



March 2025

Counseling Newsletter

MENTAL HEALTH

What is Mental Health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and behave. Good mental health helps children handle stress, build relationships, and make decisions. Just like physical health, taking care of mental health is important for overall well-being.

Why is Mental Health Important for Young Children?

Mental health is crucial in childhood because it lays the foundation for emotional resilience, learning, and social development. When children feel safe and supported, they are more likely to develop confidence, problem-solving skills, and positive relationships. Early mental health support can prevent future challenges and help children thrive.

CALMING STRATEGIES

Here are some simple techniques children can use when they feel overwhelmed:

- Deep Breathing - Take a deep breath in for four seconds, hold for four seconds, and exhale for four seconds.
- Grounding Exercise - Name five things you see, four things you can touch, three things you hear, two things you smell, and one thing you taste.
- Muscle Relaxation - Tighten and then relax different muscle groups in the body.
- Drawing or Coloring - Creative activities help express emotions in a healthy way.
- Mindfulness Moments - Take a moment to focus on the present, using slow breathing and paying attention to sounds, sights, and sensations around you.



ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

1. Gratitude Journals - Encourage children to write or draw three things they are grateful for each day.
2. Movement & Exercise - Activities like yoga, dancing, or playing outside help release stress and boost mood.
3. Acts of Kindness - Encourage small acts of kindness, such as writing a kind note to a friend or helping a sibling.
4. Story Time Discussions - Reading books about emotions and talking about feelings can help children process their own emotions.
5. Sleep Routine - Ensure children have a consistent bedtime to help regulate mood and energy levels.
6. Relaxation Scripts - Read [these visualization](#) and relaxation scripts to your student





BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Elementary.

The Color Monster: A Story About Emotions by Anna Llenas



A Little Spot of Emotion by Diane Alber



When Sophie Gets Angry - Really, Really Angry by Molly Bang



Secondary.

The Anxiety Survival Guide for Teens:
by Jenifer Shannon



What to Do When You Worry Too Much by Dawn Huebner

LOCAL RESOURCES

[Care Solace- NSD provided service](#)

[Seattle Children's Hospital Psychiatry & Behavioral Medicine](#)

[National Alliance Mental Health Illness \(NAMI\)](#)

[Crisis Connections - 24/7 Support](#)
Call 866-427-4747



APPS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

These apps can help students develop mindfulness, relaxation, and emotional regulation skills:

- Calm - Offers guided meditation, breathing exercises, and sleep stories.
- Headspace for Kids - Teaches mindfulness and breathing exercises for children.
- Smiling Mind - Provides mindfulness and relaxation activities for different age groups.
- MindShift CBT - Helps manage anxiety through cognitive-behavioral strategies.
- Insight Timer - Offers free guided meditations, relaxation music, and breathing exercises



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH

- Check in with your child or teen. Ask how they're feeling and how things are going in their life. Listen to their words, and also pay attention to any changes in their behavior.
- Listen more than you talk, and truly hear what your child is saying. Be aware that your child may not want to problem-solve, they may just want to be heard and accepted. Be curious.
- Encourage your child to keep talking. Validate their feelings by saying things like: "Tell me more." "I hear you." "I understand you feel left out."
- Encourage your child to learn about and label their emotions, and to accept all emotions.
- Ask your child to come up with ideas for how to cope when they start to feel scared, mad, sad or otherwise upset. Talk with your child about their concerns. Let them take the lead, as they learn coping skills that work for them.