

Students are Back: It's Okay not to be OK!

After a 2 week-long suspension of classes IC is back! To welcome our students the Ras Beirut Middle School Counselor, Ms. Diala Itani, held a discussion in every class allowing students to share some of their experiences and highlighting the normalcy of diverse emotions and behaviors that may arise in such a transitional time in our country.

While some students reported a sense of pride, unity, agency and compassion, Ms. Itani emphasized that it's also normal to feel pressured, indifferent, bored, afraid, worried, or simply numb! Similar things can be said about academic concerns: it's normal to feel a lack of motivation, confusion when it comes to study skills, anxiety regarding attending school, tests, make-up days... It's normal for any existent fears or worries to get aggravated; previous stressors can become more intense, and routine habits such as sleeping and eating may be affected (increase or decrease) ... There is no "appropriate" response in such situations, but counselors are available to help students cope if feeling overwhelmed.

Ms. Itani also cautioned against differences of opinions escalating to personal matches. It's normal to disagree with a person's opinion, but not to reject the person themselves. It's important to express one's point of view while at the same time refraining from bullying others, even if cyberbullying seems trendy. When in doubt, it's healthy to question one's motives and go back to the original cause: fighting for something; not against someone.