SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025 EDITION

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

On demand courses for parents with topics ranging from behavior, body image, depression & anxiety, child development and technology.

Parent Guidance.org

THE TEAM

Our team is composed of licensed mental health professionals. We connect families to mental health resources, address mental health crises across the district, are members of HEBISD's Threat Assessment Team, provide mental health training to HEBISD staff and the community. You can submit a referral to our team by clicking **HERE**.

HOW DO I TALK TO MY CHILDREN ABOUT CURRENT EVENTS?

- Take the time to check in with yourself. This will help you better manage the emotions your children may be experiencing.
- Set up a time to talk. Don't wait for them to come to you. Ask open-ended questions; "How are you feeling about that?".
  - If your child is asking you about the event, it means they are ready to talk about it.
- Answer their questions in age-appropriate ways but be honest. For younger kids it may be vague while older kids get more specificity.
- Try only to give small bits of information at once; one or two sentences at a time. This allows for your child to determine how much information they're ready to hear.
- You don't need to know all the answers!
- Try to be as objective as possible (don't add judgement). Practice stating facts without sensationalizing.
- Normalize the emotions. Don't dismiss emotions by saying, "Don't be afraid".

To read more: The Kids Mental Health Foundation

AS A FAMILY, HOW CAN WE COPE WITH STRESS ?

- Limit your consumption of news. For example, do not leave it running in the background unattended.
- Model coping strategies after having difficult conversations. Practice distraction and relaxation strategies.
- Create daily/weekly family traditions or check-ins. This allows to check the "temperature" of everyone and address needs before crisis.
- Foster open communication by engaging in conversations about your children's interests.

THE TEENAGE BRAIN – NUEROBIOLOGY

adapted from: National Institute of Mental Health (March 2025)

Did you know that big and important changes happen in the brain during adolescence? Here are seven things to know about the teen brain:

1. Adolescence is an important time for brain development: the brain finishes developing and maturing in the mid-to-late 20s.
2. Brain development is related to social experiences during adolescence: this can lead teens to focus more on peer relationships and social experiences. This might lead to take more risks because the social benefits outweigh the possible consequence of decisions.
3. The teen brain is ready to learn and adapt: this could be a good time to take on challenging classes, exercising and creative activities.
4. Teen brains may respond differently to stress.
5. Most teens do not get enough sleep: melatonin levels stay high later at night and drop later in the morning, which may explain why teens may stay up late and struggle with waking up early.
6. Mental illnesses may begin to appear during adolescence.
7. The teen brain is resilient.

Dan Siegel: The Adolescent Brain (5 min)

Stages of the Adolescent Brain (60 min)

Spring cleaning for your mental health

- Set a 'Do Not Disturb' schedule for yourself.
- Declutter your personal space or one specific spot.
- Unfollow accounts on social media that don't serve you.
- Practice a technology detox. Remove apps/games that occupy time.
- Drop one bad habit. Replace it with a healthy one!
- Make a list of the things are going well or a gratitude list.

PERSERVERANCE

Perseverance is important because it allows individuals to overcome challenges, maintain a positive attitude, and achieve their goals even when faced with setbacks or obstacles, essentially enabling them to keep moving forward despite difficulties; it is considered a key component to success in any area of life.

Some Ways to Foster Perseverance:

1. Set realistic goals and break them down to smaller ones.
2. Write down the reasons for wanting to achieve the goal.
3. Make a plan for how to deal with setbacks

PBS KIDS Talk About: Perseverance