



Patrick Henry Local Schools

Create an environment where all students discover
their personal best in every opportunity

Monthly Newsletter

Hello! Thank you for reading the monthly newsletter for May from the school social worker. The goal of my monthly newsletter is to provide at least one takeaway strategy, resource, tip, or idea. This newsletter will focus on staff feedback regarding mental health in support of Mental Health Awareness Month.



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May is Mental Health Awareness Month and for this newsletter, I decided to do something similar to what I did last year. In the past, I had asked a small portion of our students to share feedback on a few questions regarding mental health to help those in their lives better understand how mental health impacts our students. This year, I asked some staff members to share their personal experiences regarding mental health and what they see from the students that they work with. The feedback I received was very insightful and some of the feedback that they provided is shown on the following page. The responses I received also mentioned the need for additional helpful mental health resources and I have included some of these on right hand side of the following page.

I'm grateful to the staff members who provided this information to shed a light on what they have been seeing in the classroom and to help lessen the stigma around mental health. No matter how big or small your problems may seem, it is okay to reach out for support and the support you give to others matters. I encourage everyone to consider how caring for your mental health can be applied to our three pillars: **perseverance**, **above and beyond**, and **family**. I am thankful to be finishing out another school year working in a school district that prioritizes the mental health of our staff and our students. With summer right around the corner, I hope everyone in the Patrick Henry Community is able to work on enhancing their mental health throughout this month and over the summer! **#PHStrong**

Mental Health Check In

- How have you been feeling lately?
- Have you been getting enough sleep?
- Have you been eating regular meals?
- Have you drank any water today?
- Have you been spending time with people who support you?

Staff Feedback Regarding Mental Health

What does mental health mean to you?

- How we think, feel and act, how our mental well being is, how we handle stress
- Feeling good and happy in your skin--being content with who/what you are and knowing that each person has struggles we are unaware of, but accepting those people regardless.
- My mental and emotional well being, perceived thoughts and feelings and how it impacts all aspects of my life.

Is there something you wish more people understood about mental health?

- That everyone is at their own place with their mental health and that we all cope with every situation in our own way
- I wish more people understood that an individual appearing to be happy/carefree may be internalizing a mental health struggle. I wish more people knew that depression can impact an individual at any given time and can cause debilitating impact at the time of the occurrence.
- Mental health should be taken just as seriously as physical health. If you have an infection, you would go to the doctor and get treatment. The same is true for mental health. Persistent mental health concerns should be treated by qualified therapists and physicians.

What do you see from the students in your classroom or from the students you work with regarding mental health?

- Mental health is a huge topic of concern... these children are dealing with so much more than we will ever know/understand
- I feel like most students disregard their mental health; specifically, student athletes. I feel like most student athletes feel pressure to excel in and out of the classroom so they ignore any signs of a struggle they may be experiencing.
- I have seen a general increase in students experiencing anxiety, trauma, and difficulty self regulating. At younger and younger ages, students are dealing with more than I realized before. It is becoming more common to have students and families with mental health needs than not.

Additional Resources to Explore

Tips for how to talk about mental health: For Educators
[https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/how-to-](https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/how-to-talk/educators)

[talk/educators](https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/how-to-talk/educators)

Mental Health Fact Sheets and Brochures:

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets-in-english>

Resources for Teachers- Mental Health in the Classroom:

<https://childmind.org/topics/resources-for-teachers/>

“One small crack does not mean that you are broken, it means that you were put to the test and you didn’t fall apart.”
—Linda Poindexter