



Student & Family Support Services Department Mental Health

MENTAL HEALTH POLICIES

FFB (Legal), DMA (Legal), FFG (Local), FFG (Legal), FFG (Exhibit)
FFC (Legal)

STUDENT AWARENESS

- Definition of Mental Health
- Be familiar with the school counselor and/or social worker and how they can assist
- Be familiar with resources available to seek help if they suspect that they or someone they know is having mental health issues
- Guidance Lessons – Second Step (Elementary) and 7 Mindsets (Secondary)
- Student Training - Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) - JECA and Middle Schools
- Counseling Services

PARENT AWARENESS

- Definition of Mental Health
- Attend district wide parent meetings
- Access to school counselor and/or social worker to report concerns
- Brochures

STAFF AWARENESS

- Definition of Mental Health
- Attend staff development campus training conducted by Student and Family Support Services Staff
- Complete the online Safe School Trainings
- Should report a to a school counselor and/or social worker if they suspect a student or staff member is having mental health issues
- Brochures



Student & Family Support Services Department Mental Health

Mental health is the foundation for thinking, communication, learning, resilience, and self-esteem. Mental health is also key to relationships, personal and emotional wellbeing and contributing to community or society.

Many people who have a mental illness do not want to talk about it. Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of. It is a medical condition, just like heart disease or diabetes. Mental health conditions are treatable. Treatments are available to help people successfully manage mental health conditions.

Mental illness does not discriminate; it can affect anyone regardless of your age, gender, income, social status, race/ethnicity, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, background or other aspect of cultural identity. Mental illness can occur at any age.

Mental illnesses take many forms. Some are mild and only interfere in limited ways with daily life, such as certain phobias (abnormal fears). Other mental health conditions are so severe that a person may need care in a hospital.

Know the Warning Signs

It is especially important to pay attention to sudden changes in thoughts and behaviors. Trying to tell the difference between what expected behaviors are and what might be the signs of a mental illness isn't always easy. There's no easy test that can let someone know if there is mental illness or if actions and thoughts might be typical behaviors of a person or the result of a physical illness.

- Changes in school performance
- Poor grades despite strong efforts
- Excessive worry or anxiety
- Hyperactivity
- Persistent nightmares
- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums
- Confused thinking
- Prolonged depression (sadness or irritability)
- Feelings of extreme highs and lows
- Social withdrawal
- Dramatic changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Strong feelings of anger
- Strange thoughts (delusions)
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there
- Growing inability to cope with daily problems
- Suicidal thoughts



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When talking about mental health with your child you should:

- Communicate in a straightforward manner.
- Speak at a level that is appropriate to a child or adolescent's age and development level (preschool children need fewer details than teenagers).
- Discuss the topic when your child feels safe and comfortable.
- Watch for reactions during the discussion and slow down or back up if your child becomes confused or looks upset.
- Listen openly and let your child tell you about his or her feelings and worries.

The Role of the School Counselor and Social Worker:

- Focus their efforts on designing and implementing comprehensive programs that promote academic, career and social/emotional success for all students.
- Help identify and address students' mental health issues.
- Promote positive, healthy behaviors and seek to remove the stigma associated with mental health issues.
- Provide internal and external referral procedures, short-term counseling or crisis intervention focused on mental health or situational (e.g. grief, difficult transitions) concerns with the intent of helping the student return to the classroom and removing barriers to learning.
- Provide school-based prevention and interventions for students with mental health and behavioral health concerns,
- Direct students and parents to school and/or community resources for additional assistance through referrals that treat mental health issues (suicidal ideation, violence, abuse and depression)

Although school counselors and social workers do not provide long-term mental health therapy in schools, they provide a comprehensive school counseling program designed to meet the developmental needs of all students

Ways mental health concerns are addressed in the school setting:

- 504 Special Ed referral
- Wellness Referral
- Classroom Interventions:
 - Behavioral Contract
 - Individual Learning Plan
 - Individual Counseling Sessions
 - Group Counseling Sessions
 - Guidance Lessons



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TEXAS CONSTITUTION STATUES

Health and Safety Code [§161.325](#)-policy concerning mental health promotion and intervention, substance abuse prevention and intervention, and suicide prevention that:

- (1) establishes a procedure for providing notice of a recommendation for early mental health or substance abuse intervention regarding a student to a parent or guardian of the student within a reasonable amount of time after the identification of early warning signs as described by Subsection (b)(2);
 - (2) establishes a procedure for providing notice of a student identified as at risk of committing suicide to a parent or guardian of the student within a reasonable amount of time after the identification of early warning signs as described by Subsection (b)(2);
 - (3) establishes that the district may develop a reporting mechanism and may designate at least one person to act as a liaison officer in the district for the purposes of identifying students in need of early mental health or substance abuse intervention or suicide prevention; and
 - (4) Sets out available counseling alternatives for a parent or guardian to consider when their child is identified as possibly being in need of early mental health or substance abuse intervention or suicide prevention.
- (e) The policy must prohibit the use without the prior consent of a student's parent or guardian of a medical screening of the student as part of the process of identifying whether the student is possibly in need of early mental health or substance abuse intervention or suicide prevention.

Crisis Hotline Numbers

Suicide Hotline
9-8-8

Crisis Hotline
210-223-7233

Youth LGBTQ Crisis Line
1-866-488-7386

Self-Injury Prevention
Hotline 1-800-366-8288