We run mental health workshops, coordinate peer tutoring programs, and more!



Tier 1

EVERY student in the school is on this shelf! We try our best to reach every student by:

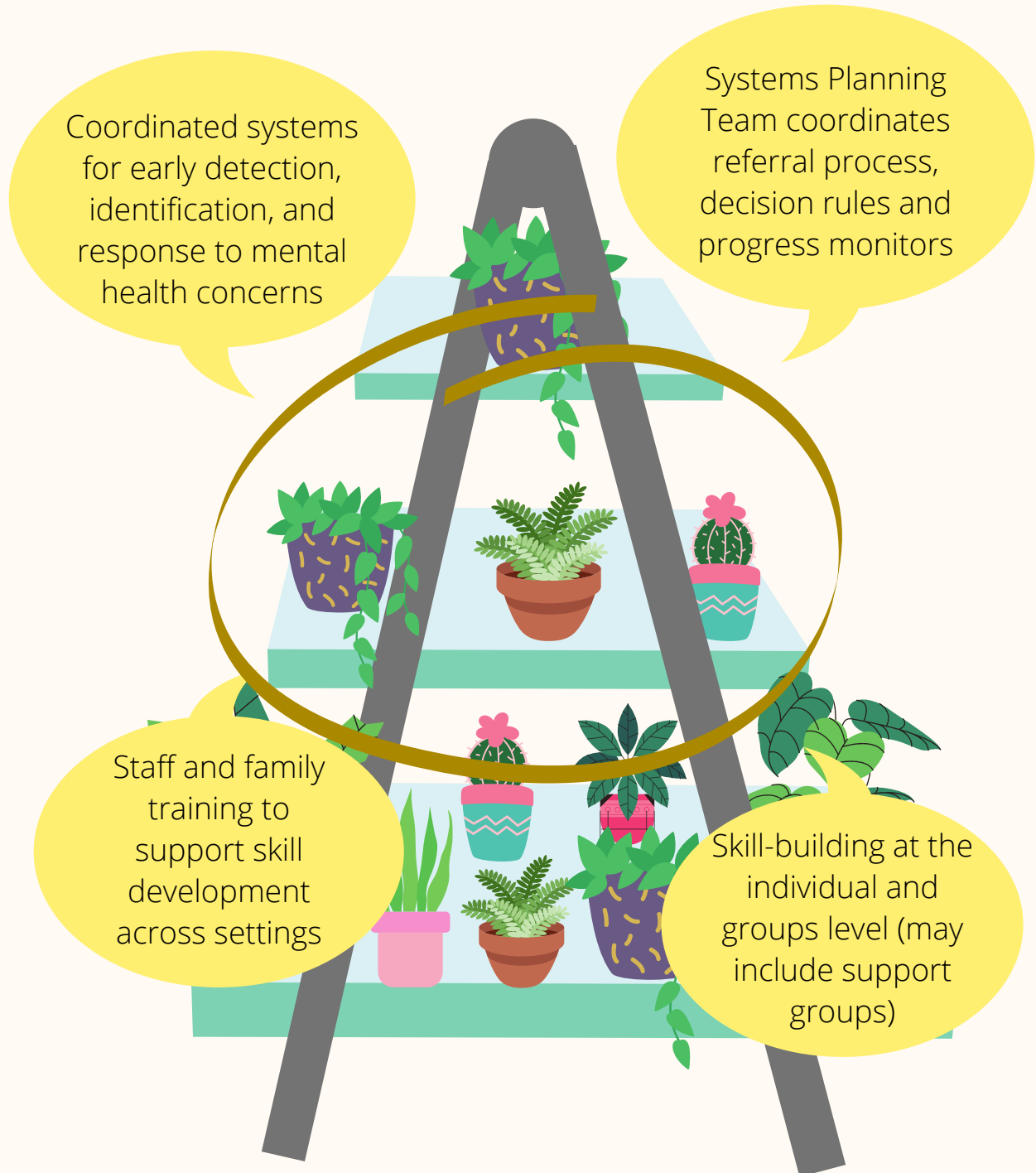
- Creating after-school clubs and programs
- Conducting workshops and assemblies for the whole school
- Holding grade-level meetings with your counselors

AND MORE!

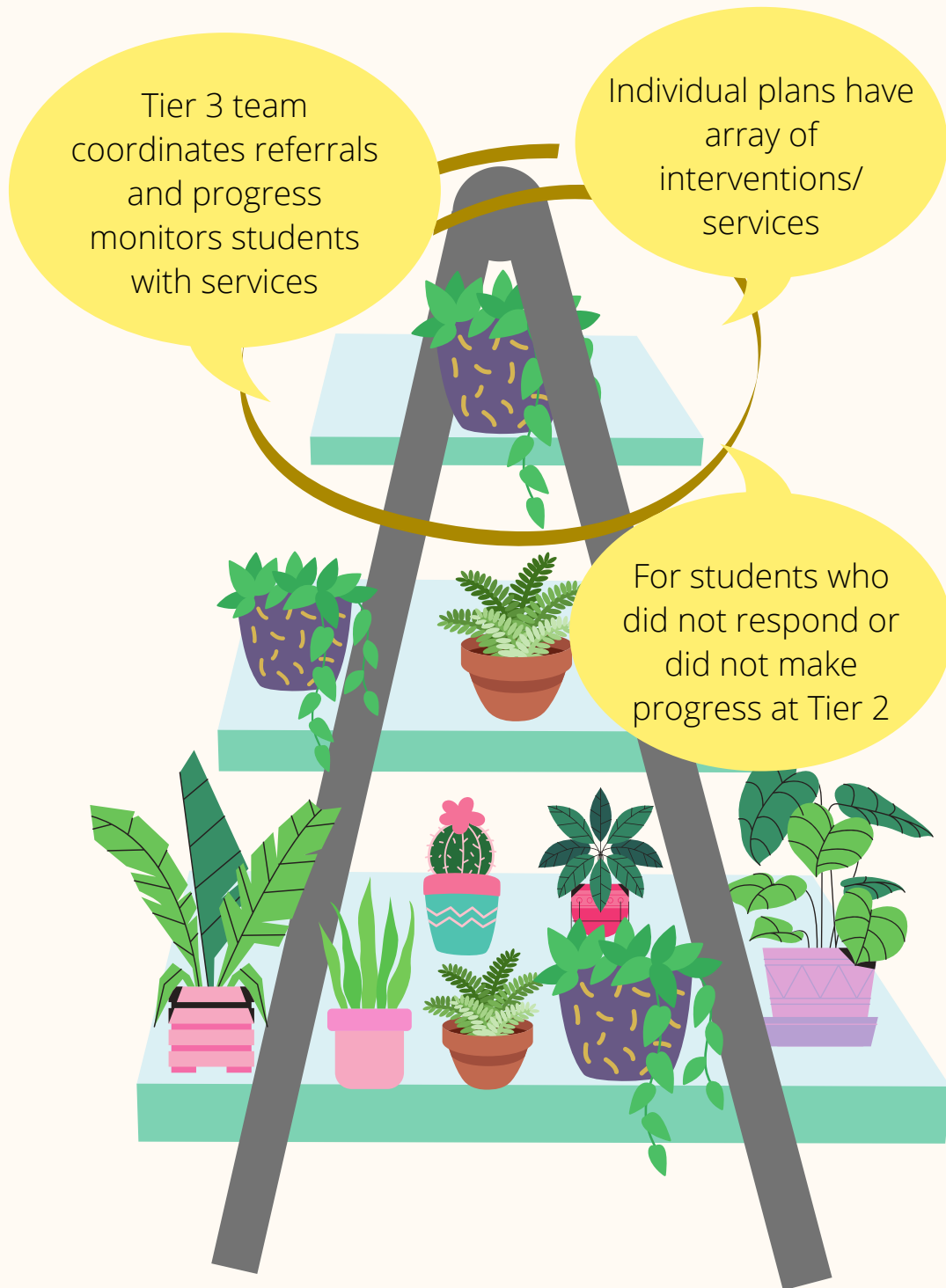
TIER 1: UNIVERSAL PREVENTION FOR ALL




TIER 2: EARLY INTERVENTION FOR SOME



TIER 3: INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR FEW



SCHOOL POLICY



Mental wellness is our top priority at school for you, your friends, teachers, and other staff. Together we can create a safe space by committing to our own happiness and spreading this onto those around us. We can do so by using this toolkit to blossom with extra water and sunlight. We will do our best in helping you understand your feelings and experiences comfortably. We will learn and grow more resilient in order for each one of us to be our best selves! As a community, we will continue to build strong friendships by watering others with confidence. Last but not least, we will celebrate one another for each growth spurt, big or small!

Asking for Help?

Here is important
information
to know

What is confidentiality?


When you are talking to a trusted adult like your teacher, school counselor, or school psychologist, everything you tell them stays between you and the trusted adult.

Unless...

- You tell them you are going to hurt yourself
- You tell them someone is going to hurt you
- You tell them you are going to hurt someone else
- Or you give permission to share with another adult

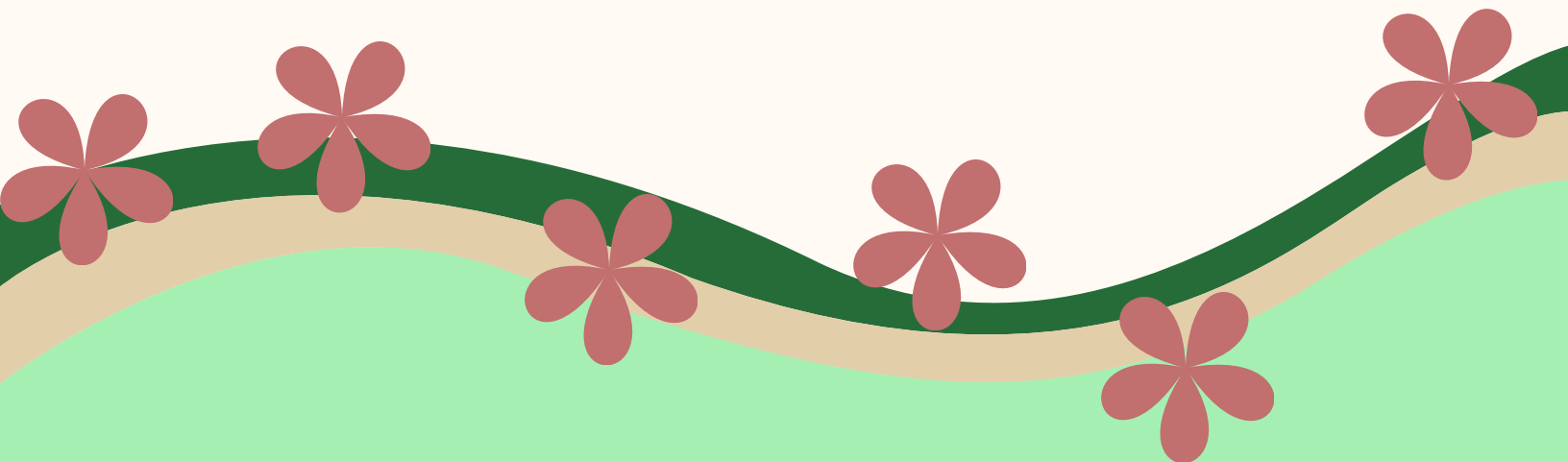
**The most important thing is to keep
you and others safe!**





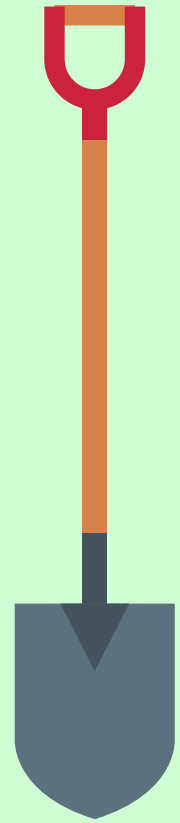
Sometimes it can
be hard to tell
others that we
need help...

that is why
the professionals at your
school will do mental
health screeners!



WHAT ARE MENTAL HEALTH SCREENERS?

tools that tell adults at your school what students may need additional help managing their mental health



WHO PARTICIPATES?

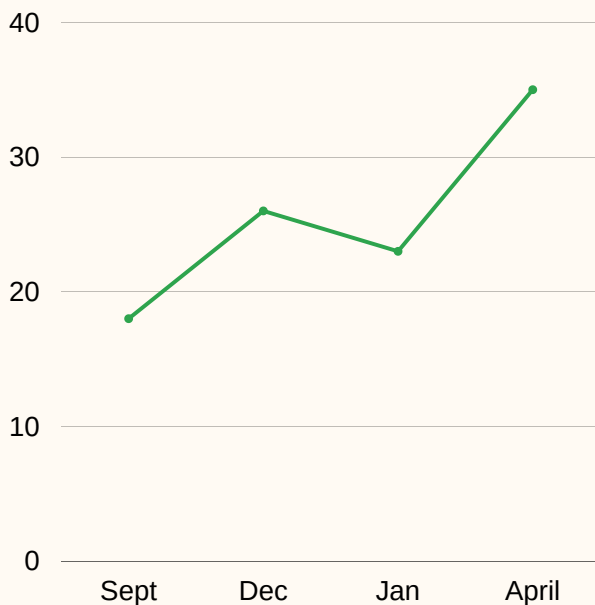
Mental health screeners are provided to all students in a classroom & school

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

Questionnaires or checklists that you fill out with your teacher, counselor, or school psychologist

What happens next?

PROGRESS MONITORING



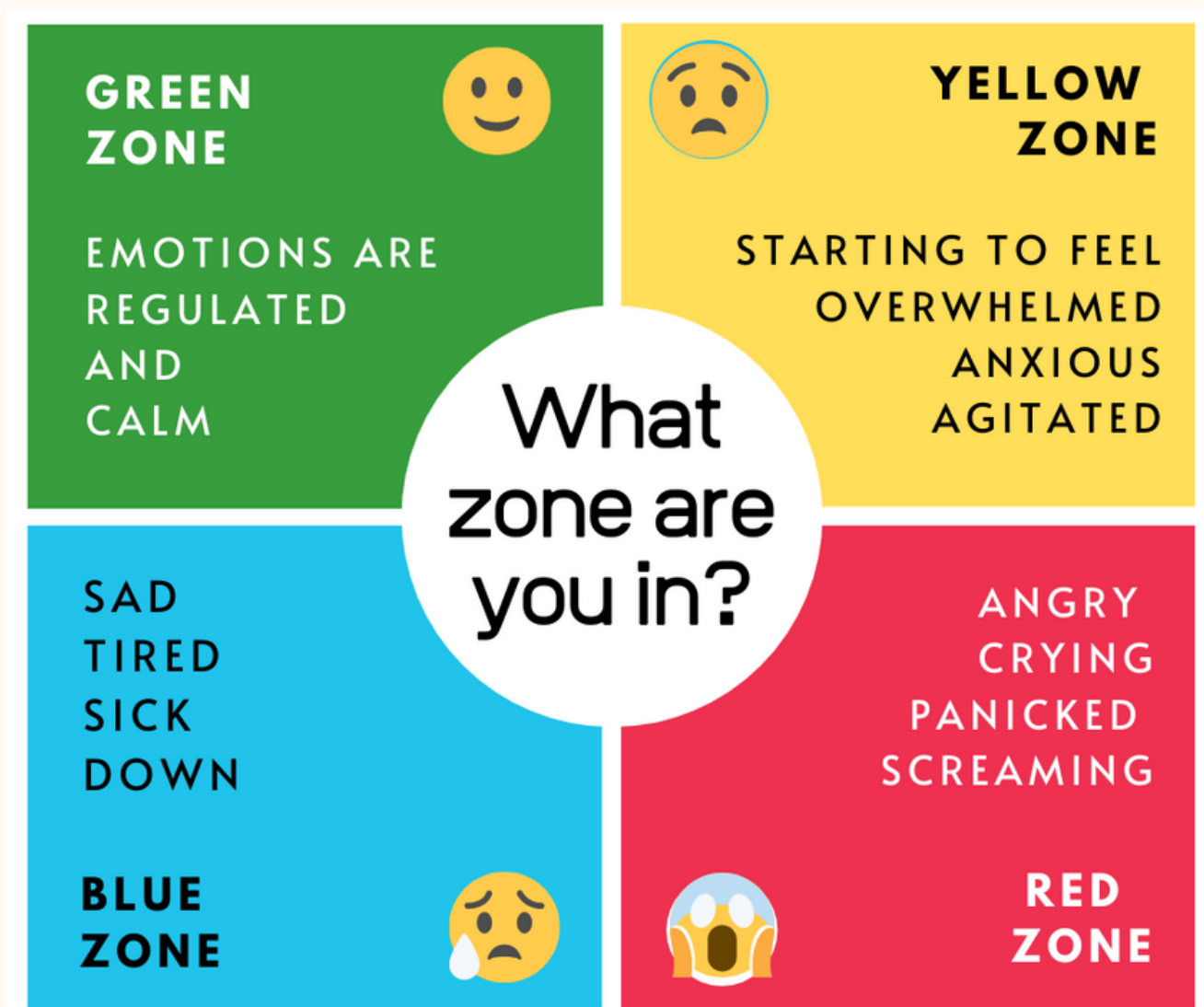
Progress monitoring lets your teachers, counselors, and school psychologists know how you are doing throughout the school year.



Remember when we talked about screening? Well, the tools and questions used for progress monitoring may look similar to the ones you saw during the screening process. Depending on your school, progress monitoring will take place on a weekly or monthly basis (sometimes more, sometimes less!).

LET'S PRACTICE

Monitor Your Progress!



LET'S BRAINSTORM

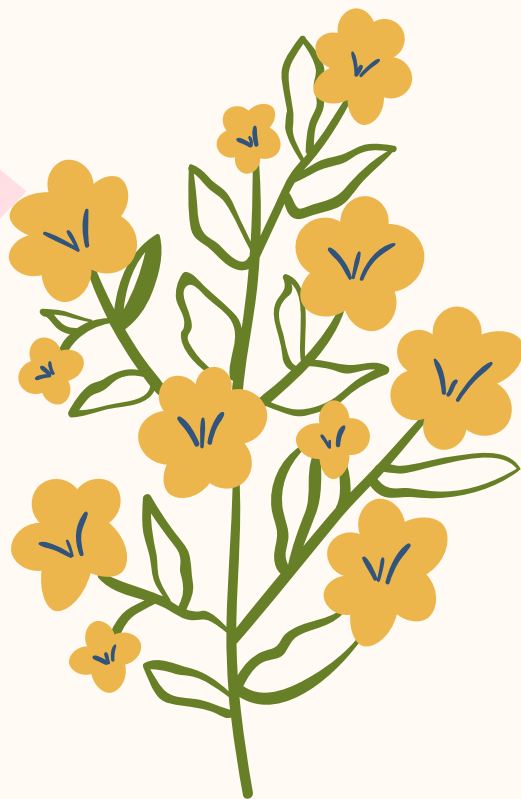
Can you think of some tools to keep us in the green zone and to help us when we feel blue, yellow, or red?!

When I feel green I...

1. Smile at my classmates

2.

3.



When I feel blue I...

1. Stretch

2.

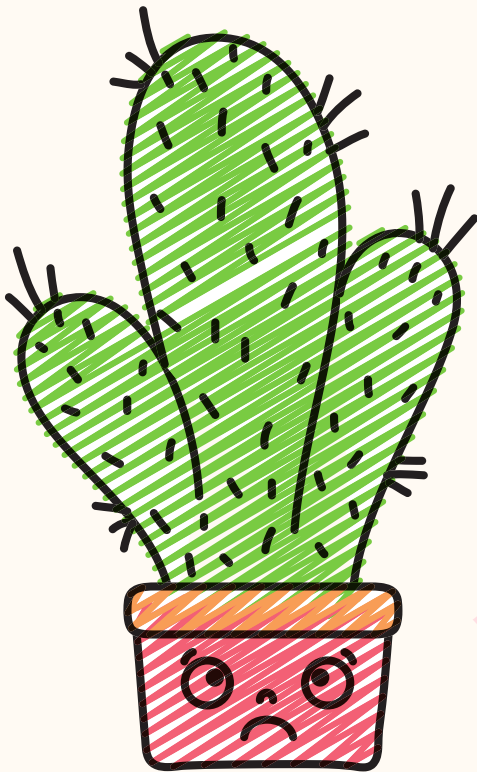
3.

When I feel yellow I....

1. Take 5 long, deep breaths

2.

3.



When I feel red I...

1. Take a break from the classroom

2.

3.

STOP
&
smell
the roses



Facilitator Guide: **Ethical Practices**

Ethical practices and following state and federal laws are crucial in order to ensure standards of care, the well-being of the student, minor rights, and more. It is crucial that each individual practicing mental health with students is well informed on the limits to confidentiality, that they have access to procedures for challenging situations, and understand the relationship between what is ethical and what is legal.

Confidentiality / Informed Consent / FERPA

Confidentiality is an ethical standard that permits the mental health practitioner to keep information shared in a session with a student private. This is in place in order to foster a trusting relationship and allow a student to feel safe.

However, if a student is at risk of harming themselves, having someone else harm them, or has a serious intent to harm someone else, then that mental health professional is required to make a report in order to ensure the student is safe. Informed consent is when the mental health professional explains these limitations to the student prior to the session. It also dictates that if the mental health professional needs to make a report, that they inform the child beforehand.

Since students are minors, their parents have certain rights to access student information. In addition, it is crucial that parents are notified if the child has intent to harm themselves or someone else. If you suspect a child is being hurt by their caregivers, a call to Child Protective Services (CPS) is required.

Facilitator Guide: **Ethical Practices**

Scenarios

(These are very brief overviews of complicated situations. Please seek out further information on these topics to become more comfortable addressing them.)

Student admits to suicidal ideation:

This situation is an example of the limits of confidentiality. Even though maintaining the therapeutic relationship by keeping information confidential is crucial, but in this case, the student's safety is more important. Call the student's parent to discuss a course of action.

You are concerned the student is being abused:

If, at any reason, you are suspicious of potential abuse happening to a child, report it to Child Protective Services immediately. It is the responsibility of the mental health professional to make the necessary report to ensure the child is safe. Do not make false promises to the child about confidentiality or investigate for physical signs. Refer to your supervisor and site protocol.

Student reports drug use:

Though parents have the right to access their student's file, and therefore, the mental health practitioner's notes in session, reporting a student's drug use may break confidentiality, unless the student is determined to be unsafe. Use professional judgement to ensure the safety and well-being of the student. In this situation, confidentiality and maintaining a trusting relationship is the priority - unless you are concerned with the student's safety, then inform their parents.

Why screening tools?

Young children with mental health problems are often under-recognized and under-treated. Informal conversation about mental health is also insufficient to identify issues experienced. Therefore, a systematic screening approach should be implemented to better identify mental health issues among children.

What tools are available for me?

Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ)

- **What** does it measure?
 - Emotional Symptoms, Conduct Problems, Hyperactivity/Inattention, Peer Relationship Problems, Prosocial Behavior
- **Who** can complete the form?
 - Teachers and parents of 4-16 years old children; Nursery teachers and parents of 3-4 year old children have a slightly modified version; Adolescents aged 11-16 also have self-completion forms; Alternative forms also available for children in low-risk or general population
- **Strengths** and **weaknesses**?
 - Accessible - able to download all tools online; Affordable - free to download the screening tool and free to access scoring system online. Brief - 25 items; Perspectives - have teachers, parents, children to complete forms; Focus - focuses on strengths and difficulties; Training - no training required to administer the screener.
 - Low internal consistency for parent and self-report on conduct problems, and self-report on peer problems; cut-scores are developed from the United Kingdom

Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BESS)

- **What** does it measure?
 - Adaptive skills; Externalizing Problems; internalizing Problems; School Problems
- **Who** can complete the form?
 - Parents, teachers, and student forms are available with 25-30 items
- **Strengths** and **weaknesses**?
 - Normative - scores are normed on nationally representative sample of students; Reliable and Valid - widely researched with good results; Consideration - multiple dimensions are measured to determine specific interventions
 - Need more specific forms for parents and students; Need data on specified groups like preschool and high school students with particular issues

Why Progress Monitor?

Use standardized measurements to see mental health outcomes and provide feedback to school psychologists and counselors can further improve mental health outcomes.

What tools are available for me?

Direct Behavior Rating Single Item Scale (DBR-SIS)

- **What** does it measure?
 - Academically Engaged; Respectful; Disruptive
- **Who** can complete the form?
 - Teacher and counseling service providers
- **Strengths** and **weaknesses**?
 - Efficient - simple and quick to complete; Repeatable - can be used for multiple parts of progress monitoring; Defensible - given increasing evidence of technical adequacy; Flexible - used across many ranges and purposes
 - Reliance on teacher report can be a weakness for this tool

Other Forms of Progress Monitoring?

Three-Tiered Progress Monitoring

- Step 1: determine what progress monitoring system we would use as school staff
- Step 2: determine the materials to use for progress monitoring
- Step 3: screen students at least 3 times a year
- Step 4: determine and place students in tier 1,2,3
- Step 5: determine what additional instructions and interventions to use for each tier
- Step 6: monitor students on monthly or weekly basis
- Step 7: develop decision rules to determine when to change instruction
- Step 8: implement instructional changes as needed, move students to different tier when needed as well
- Step 9: continue with progress monitoring

Other ways to collect data for progress monitoring:

- Interview parents, teachers, caregivers, etc
- Observe students in classroom settings, play settings, in home, etc

Borntrager, C., & Lyon, A. R. (2015). Client progress monitoring and feedback in school-based mental health. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 22(1), 74-86. University of Missouri, Evidence Based Intervention Network, <https://ebi.missouri.edu/?cat=47>

Bolt, D. M., Ysseldyke, J., & Patterson, M. J. (2010). Students, Teachers, and Schools as Sources of Variability, Integrity, and Sustainability in Implementing Progress Monitoring. *School Psychology Review*, 39(4), 612-630. doi:10.1080/02796015.2010.12087746

Lembke, E. S., & Stichter, J. P. (2006). Utilizing a system of screening and progress monitoring within a three-tiered model of instruction: Implications for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. editor's page.

RESOURCES

for promoting mental health

books:

websites:

caresolace.com

24/7 support with
accessing mental
health services

www.namioc.org

helpline & family
resources for mental
health

friendlycenter.org

support for low income
families in Orange
County

childmind.org

national non-profit for
children and families to
support mental health

**Don't Feed the
Worry Bug**

by: Andi Green

Am I A Bully?

by: Hope Gilchrist

**Tough Guys (Have
Feelings Too)**

by: Keith Negley

**The Very Cranky
Bear**

by: Nick Bland

**Glad Monster, Sad
Monster**

by: Ed Emberley &
Anne Miranda

**Taking a Bath
With the Dog and
Other Things That
Make Me Happy**

by: Scott Menchin

apps:

happify

uplifting games,
activities, and
meditations

well-beings

wellness activities for
kids

manatee & me

supports families in
promoting mental
health in children

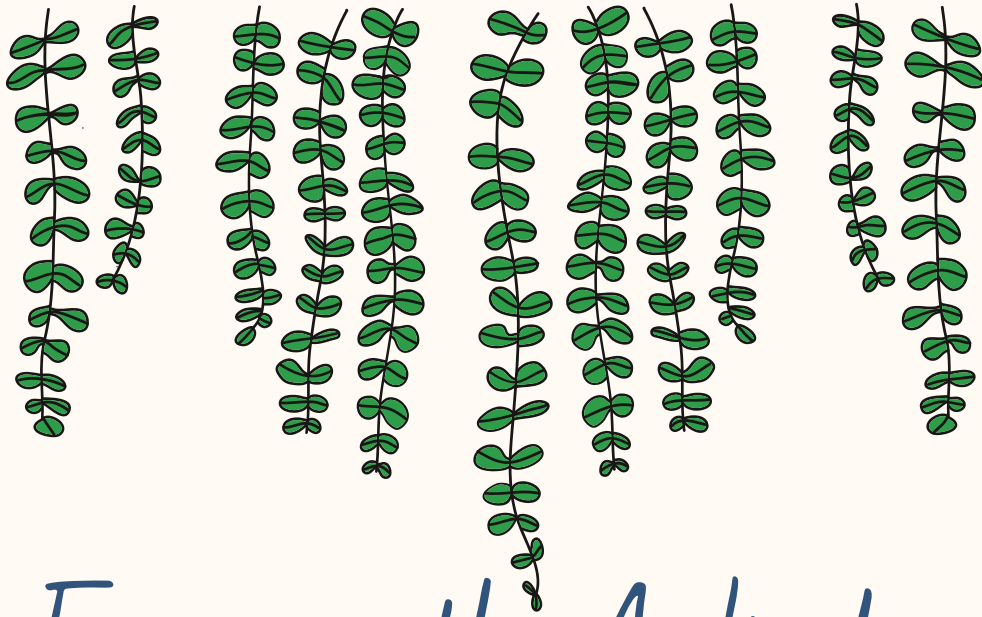
calm

family friendly
meditations

**mood monster's
yoga workshop**

mindfulness & yoga for
managing emotions





Frequently Asked Questions: Students

Q: What does a School Counselor do?

A: Counselors are trusted adults that you can talk to and rely on at school. We can help you embrace your feelings and create strong friendships with others.

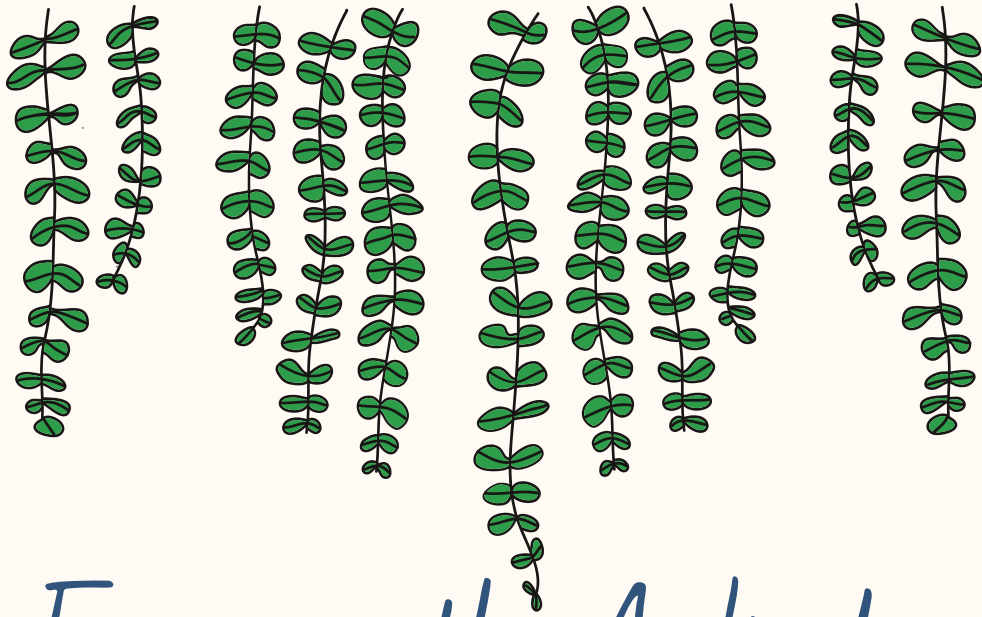
Q: How will this help me?

A: This toolkit helps students like you to better understand your emotions, communicate, use compassion and empathy to understand the needs of yourself, your friends and family for positive connections. You are not alone!

Q: Will my friends learn this too?

A: It is possible! Everyone needs a little extra watering as we grow, even your counselor, teachers, and parents!





Frequently Asked Questions: Adults

Q: When do I need to meet with students?

A: Students who are engaging with this toolkit can work independently through each section. When the student approached the "stop and smell the roses" page, the group can have a discussion and you can check for comprehension.

Q: How do I know which students need this?

A: Mental health, and information about mental health, is important for all young people to engage in. This toolkit should be made available to all students.

Q: Do I have to teach the students about each section?

A: Lesson planning is not necessary. The importance of the facilitator guides is to take a deeper dive into the subject and allow the students to demonstrate what they've learned. However, for young children, you may walk through the toolkit alongside them.



THE END...
*did you stop &
smell the
roses?*





RESOURCES



for promoting mental health during COVID-19

Website:

NAMI Orange County

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is a great resource for additional mental health support, and resource referrals to support individuals with mental health conditions and their families. The link below includes simple and quick ways to practice self-care while in quarantine. These activities can be done alone or as a family!

NAMI Self-Care During Quarantine: <https://www.namio.org/support-during-the-quarantine>



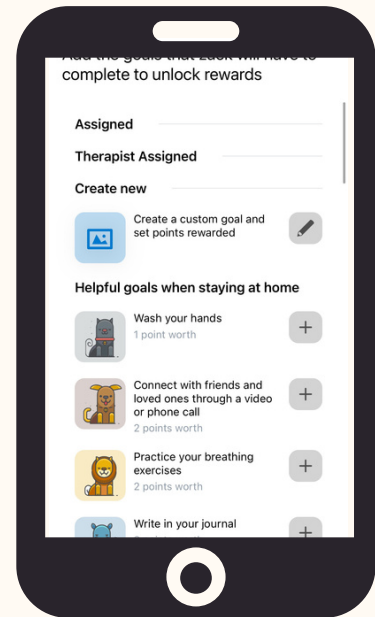
Free and confidential text/chat available **24/7** to provide support and resources
Text/Chat: **(714) 991-6412**

App:



Manatee & Me

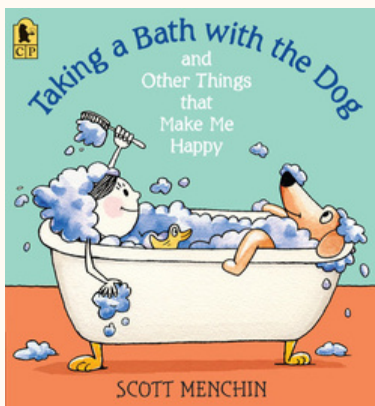
An app for parents to monitor and facilitate their child's mental health development. The app is designed so each child has their own profile, monitored by the parent, that has space for the child to progress in their treatment. The app has assigned goals, both from parents and a therapist, with a rewards system for when the child accomplishes their set goals. The app also has daily tips and advice for parents to further their development on how best to meet their child's mental health needs.



Book:

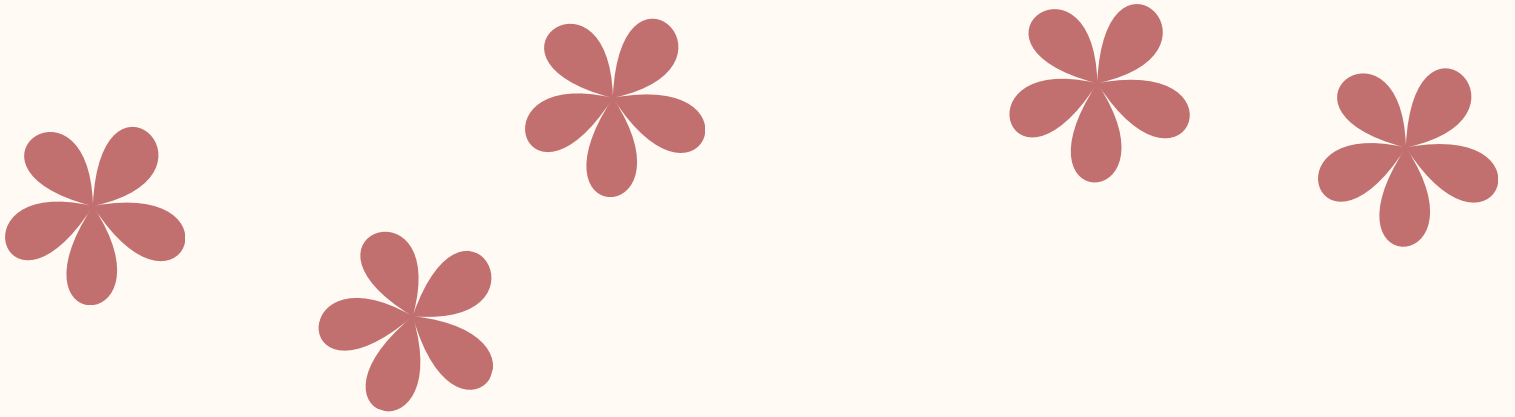
Taking a Bath With the Dog and Other Things That Make Me Happy

by: Scott Menchin



A fun way to spark a conversation about emotions with kiddos! Talk about what makes them happy, and how different things make different people feel happy. Let them know that like the main character, Sweet Pea, it's okay to feel sad sometimes. Write a list of things with your little one that make them feel happy and sad, and talk about how those emotions come up even more during a tough time like COVID.

Click on the image for a read-aloud of the book!



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.