

# COUNSELOR CONNECTION



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## KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON

Greetings IMS families! In this month's counseling newsletter, we focus our efforts on making sure our 8th graders have the access they need to High School registration, so they are ready to transition to the next step in their educational pathway. And in case your 8th grader didn't tell you, we rolled out a career interest survey earlier this month, which we encourage you to talk to them about. We also wanted to make you aware of the screeners we have been offering to check in on the well being of all our students. Additionally, we wanted to provide all of our families with some pointers on how to start mentally preparing for the changes and transitions that are upon us. Lastly, MIYFS Counselors are offering a new parent education group. Check it all out, and as always, please don't hesitate to let us know how we can support you and your student!

### REMINDER REGARDING HIGH SCHOOL REGISTRATION

#### Attention parents/guardians of 8th graders:

You should have received communication and started to register for high school classes.

**Skyward registration closes on  
January 31st.**

Please use the helpful links below to complete the registration process, if you haven't already.

- ♦ [Registration Video](#)
- ♦ [Calendar of Events](#)
- ♦ [MIHS Course Catalog for 2021-2022](#)
- ♦ [FAQ Sheet](#)
- ♦ [How to register in Skyward](#)
- ♦ [Elective Courses for 9th Graders](#)
- ♦ [Honors Course Expectations](#)

### REQUIRED ACTIVITY FOR 8th GRADERS

This month all 8th graders were tasked to take a Career Interest Survey, which is a graduation requirement for all 8th graders in the state of Washington. We have a few students who have not completed this survey, so please check in to see if your child has done it. We encourage you to look at your student's results and talk about what they discovered. All of the materials associated with this assignment are posted in Schoology, under "Courses," in a course labelled "High School and Beyond Planning." Discussing these survey results with your student can lead to meaningful conversation about future planning, especially as 8th graders consider their High School course selections. There's a folder of additional resources on that Schoology page if you and your student would like to participate in additional career exploration activities.

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS CHECK-INS



IMS is joining 44 King County Middle Schools as part of the Best Starts for Kids grant. 7th graders will use a screening tool called "Check Yourself," developed by Seattle Children's Hospital and the University of Washington with Tickit Health. This screening is based on the Screening Brief Referral to Treatment model and is designed to determine whether a student may or may not need additional support. Information about the EES Survey (given to 6th and 8th graders) and the "Check Yourself" screener was sent home to all IMS families. If you have any questions about either tool, please don't hesitate to contact someone from our team.

## LEANING INTO CHANGE

IMS families, with the pending return to school, our counseling team is leaning into the concept of Coping Forward. We want to encourage you to partner with us in shifting to the “*Recovery Phase*” which represents moving out of the “*Disillusionment Phase*” towards creating a new beginning for our students.

Here are some ideas for preparing for the transition back to school from [Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia](#).

**Open the dialogue now:** Start conversations about returning to school. Share what you know and explore what your child is thinking and feeling about the transition. Are they excited, worried or both?

**Find out what they know:** What have they heard from friends or in the news? Reassure your children that you will be there for them, no matter what.

**Model positive behavior for your child:** Given the ongoing uncertainty in our world, it’s crucial to take care ourselves and model that for our children. Some behaviors to demonstrate include: getting enough sleep, eating nutritious foods, exercising regularly, maintaining connections with friends and family, and sharing your strategies for overcoming worry with your children.

**Practice now:** No matter what the specific date of our return to school will be, it is essential to start preparing for the transition. Here are a couple practices to get ready: have your child practice wearing a mask for an extended period of time (while gaming, reading or doing other activities), and get on a regular schedule with sleep and wake up times.

**Practice getting prepared like your student would if they were going to brick and mortar school:** We think this might be the biggest challenge. Remember, students haven’t had to leave home for almost a year!

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** There is no one way to fully prepare. Do what fits your family's needs. This transition will be a challenge for some and others are already eager to jump in.

As always, if you need additional support contact your child’s counselor and/or your IMS, MIYFS Counselors.



## MONDAY MORNINGS WITH MIYFS

**Beginning Monday, February, 8th,** MIYFS school-based Counselors at IMS and MIHS will share lessons from the curriculum Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills In Schools Skills Training for Emotional Problem Solving for Adolescents (DBT STEPS-A). These weekly meetings, **from 9-10am**, are designed to help parents build effective skills, community and resiliency. We will also leave space for other related topics and concerns. For the Zoom meeting link email [harry.brown@mercerislandschools.org](mailto:harry.brown@mercerislandschools.org).