

Wellness Connect Newsletter

Spring 2025-2026

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.



Mrs. Wynter, Director

Shining a Spring Light on Mental Health



Boyd Anderson High Wellness Fair

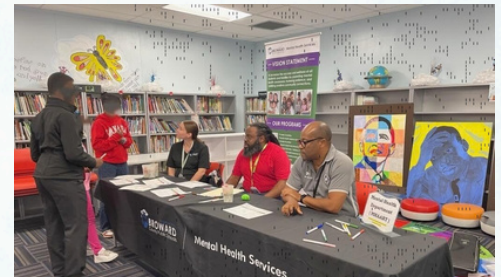


Blanche Ely High Wellness Fair

The Mental Health Services Department continues to prioritize mental health for students and families by providing essential assistance and resources to support wellness.

Our department thrives on collaboration with programs within the District and partners within the community to deliver meaningful support, education, and engagement across schools and the community. By combining expertise and resources, these partnerships expand the reach and impact of mental health services throughout the District.

Looking ahead to May, the department will proudly celebrate **Mental Health Awareness Month**, a highlight of the year. Programs are busy preparing engaging initiatives to promote wellness and awareness. Stay tuned for exciting updates and activities as we embrace this important month and an impactful final quarter of the 2025-2026 school year!



Morrow Elementary Wellness Event



Trusted Adult Week: Family Therapist, Student Support Instructional Specialist & School Social Worker at Northeast High



Blanche Ely High Wellness Fair



Plantation Elementary Wellness Fair

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BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Wellness in Action: Programs Working Together

The Mental Health Services (MHS) Department showcased the power of partnership this quarter, remaining visible and valuable to the community. Collaborating programs included **Required Instruction** and **Mental Health Assistance Allocation Regional Team (MHAART)** in conjunction with School Social Work, School Culture & Student Support, School Counseling, and local municipalities.

Our team presented an informative presentation to parents at the Gifted Advisory Council regarding test anxiety, gifted students' unique needs and ways parents can support their child's wellness.

Key events in January included the **Teen Summit**, followed by the **Martin Luther King Jr. Teen Summit**. Subsequently, the **Martin Luther King Jr. Teen Zone Event** offered interactive wellness activities. Presentations at the **Title 1 Parent Seminar** brought a wealth of education and resources to attendees.

The **15th Annual Unity in the Community Family Fun Day** brought families, students, local organizations, businesses, and public agencies together at Pompano Beach's Community Park and Amphitheater to connect, access resources, and celebrate neighborhood unity.

Pines is Kind community event, which was organized with the City of Pembroke Pines to promote inclusion and **Stay Healthy Together in Lauderdale** was highlighted in February. These cross-program collaborations maximize impact, strengthen relationships across departments, and ensure students and families receive coordinated, comprehensive mental health support.

MHAA Guidance for Charter School Leaders

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting schools with mental health funding and compliance, Dr. Susan Robinson delivered a comprehensive presentation about the Mental Health Assistance Allocation (MHAA) at the February Charter Schools Management Support Meeting. The session, held at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, provided charter school principals with clear guidance on requirements and best practices for preparing MHAA documentation, ensuring alignment, accountability, and continued support for student mental health services.

Celebrating Student Voices: MHAC Poster Contest

Founded in 2014, the Mental Health Awareness Committee (MHAC) is a volunteer group comprised of BCPS professionals from across Mental Health Services programs and fellow departments, dedicated to promoting mental health awareness year-round, with a special focus during May's **Mental Health Awareness Month**.

This year, MHAC hosted its third annual poster contest, giving students the opportunity to share their perspectives and celebrate the theme **#Everyone4MentalHealth**. Select posters will be showcased at the **United Way Behavioral Health Conference** in May. Winners will also be featured on the Broward Schools website throughout the month and displayed at the K.C. Wright Building. Be on the lookout for these inspiring creations!

Last year's Poster Contest winning posters!



Parent Presentation at the Gifted Advisory Council About Test Anxiety



Title 1 Parent Seminar



Teen Summit at Pompano Beach High



Pines is Kind: City of Pembroke Pines



Dr. Susan Robinson, Mental Health Coordinator, presenting at the Charter Schools Management Support Meeting



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PROGRAM IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Mental Health Services: Impact in Schools

Programs across the Mental Health Services (MHS) Department joined forces to bring learning, support, and fun to students and families in areas of life skills, wellness, and academic success. By combining expertise and resources, these teams bring powerful and meaningful experiences to participants.

Through Wellness Fairs, Community Events, and The Day of Service and Love Projects, there were program collaborations this quarter with **Required Instruction, Mental Health Assistance Allocation Regional Team (MHAART), Family Counseling Program, Student Support Instructional Specialists (SSIS), Suicide Prevention, School Social Work, School Culture & Support Services, School Counseling, Life Skills & Wellness, and Homeless Education Assistance Resource Team (HEART).**

Wellness Comes Your Way!



Wellness Fairs were hosted and well-received by students and staff at Blanche Ely High, Boyd Anderson High, McNicol Middle, Morrow Elementary, and Plantation Elementary School. Invitations for families to also engage were offered at Western High School's Parent Wellness Event, Forest Glen Middle School's Parent Night, and Deerfield Beach High School's Curriculum Fair.

Safe Spaces, Stronger Students: Support Groups Are Here

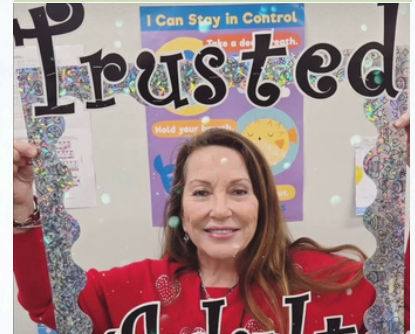
Mental Health Assistance Allocation Regional Team (MHAART) and Family Counseling Program have launched student support groups in select schools based on identified needs of the student populations.

Knowledge in Action: Presentations for Wellness

Mental Health Assistance Allocation Regional Team (MHAART) delivered **Healthy Relationships** presentations in February during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week. Team members also presented on the topic of **Exceptional Student Education: Gifted Test Anxiety.**



Blanche Ely High
Wellness Event



Coral Springs Middle
Trusted Adult Activities
Family Therapist-Ms. Gardiner



Day of Service & Love at
Flanagan High



Blanche Ely High Girls Support Group
Galentines Celebration



Day of Service & Love at
South Broward High



Boyd Anderson HS
Wellness Fair
Collaboration across
District Departments

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PROGRAM IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Building Resilience: Speak Life & Teen Summit

Required Instruction Resiliency Team delivered *Speak Life: End Bullying* assemblies at select schools throughout the district. Nova Middle School hosted this presentation, and **Ms. Debra Hixon, School Board Chair**, along with the **Suicide Prevention** and **Required Instruction** teams, appreciated the experience and student discussion.

The Required Instruction team also supported January's **Teen Summit** at Pompano Beach High School. Students practiced identifying Trusted Adults and applying resiliency strategies, while summit participants developed campus action plans to promote positive thinking. These initiatives continue to empower students to use resiliency skills every day.

Connecting Beyond the Classroom: Family Counseling in Action

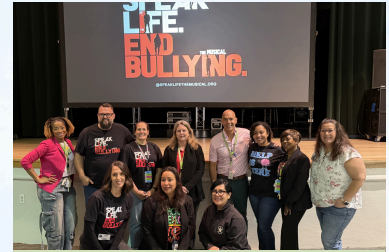
The **Family Counseling Program (FCP)** continues to expand its impact beyond counseling sessions. This quarter, the team brought *The Parenting Corner* to families at Fox Trail and Gulfstream Elementary Schools.

Mental Health Bulletin Boards

Student Support Instructional Specialists (SSIS) continue sharing essential wellness messages through visually engaging bulletin boards that inspire growth, resilience, and strong relationships. January highlighted a growth mindset, embracing challenges, and setting goals. February focused on healthy connections through the district-wide *Help is Here: Trusted Adult Initiative*, and March emphasized decision-making. Throughout each month, students were encouraged to foster relationships built on trust and respect and to identify support through a variety of interactive activities.

Be the One Who Shows Up

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) gives anyone the skills to recognize when someone may be struggling emotionally, start a supportive conversation, and connect them to the right resources. The YMHFA team recently joined the Student Government Association (SGA) at Bair Middle School for their **Hearts of Hope** initiative, filling the cafeteria with student-written messages of encouragement. Moments like these remind us that every kind word and check-in helps build a community where students feel seen, heard, and supported.



Speak Life: End Bullying Assembly at Nova Middle with Ms. Hixon & Mental Health Services Team



The FCP Parenting Corner at Fox Trail Elementary School



Ms. Mitchum, Mental Health Coordinator - Youth Mental Health First Aid



Student Support Instructional Specialist's Mental Health Bulletin Board at South Broward High



The FCP Parenting Corner at Gulfstream Early Learning Center



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NEW IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT...HOT OFF THE PRESS...

Expansion of the Broward County Baker Act Transportation Pilot Program

The **Suicide Prevention** team expanded the **Baker Act Transportation Pilot Program**, a multi-agency initiative designed to reduce trauma and improve transportation of children in crisis within the Broward County system of care by providing the option for students who are Baker Acted to be transported by a basic life support ambulance rather than a police vehicle. Currently, the program is being piloted at select schools.

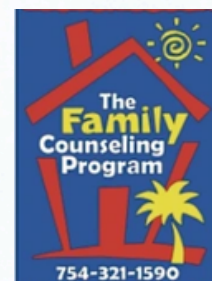


Suicide Prevention Hosts Hot Lab for Staff District-wide

Suicide Prevention hosted another successful Suicide Risk Assessment Hot Lab for staff in March. The smaller class sizes allowed for deeper discussion, hands-on practice, and individualized support, while showcasing the program's strength in providing high-quality training for this sensitive process. Additional opportunities to participate are scheduled for Tuesday, April 14 and Tuesday, May 12.

Connecting Beyond the Classroom: Family Counseling in Action

Family Counseling Program (FCP) continues to extend its support beyond counseling sessions and into the community. The team is excited to launch the Paren-Teen Corner, a new resource for families of middle school students designed to help parents navigate the changes of adolescence. This space will provide practical tools and strategies to strengthen communication, build healthy relationships, and better understand teens' social and emotional development.



Youth Mental Health Summit

The Mental Health Services and School Culture & Student Support Departments are supporting The Unbreakable Organization to host a student-led Youth Mental Health Summit for secondary students on Saturday, April 18 at South Broward High School featuring resources and breakout sessions to support students' wellness.



11th Annual South Florida United Way - Behavioral Health Conference

Celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month by exploring opportunities to expand knowledge and skills in behavioral health. The **11th Annual South Florida United Way Behavioral Health Conference: The Power of Prevention** will be held Wednesday, May 27 & Thursday, May 28, at The Diplomat Beach Resort.



**SSIS ensuring students at
Northeast HS know their
Trusted Adults**

**Speak Life: End Bullying
Presentation at Millennium 8-12
Collegiate Academy**

