CAMPBELL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH

MAKING MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY

WDE SAMHSA Project Aware Grant
TAKE A LOOK INSIDE

THIS RESOURCE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN CAMPBELL COUNTY, RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO OUR FAMILIES, WARNING SIGNS AND CONVERSATION STARTERS THAT WILL HELP GUIDE YOU AS YOU BECOME BETTER EQUIPPED TO SUPPORT YOUR OWN CHILD’S MENTAL HEALTH.
To understand mental health, let's briefly review key terminology.

**Mental health** refers to positive social, emotional, and physiological well-being. Mental illnesses relate to a child's inability to effectively manage those aspects of well-being and, therefore, have difficulty progressing throughout the day.

As such, **behavioral health** is often interchangeable with mental health.

**Wellness** is a comprehensive approach to health, including physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being. Focusing on wellness is a positive process in which an individual is consciously working toward achieving their wellness goals.

*Why is it important to know these terms as parents?*

These terms provide a basic understanding and awareness toward your child's mental health. In supporting your child, it is critical to acknowledge that mental health and wellness are complex and related. As a parent, it is key to foster environments in which your child can build skills and achieve their goals.
A common misconception: mental health issues aren’t an issue in younger children. Our student data tells a little different story. Of all our mental health referrals from school counselors, k-5th grade referrals make up 45%. Our schools are working hand in hand with our families and community mental health partners to make sure our students receive needed services.

Of the referrals made by CCSD counselors, below are the top five concerns:

- Anxious/Fearful/Excessive Worry
- Difficulty concentrating/distracts easily/inattentive
- Family Dynamics/Divorce and Separation
- Angry/Irritable/Argumentative/Defiant
- Appears depressed or sad/hopeless

83% of CCSD students report having an adult they can talk about their problems with. When they come to you for help, Listen, Support, and Encourage.
CHECKLIST FOR FOSTERING MENTAL HEALTH AT HOME

- Identify ways to relax with your child
  - movies, a walk, read together

- Engage in family fun activities together.

- Emphasize their strengths through positive reinforcement.

- Make goals with your child
  - practice goal-setting, start with small/easier goals first

- Help your child in maintaining routines

- Pay attention to your child's use of internet/social media

- Model behavior
  - demonstrate your own personal focus on mental health by talking about it and doing things for yourself (yoga, walking)
ADHA, behavior problems, anxiety, and depression are the most commonly diagnosed mental health disorders in children.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):**
ADHD is characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity or impulsivity that interferes with development, learning, or functioning. The symptoms of ADHD usually start prior to age 12. In school, ADHD may look like: distractibility, restlessness, forgetting to complete assignments, difficulty concentrating, disrupting the class.

**Behavior Problems:**
Behavior problems can present themselves as a pattern of disruptive behavior in children. These can be presented in various settings including: school, home, social situations. Common behavior problems diagnosed in childhood include: Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder. In school, ODD/Conduct Disorder may look like: negativity, noncompliance, temper outbursts, angry and irritable mood, hostility toward authority figures (teachers/school staff)

**Anxiety:**
Anxiety can be defined as excessive worry that is not focused on a single trigger (i.e. fear of social situations, or fear of a specific event/situation). In school, anxiety may look like: avoidant of certain situations, physical symptoms (stomach aches, shaking hands/legs, racing heart), feeling self-conscious in certain situations, trouble completing classwork, missing class or increased absences.

**Depression:**
Depression in children is characterized by persistent sadness and hopelessness. It presents in many ways, but children suffering from depression may experience changes in eating patterns, loss of interest in things they used to enjoy, changes in sleep patterns, changes in energy and inattention. In school, depression may look like: poor work completion, feeling sick, increased school absence, lack of participation, isolation and withdrawal, sleeping in class.
Parents play an integral role in supporting your child if they experience mental health struggles.

START HERE:
- Inform yourself about your child's mental health disorder
- Connect with your student's school team to advocate for your child's well-being and to ensure there is appropriate support
- Explore self-care strategies for yourself - being a parent of a child with mental health needs can be challenging.
- Strive to understand your child's mental health struggles
- Remind your child that mental health struggles are common
- Remind your child that it is okay to feel sad, angry, or frustrated about their mental health struggles.
- Be empathic and understanding - show love and acceptance.

ENVIRONMENT MATTERS:
- Create a positive home environment
- Ensure that your student is in a positive, safe, school environment - feeling safe at school is critical to learning and positive mental health.

ENCOURAGE COMMUNICATION:
- Listen and respect your child's feelings about their mental health disorder
- Find an outside provider if your child does not feel comfortable talking to you (therapist, school counselor, etc)
- Ask questions and come without judgement
- Help your child set realistic goals for themselves
- Encourage your child to build strong relationships with friends and family
- Encourage resiliency through connectedness, helping others, and problem solving.
Warning Signs may indicate that your child is experiencing mental health difficulties.

Examples:

- recurring behavior at school
- frequent temper tantrums
- unusual worries/fears
- hyperactivity/constant movement beyond regular play
- difficulty participating in normal activities for child's age
- difficulties with concentration, attention, or organization
- withdrawal from people or activities he/she used to enjoy
- prolonged lack of energy
- difficulty going to sleep, staying asleep, or waking up
- sudden outbursts or explosive emotional reactions
- prolonged negative mood and attitude
- frequent refusal to go to school
- ongoing decline in school performance
- isolation, loneliness, and lack of friends
- risky or dangerous behavior
- feeling hopeless or worthless
- abuse of alcohol or drugs
- self-injury or physical harm to others

**thoughts or talk of suicide:** If your child is having thoughts of suicide or talking about suicide, seek immediate assistance from a doctor, school professional, or law enforcement and do not leave your child alone.

**Risk Factors** are variables that make it more likely that a child may experience mental health problems. These risk factors can be internal characteristics, or experiences in a child's environment.

Examples:

- health problems
- poor social skills
- violence or abuse in the home
- parent mental health problems
- loss of a family member
- parent divorce/separation
- low socioeconomic status

**Protective Factors:** When present in a child's life, make it less likely that a child will experience a mental health problem. These can help a child overcome, cope with, or "bounce back" from a difficult situation.

Examples:

- high self-esteem
- good coping skills and problem solving
- structure in the home with clear expectations for behavior
- supportive relationships with family and community
- engagement in school and community
STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Print this page and incorporate this Feeling Wheel in conversation with your child.

~Ask your child about the things they enjoy
~Listen to their thoughts and feelings
~Have conversation in a quiet place
~Share something about your day first, be open about your thoughts and feelings
MINDFULNESS AND CALMING STRATEGIES

Mindfulness is the act of bringing your attention to the present moment.

Below is a helpful activity to do with your child if you notice changes in their mood, or after a stressful day.

1. Ask your child to tell you or write down the things that are making them sad, angry, anxious, etc.

2. Tell them to close their eyes and imagine those feelings and thoughts being placed inside balloons.

3. After a few seconds, tell them to imagine those balloons floating away and have them open their eyes.
Much research is ongoing to better understand connections between mental health and sleep, but evidence supports to a bidirectional relationship. This means sleeping problems may be both a cause and consequence of mental health problems - mental health conditions can make it harder to sleep, while poor sleep habits can be a contributing factor to the initiation and worsening of mental health problems.

Brain activity fluctuates during sleep, and each stage plays a role in brain health. Sufficient sleep helps the brain's processing of emotional information. While we sleep, the brain works to evaluate and remember thoughts and memoires, thus the lack of sleep is especially harmful to the storing of positive emotional content. This can influence mood and emotional reactivity, and is tied to mental health disorders and their severity.
SLEEP SCHEDULES AND ROUTINES

Improving Sleep Habits

Caffeine is a stimulant, and can keep your child alert and awake, well after bedtime.

A good bedtime routine includes relaxing activities:

- Taking a warm bath/shower
- Singing lullabies
- Reading with a parent or individually
- Journaling
- Meditating
- Cuddling with parent

Bedroom Tips for Quality Sleep

- Set a bedtime and maintain that throughout the week.
- Keep the room dark
- Make sure the room is cool
- Eliminate noises and keep room quiet
- Use the bed only for sleeping
- Avoid blue light and technology one hour before bed.

Research shows that children exposed to blue light before bedtime experience poorer sleep quality.
Research shows social/emotional stress in our youth can be correlated to their amount of "Screen time". Data also shows that our kids are spending 8-14 hours a day in front of a screen, whether streaming shows or using social media.

In the past, our kids were most influenced by their family, school and then their peers. In recent years, and with the influence of social media, our kids are now mostly influenced by their peers, then school, and finally family.

**MOST WIDELY USED APPS**

- Snapchat
- Kik
- Whatsapp
- Instagram
- YikYak
- Live Me
- Omegle
- Chatroulette

**WHAT CAN PARENTS DO??**

Lead by Example:
- Have your own device put away at times (meals, driving, conversations)
- Set Routines/Be Consistent: check social media at set times, phones charged in non-bedroom area
  - Tech Free Tuesday
  - Chores and Reading first
  - Screen Time limits
**Apps to Keep on Your Radar**

**Yik Yak**: messaging app to send messages to others anonymously - a breeding ground for cyberbullying.

**House Party**: app uses video technology as a way to communicate with others, however - anyone can pop into a live video and be able to comment in the chat section.

**Yik Yak**: messaging app to send messages to others anonymously - a breeding ground for cyberbullying.

**Calculator%**: Looks like a normal calculator, but instead acts as a secret vault used for hiding photos, apps, files, etc

**Likee**: This app is the kid version of Tinder, a dating app for adults.

**Kik**: This app is designed as a way for people to text each other, however, it allows anyone, anywhere to have the ability to text your child.

**WhatsApp**: This app has the ability to send text messages, phone calls, voicemails, and video chat through the use of an internet connection.
MONITORING
SOCIAL MEDIA AND
SCREEN TIME

Parental Control Apps

Can Include:
- content filtering
- site or app blocking
- screen-time limits
- location tracking
- geofencing
- call or text monitoring
- social network supervision
- contact blocking

Find a System that fits your family.

Online Resources for app reviews and other media:
1. Common Sense Media: user is allowed 3 reviews from each device, commonsensemedia.org
2. Protect Young Eyes: protectyoungeyes.com
3. Use a regular old "Google" search

The 7 BEST Parental Control Apps of 2022

Overall: Net Nanny
Older Kids: Canopy
Younger Kids: Qustodio
Overall Monitoring: Bark
Managing Screen Time: OurPact
Location Tracking: FamilyTime
Budget Friendly: Norton Family

HTTPS://WWW.VERYWELLFAMILY.COM/BEST-PARENTAL-CONTROL-APPS-4779963
It's important for our schools and parents to form a collaborative team to help support our student's mental health.

Schools are an ideal place to connect students with mental health services.

- Every community has a school
- Most children spend at least 6 hours per day at school
- Schools provide an environment for positive development and intervention.
- School-employed professionals know the student and family well (school counselors, nurses, teachers)
- Research suggests that students are more likely to seek counseling when services are available in schools.
- Please contact your school counselor for more information regarding mental health service referrals and available grant funding.

Feelings of safety affect academic performance and problem-solving skills.
RESOURCES

Kid Clinic
School based health center for children 2 weeks to 21 years old, medical and mental health services provided.
307-688-8700

Crisis Center: Behavioral Health and Mental Health Crisis Line
307-688-5555

Suicide Prevention Center: 1-800-273-8255

Crisis Text Line: Text WYO to 741-741

GARF: Domestic violence, sexual assault, 307-686-8070

YES House: Youth Emergency Services AND Substance Use assessments and counseling at the 307-686-0669

Child Abuse Hotline/Child Protective Services: 307-682-7277

Student Support Services at CCSD: 307-687-4546

CCSD partners with mental health clinics across our county. Please reach out to your school counselor for more information and grant funding with Project AWARE.

For a Comprehensive list of Resources, please visit Campbell County Prevention Council: https://www.campbellcountyresources.com/
APPENDIX
ADDITIONAL WORKSHEETS AND RESOURCES
CALMING APPS

**Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame**  
Ages 4+  
Adorable monster de-stresses kids with Sesame Street style.

**Calm**  
Ages 7+  
Appealing meditation and relaxation for all ages.

**Three Good Things-A Happiness Journal**  
Ages 7+  
End the day positively with this digital journal

**HeadSpace: Meditation & Sleep**  
Ages 8+  
Practical meditation for adults and kids.

**Wuf Shanti Yoga Fun Machine**  
Ages 3+  
Kid-friendly yoga, meditation lessons from big, happy dog.
Mindful Coloring
Take a few minutes our of your busy day to color with your children. Mindful coloring is where you focus your attention to the present moment, you let go of any thoughts about tomorrow or yesterday and just focus on the present.

Mindful Walks
Go for a walk with your family or by yourself and practice noticing your surroundings and how your body and mind feel while moving.

The Ultimate List of Free Yoga Pose Printables for Kids
If you or your children are feeling restless or overly energetic take a few minutes to do some stretches/yoga poses to help relax your brain and body.

Relaxation strategies/Yoga allows children to experience the energy of intense emotions and impulses in a healthy manner.
### 28 Days of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY 1</th>
<th>Create a journal with your child or use the last one to record each day's activity. They can decorate the front page.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAY 2</td>
<td>Try to build an object that moves if you push it and then test it outside. Ex: A car made of tissue box or a rolling toilet paper roll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 3</td>
<td>Bring paints outside and search for a beautiful flower or scene. Paint the flower or scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 4</td>
<td>Go outside and find a tree, bush, or flower. Then, make up a story or words or pictures about something that lives there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 5</td>
<td>Make popsicles or your own DIY freestyles. Freeze toys or objects that won’t be damaged in ice for Day 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 6</td>
<td>Build a fort outdoors or indoors. Then, read or look at books with a flashlight in the fort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 7</td>
<td>Dig out the toys or items that you stuck in the ice from Day 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 8</td>
<td>Have a picnic in your backyard, park, or on your living room floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 9</td>
<td>Beach Day! Drive to the beach or play with the sprinkler or paddling pool in the backyard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 10</td>
<td>Pretend to go camping and set up a tent in the backyard or in your house. Plan a fun camping snack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 11</td>
<td>Collect leaves. Then, go online and identify them at home in your journal. Little kids can just glue them in the journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 12</td>
<td>Make a treasure chest out of recycling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 13</td>
<td>Make Animal Rocks. Paint rocks to look like animals or glue on small rock ears, stick tails and paint eyes and a nose!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 14</td>
<td>Make a summer salad to eat. Kids can cut the veggies themselves (w/supervision). Butternuts for younger kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 15</td>
<td>Sidewalk Chalk Fun! Older kids can create a cartoon with the chalk outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 16</td>
<td>Make a flower or a leaf crown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 17</td>
<td>Go for a bike ride! Make sure you have materials for a bird feeder on Day 24.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 18</td>
<td>Collect leaves. Then, put a paper on top of one. Then, use a crayon to brush over the leaf making a leaf design on the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 19</td>
<td>Make wands out of sticks. Decorate them with strings wrapped around them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 20</td>
<td>Play with water balloons. Create a water balloon toss, have a water fight, see how high you can throw it before it pops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 21</td>
<td>Paint inspirational messages and pictures on rocks. Then go on a walk and put them somewhere in the neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 22</td>
<td>Make a boardgame like tic tac toe out of natural materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 23</td>
<td>Body Painting. In a swimsuit, paint fun pictures on your legs with washable paint. Then wash off outside!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 24</td>
<td>Make a Bird Feeder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 25</td>
<td>Wash the car!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 26</td>
<td>Make nature designs and pictures with leaves, rocks, flowers, and sticks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 27</td>
<td>Send 5 letters to friends and family to tell them your thinking of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 28</td>
<td>Make a Bug Hotel using natural materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Connect and share your activities and stories by tagging @born2beadventurous on Instagram or messaging @born2beadventurous on Facebook.
## SELF CARE CHALLENGE

### 5 Days of Self Care Challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write down five nice things about yourself and three positive things happening in your life right now.</td>
<td>Exercise for 30 minutes.</td>
<td>Take 30 minutes to yourself and relax without technology. Ideas include going for a walk, read a book, light a candle and meditate or pray.</td>
<td>Put on some music and dance around the house with your family. Smile while you’re doing it and enjoy laughing.</td>
<td>Get ready today as if you were going out to meet someone for coffee. Share a photo of your good looking self on the Born to be Adventurous Ilamas Facebook group or on Instagram.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Connect and share your self care journey by joining the @borntobeadventurousmamas Facebook group and/or make sure to tag @borntobeadventurous on Instagram.
## 75 Activity Jar Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decorate your Bike</th>
<th>Paint Rocks</th>
<th>Make Pinecone Flowers</th>
<th>Create a Scavenger Hunt</th>
<th>Play with Play Dough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do a Puzzle</td>
<td>Read a Book</td>
<td>Make Cards</td>
<td>Play with Chalk</td>
<td>Build a Fort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a Volcano</td>
<td>Play Tag</td>
<td>Bike Ride</td>
<td>Play a Board Game</td>
<td>Bake Cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go for a Walk</td>
<td>Make Paper Airplanes</td>
<td>Draw our House</td>
<td>Take 5-10 Pictures and Write about Them</td>
<td>Play Eye Spy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour a Picture</td>
<td>Play in a SandBox</td>
<td>Make Something out of the Recycling</td>
<td>Have a Tea Party</td>
<td>Trace your Body with Chalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw your Favourite Stuffy</td>
<td>Find Flowers, Leaves, and Sticks and Paint with them</td>
<td>Climb a Tree</td>
<td>Go Skateboarding/ Scootering/Roller Skating</td>
<td>Listen to an Audiobook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a Mud Pie</td>
<td>Have a Picnic</td>
<td>Make up a Play</td>
<td>Build a Fort</td>
<td>Paint a Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a Picture of Your Family</td>
<td>Play Hide-in-Seek</td>
<td>Make a Pretend Pizza out of Paper and make the Toppings</td>
<td>Make a Treasure Map</td>
<td>Make a Puzzle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play with Bubbles</td>
<td>Make an Obstacle Course</td>
<td>Make a Hopscotch out of Chalk</td>
<td>Play with Water</td>
<td>Press Flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Up the Sprinklers</td>
<td>Collect Sticks, Flowers, Leaves, and do a Craft</td>
<td>Jump Rope</td>
<td>Hula Hoop</td>
<td>Wash the Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Catch</td>
<td>Play Soccer</td>
<td>Build a Marble Run</td>
<td>Build Your Own</td>
<td>Paint Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Popsicles</td>
<td>Go for a Run</td>
<td>Set up a Nature Cutting Tray</td>
<td>Do a Photo Scavenger Hunt</td>
<td>Make a Nature Collage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Set Up a Tent</td>
<td>Pretend Play “Going on a Hike”</td>
<td>Go on a Bug Hunt</td>
<td>Make a Bird Feeder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a Snack Outside</td>
<td>Read Outside on a Blanket</td>
<td>Make a Treasure Map</td>
<td>Build with Blocks or Recycling</td>
<td>Make a Book Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Four Square</td>
<td>Paint and Stamp with Vegetables and Fruit</td>
<td>Build a Fairy House</td>
<td>Have a Penny Toss</td>
<td>Print off a Colour by Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each child is different and has different abilities, these are merely suggestions.

## CONTRIBUTION ideas for kids

*Each child is different and has different abilities so these ideas are just a starting point for choosing ideas that are suitable for your family.*

### 2-3 year olds
- Pick up toys
- Dust
- Help put away groceries
- Put dirty clothes in the hamper
- Wipe up spills
- Clear and wipe the table
- Throw trash away
- Put clothes in the dryer

### 6-7 year olds
- All the previous tasks +
- Load and unload dishwasher
- Fold towels
- Mop floors
- Rake leaves
- Match the socks
- Make a salad
- Sweep

### 10-11 year olds
- All the previous tasks +
- Clean the kitchen
- Vacuum carpets
- Clean countertops
- Bake cookies (with supervision)
- Collect garbage
- Make all of their own snacks

### 4-5 year olds
- All the previous tasks +
- Make bed
- Sort laundry
- Set the table
- Feed the pet
- Water plants
- Prepare a small snack
- Use hand-held vacuum
- Take sheets off beds
- Sweep with a small broom
- Pull weeds

### 8-9 year olds
- All the previous tasks +
- Wash laundry
- Bring in mail
- Fold clothes
- Dust furniture
- Put groceries away
- Make easy meals
- Wash the family car with supervision
- Clean microwave
- Pack their lunch
- Organize toys

### 12+ year olds
- All the previous tasks +
- Wash the car
- Cook an easy dinner
- Clean windows
- Mow lawn
- Clean out fridge
- Clean mirrors
- Manage their laundry
- Clean the garage
- Clean tub or shower