

Wellness Connect Newsletter

Winter 2025-26



Mrs. Wynter, Director

The vision of the Mental Health Services Department is to increase the success & wellness of all students and families by promoting mental health awareness, fostering resilience, and building positive community connections.

The Mental Health Services Department has been focused on positively impacting the wellness of students and families through our amazing programs.

Communication and collaboration are central to our mission. With the creation of our new Student Mental Health Advisory Committee, student voice continues to be at the forefront of creating and shaping mental health for students throughout our district. We look forward to continuing to increase student connections to mental health through our Student Services Division collaborative initiatives, such as Wellness Fairs, Support Groups, Trusted Adult Week, Wellness Clubs and Prosocial Organizations, Social Media, Toolkits, and Mental Health Bulletin Boards at schools throughout our district.

Our new Wellness Check-n-Connect Initiative provides bi-weekly corresponding messages to parents and students district-wide to increase mental health awareness and provide strategies. Our outreach efforts include participating in community events and establishing partnerships with behavioral health organizations to connect with families and facilitate access to both school and local resources. We are excited to launch our Wellness Experience Survey from January 20-30, 2026, to gather invaluable student and parent feedback on the awareness, accessibility, and effectiveness of district-wide mental health supports and inform future improvements.

As we reach the mid-year point of the school year, we celebrate the positive impact of our mental health services across schools and the community. From expanding prevention programs to strengthening partnerships that connect families with vital resources, our collaborative efforts with individuals throughout our school district and within our community are helping students thrive and foster resilience. We look forward to building on this momentum in the months ahead to create even more opportunities to support wellness!



MHAART Staff Leading Support Groups



Youth Mental Health First Aid Staff Training



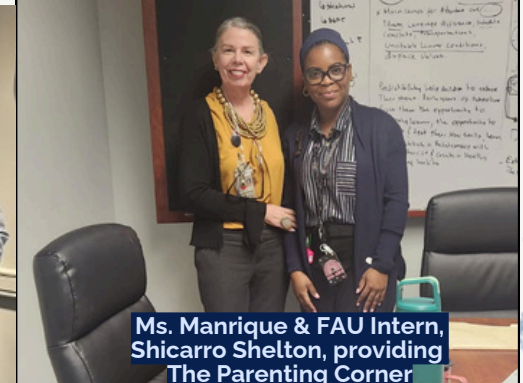
Family Therapist, Ms. Desire, showcasing Blanche Ely's Meet Your Mental Health Team Bulletin Board



Required Instruction Team with former Senator, Lauren Book



Mrs. Wynter & Ms. Mitchum presenting at the Council of Great City Schools in Philadelphia



Ms. Manrique & FAU Intern, Shicarro Shelton, providing The Parenting Corner



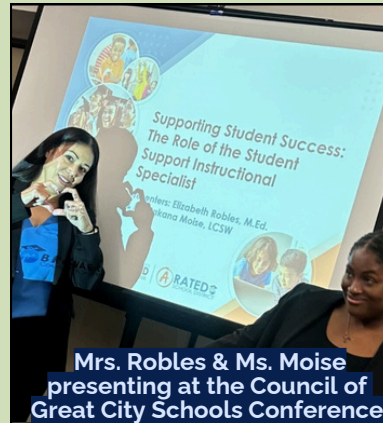
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BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Mental Health Services "hits the road" to the Council of Great City Schools in Philadelphia, PA to share best practices!

Several leaders in the Mental Health Services Department were selected to present at the annual Council of Great City Schools Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to showcase Broward County Public Schools' best practices with educators and district leaders from school districts across the nation.



Mrs. Robles & Ms. Moise presenting at the Council of Great City Schools Conference

Mental Health Walks for Awareness



A team of Mental Health Services and Student Services professionals came together to represent Broward County Public Schools for the 2025 Annual National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk. Honorable Judge Ari Porth from Circuit/Felony Mental Health Court connected with this dynamic team to support the walk for mental health awareness.



Judge Porth shows mental health support at the NAMI Walk

The Suicide Prevention Program supported the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Suicide Awareness Walk at Nova Southeastern University on Saturday, October 26, 2025.

Former Florida State Senator Lauren Book Visits Elementary Schools

Former Florida State Senator Lauren Book, author and creator of the Lauren's Kids Curriculum used in elementary schools for resiliency education, recently partnered with our Required Instruction Program team to deliver special presentations. She visited Park Trails ES and Coral Cove ES, engaging 1st-3rd grade students through interactive lessons. Joining her was the program's beloved mascot, Buddy, whose appearance brought tremendous excitement and joy to the children.



Buddy from Lauren's Kids visits elementary schools

MHAART in Action: Building Connections & Promoting Wellness



From Wellness Wednesdays at Forest Glen Middle, Wellness Day at North Andrews Gardens Elementary, and a mental health lunch table at Banyan Elementary to the Open House at Lanier James and Wellness Fairs at Rickards, Flanagan, Western, and Northeast High Schools, our team engaged students and families in meaningful mental health conversations across grade levels. Support also extended to SAC meetings at Glades Middle and Martin Luther King Elementary, initiatives like Mentoring Tomorrow's Leaders at Coral Glades High, and community events including NAMI Walk, Lauderhill Peace 365, Family Fun Day, Lauderhill Choose Peace, and Burnham Woods Day & Community Connection. Parent Resource Nights at Forest Glen Middle, Park Lakes, Lyons Creek, and Oriole Elementary strengthened family-school partnerships, while Harvest Drives and Sunland Park food distributions reflected our commitment to holistic well-being.



Ms. Fuentes presenting at the Council of Great City Schools Conference

PROGRAM IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Family Counseling Program Parent Workshop Initiative Expansion

The Family Counseling Program Supervisors did a special presentation to the Broward County Children's Services Board to highlight the impact the program has had on Broward County families during 2024-25.

This first semester of the 2025-2026 school year, the Family Counseling Program supported 1,800+ students and families. The new Parenting Corner initiative launched at Eagle Point, Country Isles, Pembroke Lakes, and Morrow Elementary Schools, as well as the International Welcome Center. The Parenting Corner is a preventative mental health initiative within the Family Counseling Program designed to support parents of PreK-5 students. Through seven psycho-educational workshops led by Family Therapists, parents gain strategies to manage daily behavioral challenges and strengthen family functioning. The objective is to intervene early, increasing parents' repertoire of strategies and tools, as well as promote protective factors to prevent the development of future behavioral issues. This year, the School Social Work program is kindly sharing its master's-level interns from Florida Atlantic University to be trained and support the delivery of this initiative.



Family Counseling Program
Presentation to the
Children's Services Board



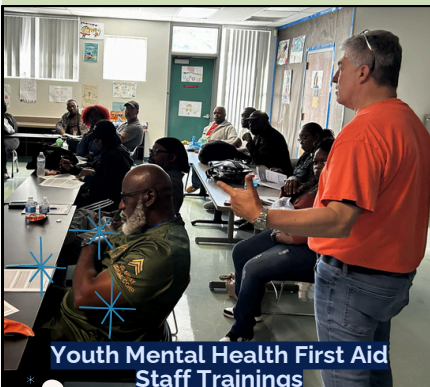
Family Therapist, Ms. Mazzocca,
at Silver Trail Middle's
Coffee with the Counselors

Youth Mental Health First Aid

In our district, more than 29,000 staff and community members have completed Youth Mental Health First Aid training, creating thousands of moments of connection, understanding, and proactive care. The ripple effect is clear: Students feel supported, staff address mental health with less stigma and greater confidence, and families carry this knowledge into their communities. We remain committed to expanding access, strengthening everyday mental health literacy, and sustaining this momentum.



Youth Mental Health First Aid at the
New Teacher Academy



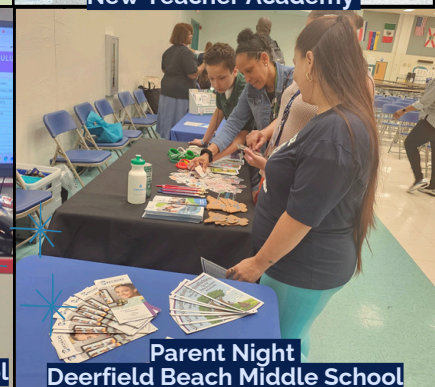
Youth Mental Health First Aid
Staff Trainings



Parent Night
Lyons Creek Middle School



Parent Night
Deerfield Beach Middle School



Parent Night
Deerfield Beach Middle School



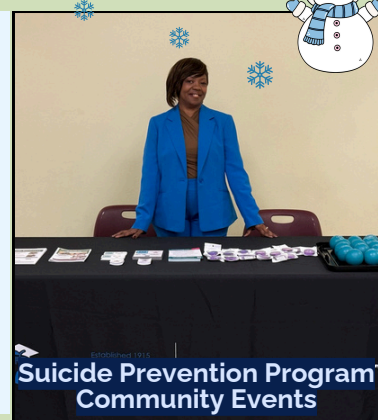
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PROGRAM IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Our Suicide Prevention Program collaborated with PAL of Hallandale as one of the Suicide Prevention Coordinators, Mrs. Arnold, served as a panelist at their Chat & Chew event in December bringing the community together to discuss mental health stigma and resources.

Required Instruction program staff participated in parent night events at Lyons Creek Middle School and Deerfield Beach Middle School to review the resiliency education lessons, as well as encourage parents and students to identify their trusted adults.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Suicide Prevention partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) to earn presenter certifications in Talk Saves Lives and It's Real: Teens and Mental Health. We're now ready to bring these vital, life changing conversations to our community to learn and make a difference! They will also host the next Suicide Risk Assessment (SRA) Refresher on Thursday, January 22, 2026.



Get Involved

Staff, we want to hear from you!
How have you used your Youth Mental Health First Aid training or seen it successfully applied in your school?

YMHFA

Send your real-world examples to LaToya Flournoy for a chance to be featured in our next newsletter. Submit Your Story Now!

Many more exciting events for students and families in the next quarter...

Wellness Experience Survey for Grades 4-12 students and parents is available January 20-30, 2026.

MHAART presents at the Annual Parent Seminar on Saturday, January 31, 2026, at the Fort Lauderdale Marriott.

Family Counseling Program will continue The Parenting Corner Initiative at Fox Trail Elementary and Silver Ridge Elementary.

Student Support Instructional Specialists will lead the second Trusted Adult district-wide initiative in February to remind students who, where, and how to identify an adult on campus they can turn to for help.

Required Instruction will sponsor Speak Life End Bullying presentations - a musical combining neuroscience-based insights and the power of art to deliver a strong anti-bullying message, at Coral Springs Middle School.

