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# COUNSELOR CONNECTION

Dru Klein, Janet Goldstein & Jayna Dash

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## A HEARTFELT LETTER FROM OUR MIYFS COUNSELOR

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Dear Parents and Caregivers of our Islander Community,

I write this while watching live coverage of thousands gathered peacefully in downtown Seattle. My concern for our city is heightened by knowing that our adult daughter is somewhere among the protesters. As parents of a young adult fully engaged working towards creating social justice in our community, she has drawn us into many difficult discussions. My wife and I have had to take stock of our role in perpetuating racism and systemic injustice.

Every family has a unique story and I would never tell anyone what to believe. What our counseling team and I encourage is for you to have honest, direct conversations with your children regarding what is unfolding. Wednesday afternoon our 8<sup>th</sup> graders participated in a webinar with Delbert Richardson. Mr. Richardson shared his American History Traveling Museum which included stories and artifacts of Black history. Our teachers are sharing lessons on facing difficult moments in history, teaching your children to think critically to support them in shaping the future. We see this as a time for you to take on the role of coach/consultant and guide the discussion to support your middle schooler in understanding what's occurring in our community and throughout the country.

We wanted to share a variety of resources that can support your conversations. Since we are unable to include hyperlinks in our newsletter, we've included them in the email to which this document is attached.

[Talking to Kids About Racism and Violence](#) Child Mind Institute video (perspective taking)

[Mindful Schools, Healing Our Hearts](#)

[Teaching Tolerance](#) Guidance and resources for teaching about Race, Racism and Police Violence.

We also understand that the last few months have led to significant challenges for youth and families. If you have concerns for your child or yourself, please call a member of our team and we can connect you with community resources.

Thank you,  
Harry Brown, MIYFS IMS Counselor

## SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

Being a parent or caregiver is NOT easy...ESPECIALLY now. The atmosphere we are living in right now is tense and stressful. With all of the events happening in the world right now, it is normal to feel a range of emotions including feelings of being overwhelmed and/or frustrated. We see you and we feel it too. That said, we thought it might prove useful to provide some tips and resources to help you manage during this unprecedented time.

### **RECOGNIZE WHEN YOU HAVE REACHED YOUR LIMIT, THEN TAKE FIVE.**

1. Stop. Step away. Give yourself space.
2. Take a short break to breath. Allow your heart rate to return to normal.
3. Remind yourself, "I can do this" or "It's important to stay calm."
4. Ask yourself, "How can I handle this situation in a way that I will feel good about?"
5. If possible, ask for support from a partner or family member. Call or text a neighbor. Remember, it's okay to ask for help.

### **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

There are a lot of resources available if you need someone to talk to for free. It doesn't have to be an emergency. Here are some of those resources:

- ✦ Parent Trust for Washington Children, The Family Help Line: 1-800-932-4673
- ✦ Harborview Abuse and Trauma Center, Support and Tips to Manage Behavior: 206-744-1600
- ✦ Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990
- ✦ Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 for crisis counseling any day and time.
- ✦ Seattle Children's Hospital has additional resources @ [seattlechildrens.org/copingandcovid](http://seattlechildrens.org/copingandcovid).

## **NEXT WEEK IS THE LAST WEEK FOR COUNSELOR OFFICE HOURS**

The IMS Counselors have been offering an **OPTIONAL** opportunity for **STUDENTS** to check in. We will each be on a Zoom call, partnered with an Administrator, for the last time next week. Dru Klein will be online **Tuesday** from 10-10:30 (students with last names A-G), Janet Goldstein will be online **Wednesday** from 10-10:30 (last names H-O) and Jayna Dash will be online **Thursday** from 10-10:30 (last names P-Z). Students are encouraged to log on to ask questions, to say hello or to simply come for additional adult connection.

**\*\*\*Zoom links are posted in the Schoology calendar.\*\*\***

## **LOOKING AHEAD...**

Please keep an eye out for emails from our administrative team with information about library and textbook collection, as well as Yearbook distribution. We have some plans in the works for an 8th grade farewell event, so stay tuned for that too! Hard to believe we only have 2 more weeks of school....Hang in there everyone!