September 2023

THE COUNSELORS' CONNECTION

The Newsletter of the
Elementary Counseling Department

MEET YOUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT!

Top Row: Marisa Woodworth, Damira Caldwell, Eric Swiech, Jaclyn McAnany, Carolyn MacMurtrie, Connor Cipparone
Bottom Row: Elizabeth Corbett, Carolynne Wurth, Megan McDonald, Jennifer Munch

One year ago, the School District of Haverford Township expanded its elementary counseling program to include two full-time school counselors in each of the 5 elementary schools. In addition to teaching the bi-weekly Social-Emotional Learning lessons (SEL), school counselors meet with students based on teacher, parent, or self-referral; provide short-term individual and group school counseling to support students with skills that are developmental and/or impact school behavior, and consult with school staff and families to support students' mental health, academic achievement, and social-emotional development.

CONNECT WITH YOUR CHILD'S COUNSELOR

Chatham Park Damira Caldwell (Grades K - 2) dcaldwell@haverfordsd.net 610 853-5900 ext. 1123 Elizabeth Corbett (Grades 3 -5) ecorbett@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 1202	**Chestnutwold** Jennifer Munch (Grades K - 2) jmunchhayes@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 8100 Jaclyn McAnany (Grades 3 - 5) jmcanany@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 8180	**Coopertown** Marisa Woodworth (Grades K - 2) mwoodworth@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 3110 Eric Swiech (Grades 3 - 5) eswiech@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 3113
Lynnewood Carolyn MacMurtrie (Grades K - 2) cmacmurtrie@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 4122 Connor Cipparone (Grades 3 - 5) ccipparone@haverfordsd.org 610-853-5900 ext. 4111	**Manoa** Carolynne Wurth (Grades K - 2) cwurth@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 6136 Megan McDonald (Grades 3 - 5) mmcdonald@haverfordsd.net 610-853-5900 ext. 6134	**Click Here to learn more about our Elementary School Counseling program!**

THE BEST WAY TO EASE THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL TRANSITION

Getting kids ready to go back to school is not always an easy task. And when you think about it, why would it be?

Back-to-school transitions can be really tough for kids. Starting a new school year can be scary, especially if kids haven't been in a school building for a long time. But the key is to help make this transition smooth and gentle. If you're not feeling prepared for the upcoming school year, don't panic. Don't lose hope. I've shared lots of ideas with families and teachers over the years. Here are some of the suggestions they've found most helpful:

- Keep the summer fun going. Plan at least one activity for the first week of school.
- Allow more downtime with the TV or computer after school than you usually will during the school year. Then gradually reduce or eliminate screen time once school really gets underway.
- Keep the schedule clear. Try not to make any extra plans or appointments for the first two weeks of school, so kids can relax after school.
- Be present as much as possible for at least the first week. This way you can set up school-day routines gradually instead of all at once.
- Let kids stay up a little later the first week of school. In the second and third weeks, begin moving to an earlier sleep schedule.
- Stress the importance of breakfast. Eating before school will give kids energy to start their day.

Returning to school can be exciting, stressful, and exhausting all at the same time. Some kids might need a little more time to adjust. If getting back into the school groove isn't working out well, tackle things gradually. Keep some of the summer fun alive and give enough downtime.

Cunningham, Bob, The best way to ease the back-to-school transition, Understood, 30, August 2023.

WHAT YOUR CHILD LEARNS IN SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social and Emotional Learning, or SEL for short, is delivered by the elementary school counselor to all children in grades kindergarten through fifth grade on a bi-weekly basis.

Our SEL curriculum, which aligns with our district initiatives of social/emotional wellness, diversity and inclusion, and efforts to prepare contemporary citizens, continues to reflect the five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavior competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Objectives include:

- Identifying, expressing, and managing emotions
- Developing positive self-talk, a growth mindset, and optimism
- Accepting and appreciating all differences in others
- Developing empathy for others
- Coping with anxiety and stress
- Impulse control and anger management
- Social Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Assertiveness and Personal Safety
- Teasing and Bullying Prevention and Response
- Digital-citizenship/safety
- Career Development