

Helpful Wellness Tips

Talking: Find a trusted adult to talk to. At school this could be a teacher, counselor, administrator or someone in the School Based Health Center.

Deep breathing: Deep breathing slows heart rate, lowers blood pressure and increases oxygen intake, which have a calming effect. Some common exercises are belly breathing and the 4-7-8 breathing exercise (inhale for four count, hold for seven, and exhale for eight).

Grounding: Grounding can distract one's mind from their anxiety and keep them grounded in the present. Common grounding exercises include the 5-4-3-2-1 senses technique (five things you can see, four things you can feel, etc.), counting how many things in different shades of a particular color can you see around the room and counting backward by 7, starting at 100.

Imagery: Imagery involves creating a detailed mental image of a safe and peaceful place. As you imagine being in that space, redirect attention away from what is stressing you and toward an alternative focus.

Progressive muscle relaxation: Progressive muscle relaxation is the practice of tightening one muscle group at a time followed by a relaxation phase with release of the tension. Students tense and relax the muscle groups one at a time in a specific order, beginning with the lower extremities and ending with the face.

Positive self-talk and affirmations: Positive self-talk helps challenge self-sabotaging and negative thoughts. Students can practice using milder wording through journal writing, negative thought stopping or snapping a rubber band during negative thoughts. You can help select affirmations that speak to you. When students repeat the affirmations, and believe them, they can start to make positive changes.

Journaling: Journaling helps you clarify your thoughts and feelings, thereby gaining valuable self-knowledge. Students can process their anxiety by fully exploring and releasing the emotions involved. By engaging both hemispheres of the brain, journaling allows the experience to become fully integrated within one's mind.

Desk yoga: Neck rolls, cat-cow stretch, shoulder shrug, triceps stretch, seated twist and the seated pigeon pose are all exercises students can discretely practice at their desk.

If a student feels they are in crisis here are some helpful resources:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988

Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24 hour): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

*24-Hour Crisis Line: 1-800-309-2131

*Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 (24 hours)

*Crisis Call Center: 1-800-273-8255 or text ANSWER to 839863

Alameda Co. Text keyword "Safe" (4pm-7pm, every day) to 20121

Trevor Project (LGBTQ Support 24-hour support): 866-488-7386

California Youth Crisis Line (24-hour talk **and** text): 800-843-5200

Grief Counseling Services: 800-260-0094

Bullying and Cyberbullying Help Chat: stompoutbullying.org