

Wellness Services and Community Supports at Samohi

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Los Angeles County
Office of Education



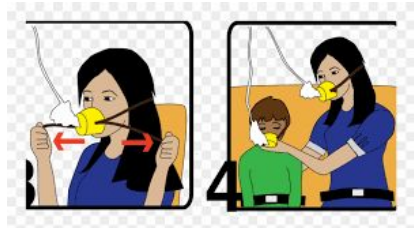
COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS



A New School Year

- A new school year can be exciting
- But it can also bring up a lot of questions and concerns
- Students pick up on adult wellbeing (or lack thereof!)

We must get in touch with our own feelings and needs to support our children with theirs.



Parent mental health maintenance



What stresses you?

What do you do to feel better when you are stressed?

Basic self-care musts

- ❖ Take care of your body
 - (Getting enough sleep, healthy food & balanced meals, exercise)
- ❖ Limit news intake
- ❖ Lower your stress
 - (Breathing /meditation, comedy, reading, walks)
- ❖ Relationships and connection
- ❖ Accept your feelings
- ❖ Try positive self-talk





Some statistics on Youth Mental Health

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one in five children and adolescents experience a mental health problem during their school years.

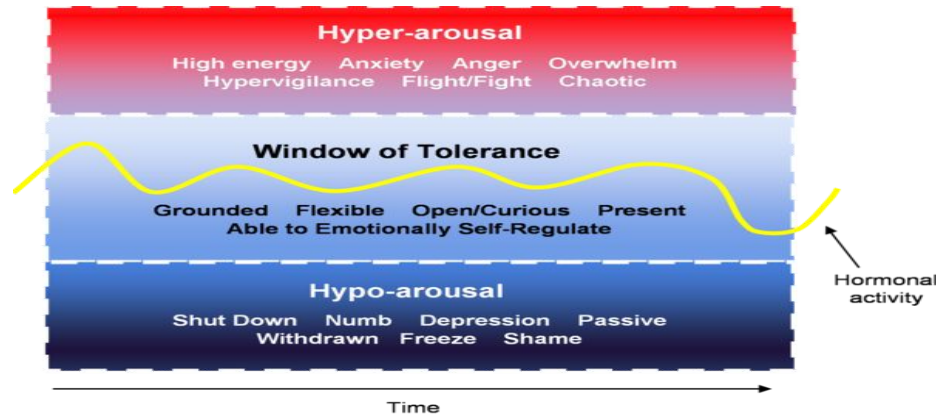
Examples include stress, anxiety, bullying, family problems, depression, learning disability, and alcohol and substance abuse.

Unfortunately, many children and youth do not receive the help they need, and disparities in access to care exist among low-income communities and marginalized youth.

Of the adolescents who do get help, nearly two thirds do so only in school.

Mental health effects of a prolonged pandemic and the effects on our students

Human brains are wired to look for predictability, so all of the uncertainty and challenges reintegrating socially are impacting all of our nervous systems. This can look like ongoing anxiety and depression, irritability, exhaustion, difficulty concentrating, and more



Who are we worried about the most?

Those who experienced learning loss (academic and social), depression due to isolation that led to dips in motivation, and anxiety about the return to “regular school” with fewer social connections

Families with unmet basic needs, health and nutrition concerns, eating disorders, family violence, and substance use issues

Just a reminder that recovery will take some time. We need to be patient.



Trauma and RESILIENCE

Psychological resilience is the ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly.

Resilience exists when the person uses "mental processes and behaviors in promoting personal assets and protecting self from the potential negative effects of stressors"






Ways to Support Youth Mental Health

Create a sense of belonging. Feeling connected and welcomed is essential to children's positive adjustment, self-identification, and sense of trust in others and themselves. Building strong, positive relationships among students, school staff, and parents is important to promoting mental wellness.

Promote resilience. Adversity is a natural part of life and being resilient is important to overcoming challenges and good mental health. Connectedness, competency, helping others, and successfully facing difficult situations can foster resilience.

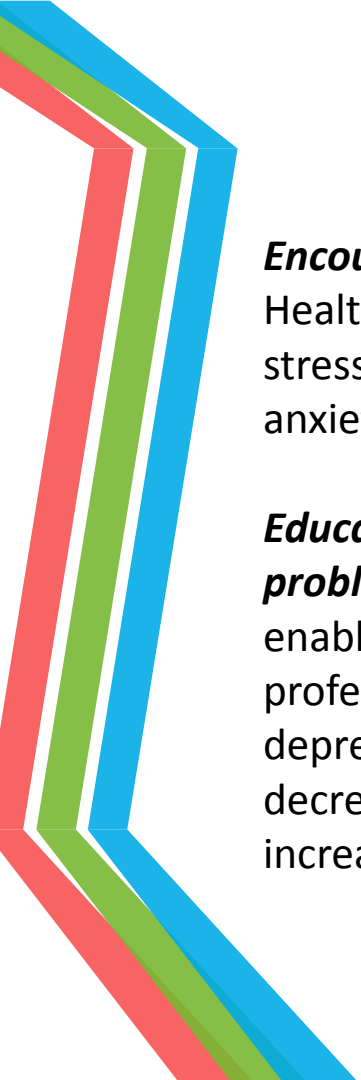
Develop competencies. Children need to know that they can overcome challenges and accomplish goals through their actions. Achieving academic success and developing individual talents and interests helps children feel competent and more able to deal with stress positively. Social competency is also important. Having friends and staying connected to friends and loved ones can enhance mental wellness.



Ensure a positive, safe school environment. Feeling safe is critical to students' learning and mental health. Promote positive behaviors such as respect, responsibility, and kindness. Prevent negative behaviors such as bullying and harassment. Provide easily understood rules of conduct and fair discipline practices and ensure an adult presence in common areas, such as hallways, cafeterias, locker rooms, and playgrounds. Teach children to work together to stand up to a bully, encourage them to reach out to lonely or excluded peers, celebrate acts of kindness, and reinforce the availability of adult support.

Teach and reinforce positive behaviors and decision making. Provide consistent expectations and support. Teaching children social skills, problem solving, and conflict resolution supports good mental health. "Catch" them being successful. Positive feedback validates and reinforces behaviors or accomplishments that are valued by others.

Encourage helping others. Children need to know that they can make a difference. Pro-social behaviors build self-esteem, foster connectedness, reinforce personal responsibility, and present opportunities for positive recognition. Helping others and getting involved reinforces being part of the community.



Encourage good physical health. Good physical health supports good mental health. Healthy eating habits, regular exercise and adequate sleep protect kids against the stress of tough situations. Regular exercise also decreases negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, and depression.

Educate staff, parents, and students on symptoms of and help for mental health problems. Information helps break down the stigma surrounding mental health and enables adults and students recognize when to seek help. School mental health professionals can provide useful information on symptoms of problems like depression or suicide risk. These can include a change in habits, withdrawal, decreased social and academic functioning, erratic or changed behavior, and increased physical complaints. Be available & check in often!



How do I know if my child (or myself) needs more help?

Everyone gets sad sometimes and everyone gets worried sometimes. Everyone struggles with loss and change. These are normal feelings – try to accept them, not push them away.

BUT...when symptoms are impacting functioning like ability to attend and participate in school/work, affecting social engagement or family relationships, or you start to rely on unhealthy coping tools (i.e substances) it may be time to seek help from a professional.

Tiered model of services



We think about intervention in TIERS –
Not everyone needs individual weekly therapy

LACOE Community Schools Initiative

Purpose

Community Schools Initiative is to build equity for students by highlighting areas of need and leveraging community resources so that students are healthy, prepared for



Four Pillars of Community Schools

Integrated
School
Support

Active Parent,
Family, &
Community
Engagement

Expanded
Learning Time &
Opportunities

Collaborative
Leadership &
Practice



Services Available at Samohi

Samohi Family Resource Center

Samohi Wellness Services Center



Partner Agencies providing mental health and counseling at Samohi

Family Service of SM (site coordinator and MSW intern)	City of Santa Monica, Department of MH	37.5 staff hours, 16 intern hours
Social Emotional Wellness Initiative	Self-funded	19 intern hours
Edelman	Department of MH	20 staff hours
CLARE Matrix	City of Santa Monica	As needed for mandated substance use counseling
SMMUSD interns	SMMUSD (LCAP)	17 intern hours
Insight Psychotherapy Group	Sliding scale, insurance, SMMUSD ESSR grant	As needed
Joe Torre Safe at Home (Margaret's Place)	LACOE Community Schools Partnership	40 staff hours
LACOE Community Schools initiative (program specialist and MSW intern)	LACOE Community Schools Partnership	16 intern hours



Margaret's Place at Samohi

Founded in 2002 by Ali and Joe Torre, Safe At Home provides services in schools to children exposed to violence in order to help them heal from trauma.

Margaret's Place Mission:

"We developed our multi-faceted school-based program, Margaret's Place, with the understanding that protective factors can decrease or mitigate the harm associated with exposure to violence and complex trauma. Margaret's Place's layered approach also raises youth consciousness about the root causes of violence and its effects on individuals and communities. At Margaret's Place, we work to empower youth and help them find their voice. We also provide training and consultation to school staff, families, and communities regarding trauma and its impact."

SAFE AT HOME
**MARGARET'S
PLACE**

JOE TORRE
**SAFE AT
HOME.**

Services

Individual Counseling



Group Counseling



Peer Leadership Club



YES Curriculum



Drop-In Lunch + TR



Student | Staff | Parent
Workshops



To Learn More...



www.joetorre.org



@margarets_place

@safeathomefoundation



Safe Keeping
by JoeTorreSAH

*Scan for Margaret's Place Fall
Newsletter!*





Counseling Services Available at Samohi


General check-ins with Student Support Advisors in house offices

Drop-in counseling in AD513 on Monday afternoons and Weds mornings

Counseling through contracted Agencies - group and individual services available (limited capacity) through a referral process.

Group or Individual Counseling through IEP related services (students who were assessed and diagnosed with disabilities) - Available for students with an identified need and goal on their IEPs delivered by a School Psychologist or Intern.

ERICS (Educationally Related Intensive Counseling Services) - Students who have had counseling in their IEPs, but need more intensive services. Can include Individual counseling, parent counseling, behavior intervention services, and social worker services.



Number of Students Seen (throughout SMMUSD) & Improvement %

School Year	Individual Setting		Group Setting	
	# seen	% improved since beginning of treatment	# seen	% improved since beginning of treatment
2021-22	389	77%	328	90%
2020-21	385	65%	197	84%
2019-20	453	78%	387	81%

NOTES:

Numbers do not include outreach, teacher support/classroom consultations, short-term interventions (less than 6 weeks of therapy), or parenting groups.

Numbers do not include students served by Special Education staff (school psychologists or STEP program) or mental health services/consultation/teacher support in SMMUSD preschools.



Questions?

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