



# January 2nd Cup of Coffee

Maine South High School, District #207






# COVID Updates

## What we changed since December

- No eating and drinking in hallways
- Mask announcements every period the first week
- No eating or drinking except the cafeteria during non-lunch periods
- Masks outside of schools
- We could use parent volunteers during lunch 11:20-1:40pm each day
- **Students can still receive consequences for improper mask usage**
- Not seeing school transmission cases that we know of

## Staffing

- Close to 40 staff out, half because of COVID
  - Some teachers “zooming” into their class from home
  - Made some changes to internal subbing
  - Not seeing staff transmission cases last week
  - **Doing everything we can to stay open**
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# Collaborating with Caregivers:

## Understanding & Supporting Teen Mental Health

Maine South High School, District #207





# Overview

1.

## Challenges

Things your student may be facing.

2.

## Mental Health

Signs, symptoms, and when to worry.

3.

## Covid-19

Exploring the pandemic's impact on our teens.

4.

## Talking to your Teen

How to have difficult conversations.

5.

## Supports

School and community services.





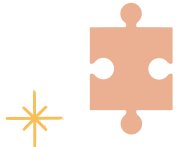
# Difficult Situations Teens Experience

<b>Peer Conflict</b>	<b>Divorce</b>	<b>Homelessness</b>
<b>Family Conflict</b>	<b>Transitions</b>	<b>Financial Instability</b>
<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Academic Pressure</b>	<b>Natural Disaster</b>
<b>Loss of Loved One</b>	<b>Community Violence</b>	<b>Global Pandemic</b>

# Common Reactions to Difficult Situations:



- Shock
- Anger
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Hopelessness
- Guilt
- Denial



# Dealing with Stress



## Healthy

- Talk to a friend
- Take a walk
- Write in a journal
- Listen to music
- Exercise
- Meditate
- Do something creative
- Talk to a therapist
- Sleep
- Use a stress ball

## Unhealthy

- Too much sleep
- Under/Overeating
- Withdrawal from peers
- Smoking/vaping
- Alcohol abuse
- Drug use
- Self-harm
- Increased aggression



# Depression: Signs and Symptoms



**Depressed Mood**



**Loss of Interest**



**Change in Appetite**



**Loss of Energy**



**Sleep Problems**



**Suicidal Thinking**



**Restlessness**



**Trouble Concentrating**



**Feelings of Worthlessness**



# More than Sad?

Is this sadness or something else?



## Number of Symptoms

Must have 5 or more of the symptoms mentioned



## Length of Time

Symptoms must be present for 2 or more weeks



## Impact

Condition must substantially limit the teen in one or more areas: Academic, Social, Emotional

# Anxiety: Signs and Symptoms



**Excessive  
Worries**



**Edginess or  
Restlessness**



**Change in  
Appetite**



**Loss of  
Energy**



**Sleep  
Problems**



**Impaired  
Concentration**



**Irritability**



**Somatic  
Symptoms**



**Panic Attacks**

# Normal Stress or Clinical Anxiety?



## Number of Symptoms

Must have 3 or more of the symptoms mentioned



## Length of Time

Symptoms must be present on more days than not for 6 months or more



## Impact

Condition must substantially limit the teen in one or more areas: Academic, Social, Emotional



# Impact of COVID-19 on Teens



**Global  
Anxiety**



**Loss of  
Safety**



**Change in  
Routines**



**Missed  
Milestones**





# What We See at Maine South

## **Current Mental Health Data:**

- This year, 50 students required follow up after the Pediatric Symptoms Checklist given to all sophomores.
- 70 freshmen required follow up after our Signs of Suicide presentation.

## **Connection between Mental Health & Behavior:**

- Stress related to a high-pressure environment
- Challenges with transitioning back to in-person school
- Substance use
- Escalated behavior: peer conflict, disrespect towards staff, difficulty adhering to behavioral norms, and disruptions.



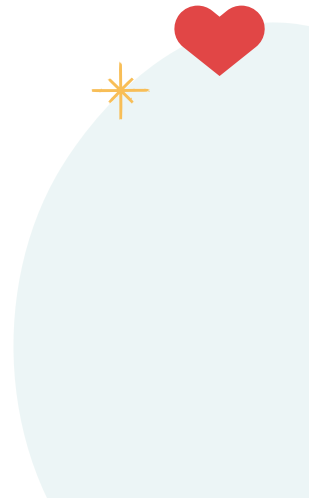


# How We Respond

## Universal Supports

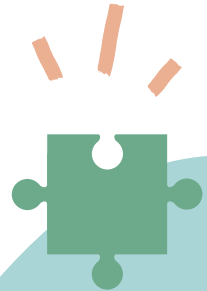
- Advisory
- Student Support Teams
- Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (e.g., PRIDE)
- Encouragement for involvement in school community
- Universal screening (e.g., PSC, SOS)
- Weekly data monitoring through SST

## Targeted Supports

- Referrals to skill-building groups
  - Restorative discipline
  - Individualized intervention
  - Mentoring (e.g., Project CONNECT)
  - Referrals to outside supports.
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**With the right support, youth  
are incredibly resilient.**



# Active Listening


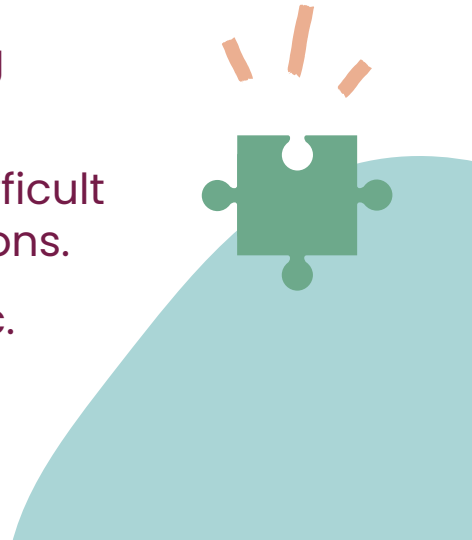






# How to Talk to Your Student



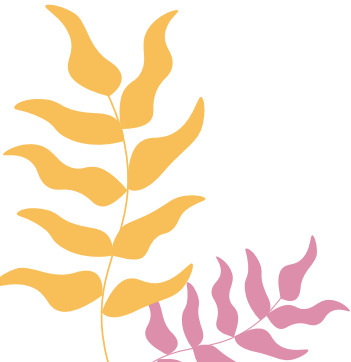
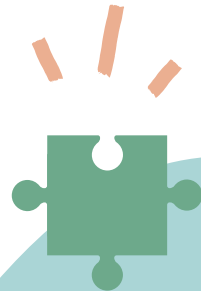
- You don't have to have the perfect words.
  - Be consistent, honest and reassuring.
  - Validate their feelings.
  - Don't panic in the absence or presence of strong emotional responses
  - Reassure them that it is normal to experience difficult emotions and there are no right or wrong emotions.
  - Talk about symptoms of stress, trauma, grief, etc.
- 
- 



# Try to Avoid...



- “What do you have to be sad about?”
- “I had it worse when I was a kid”
- “You’ll be fine, stop worrying about it”
- “You’re being too sensitive”
- “I know EXACTLY what you’re going through”
- “It’s all in your head. Just don’t think about it”
- “It could be worse”



# Things You Can Say:

**"We can get through this together. You are not alone."**

**"Do you feel like you want to talk to someone else about what you are going through?"**

**"Sometimes it helps to talk to someone. I'm here to listen. How can I help you feel better?"**

**"I understand if you aren't ready to talk-but I will keep checking in on you."**

**"I'm sorry for what you are going through. I am here to support you."**

**"I've noticed some changes and I'm worried about you. Is now a good time to talk?"**





# What You Can Do




## Addressing Wellbeing

- Encourage participation in our school community (e.g., athletics, clubs)
- Promote sleep hygiene at home.
- Model healthy habits.
- Encourage regular exercise.
- Discuss the potential impacts of social media.
- Talk openly about mental health.



## Addressing Behavior

- Set strong boundaries and clear expectations.
  - Follow through with consequences.
  - Partner with our Assistant Principals for Student Services regarding school issues.
  - Encourage reflection following a poor decision.
  - Take a restorative approach.
  - Pay attention to who your child socializes with.
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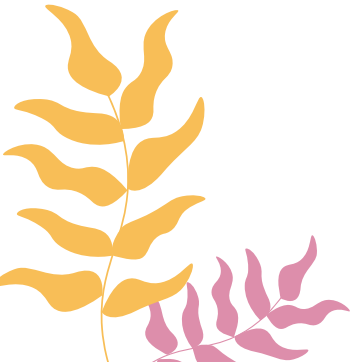
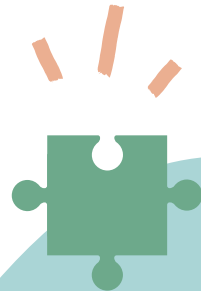


# Taking Care of Yourself

You can't pour from an empty cup!

**Before talking to your student, consider how these conversations may spark things in your own life:**

- Have you experienced tough things?
- Do you have judgements or expectations for how people should respond in crisis?
- How is your own emotional health?
- How can you set appropriate boundaries?



# School-Based Resources



## Student Services Team

Counselors  
Social Workers  
Psychologists



## Social-Emotional Groups

Stress Management  
Mood Management



## Assistant Principals of Student Support

Jen Korbar  
Kyleen Coia  
Dara' Fenner



## School-Based Health Center

(847) 825-4059



# Community-Based Resources



## Counseling Referrals

Provided through SST



## MaineStay Youth & Family Services

Counseling, Psychiatric  
Services, Youth Programming



## Hospital Programs

Provided through SST



## Suicide Hotline

Call: 800-273-8255

Text: 741741



# Thank You!



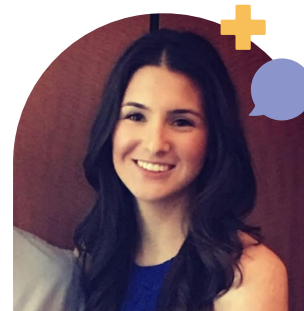
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504 Coordinator



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School Psychologist, Team Red

