

| Dayton Oaks Elementary |

# Supporting Your Child's Well-Being

Thursday, 12/3/2020

Presenters:

School Counselor - Stephanie Dix  
School Psychologist - Jill Schindler  
School Psychologist - Aubrey Roesener

# Stephanie Dix, School Counselor

**My role:** Connecting with & supporting students through individual, group, and classroom guidance

**A little bit about me:** This is my third year at DOES and my fourth year as a school counselor. I am a former classroom teacher. I have two toddlers & enjoy family game nights.

**How I am feeling right now:** Thankful & also like too many tabs are open in my brain

**Being at home:**

**What is filling my bucket:** More down time as a family, having a window in my home office, true crime podcasts during lunch

**What is draining me:** More downtime as a family, feeling disconnected from extended family & friends



# Jill Schindler, School Psychologist

**My role:** Supporting the academic and social-emotional growth of preschool through fifth grade students. Working with the Special Education Team, Instructional Intervention Team, and Student Support Team to help students reach their full potential.

**A little bit about me:** This is my fourteenth year at DOES and my twenty-fourth year as a School Psychologist. I'm the mom of a 20 and 18 year old, both of whom are current college students.

**How I am feeling right now:** Very impressed with how skilled our students have become with technology and virtual learning!

## **Being at home**

**What is filling my bucket:** Taking my dog on walks during my lunch breaks and appreciating nature.

**What is draining me:** The unknown of when we will return to normal!



# Aubrey Roesener, School Psychologist

**My role:** I support Dayton Oaks one day/week primarily in the RECC program. I support teachers and students with academic and behavioral needs to help all students thrive!

**A little bit about me:** This is my first year at Dayton Oaks and my sixth year as a school psychologist. I have a 2 ½ year old daughter and 10 month old son. I enjoy being creative and spending time with family.

**How I am feeling right now:** Depends on the day - Most days I feel like I have a good routine but other days feel overwhelming. Feeling grateful for my family's health.

**Being at home**

**What is filling my bucket:** Having more time with my kids!

**What is draining me:** Not being able to see our extended family.



# What is filling your bucket today and what's draining it?

From the book by Carol McCloud, "Have you Filled a Bucket Today?: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids"



# Access to Behavioral Health Care

- Knowing when and how to seek help from a behavioral specialist or therapist. If you're not sure, please contact one of us.

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# Family Connectedness

- Make time each day to connect as a family without distractions. Give your children your full attention and talk about their day. Keep this time positive and refreshing, try not to use this time to discipline or reprimand. Simply be together and enjoy one another! Play a game, do a puzzle, eat dinner together, ride bikes, or go for a walk.
- Try prompting a discussion with your child by starting with, "I wonder... (what you did in math, what was easy today, what was most challenging today) instead of "How was your day?"
- Think of ways to connect through activities you're already doing like walking the dog or making dinner



What are some ways your family has connected during the last few months?







  
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How have you connected with school and community?

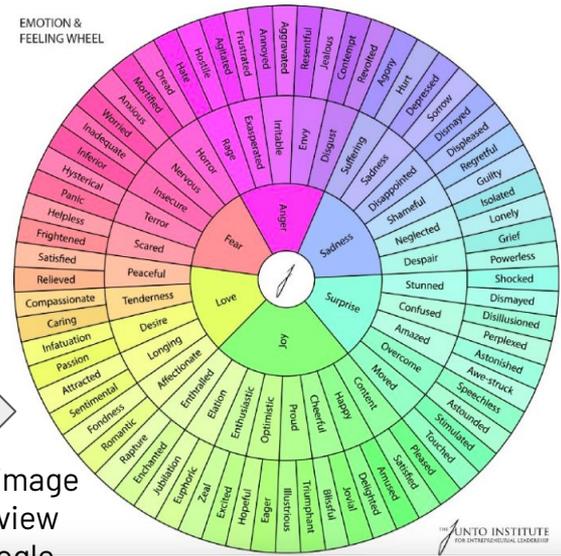
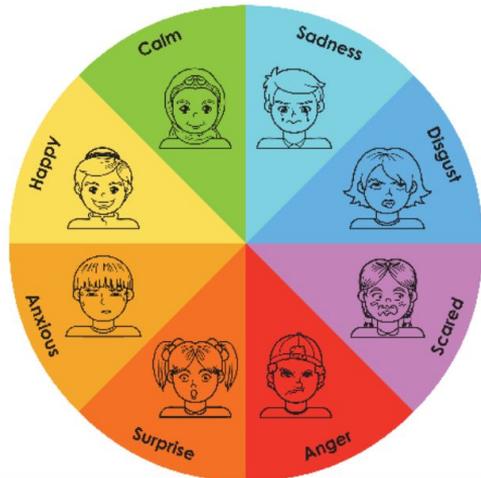
# Life Skills

- Have them do chores! They may not love you at first but it helps them learn how to contribute to the family and gives them a sense of accomplishment and independence when they see that their contribution makes a difference to the family. Make a big deal out of how helpful it is to you when they pitch in!
- Teach them other life skills like basic cooking, fixing things around the house, or using tools to build something.
- Invite their input to increase the motivation



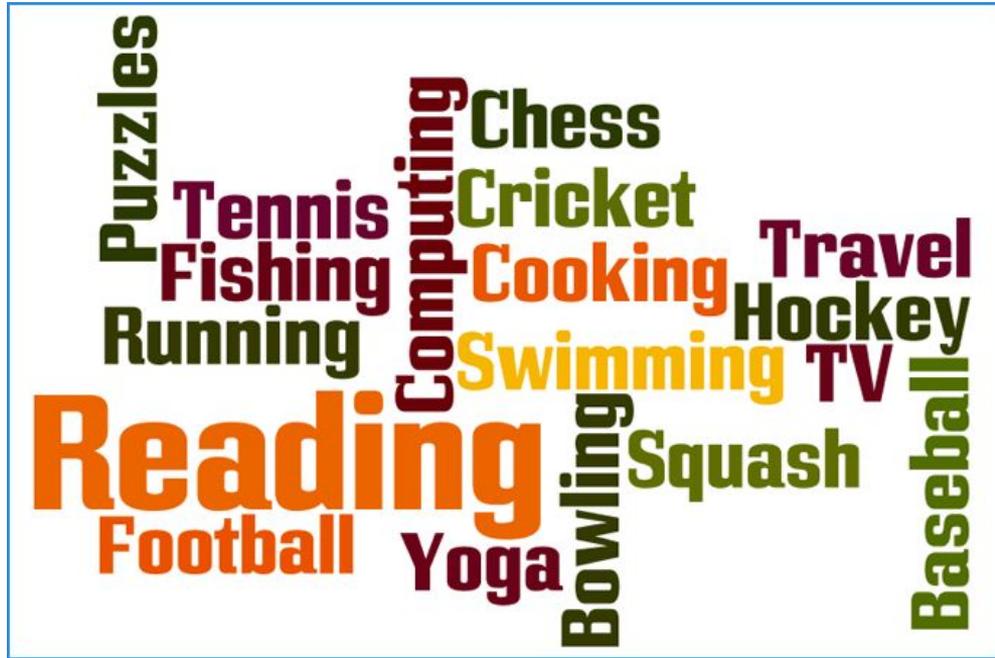
# Social Emotional Vocabulary

- Work to build emotional vocabulary by naming feelings for your children and encourage them to name their own.
- Move past words like happy, sad, and angry
- Teach them what these more complex feeling words mean and encourage them to be more thoughtful when teasing out exactly how they are feeling.
- Hang up a feelings chart for visual support



Click on this image  
for a larger view  
(links to Google  
document)

# Positive Self-Image



- Help your child(ren) to create a positive self image by exploring their interests and strengths.
- Explore the multiple ways of being intelligent and reinforce to them that no one is great at everything.
- Create a schedule that alternates non-preferred academic tasks with preferred

# Self Compassion

- This is the idea that people need to learn to be warm and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate, rather than ignore our pain or beat ourselves up with self-criticism.
- Modeling this ourselves is the best form of teaching self compassion! Talk kindly to yourself out loud so your child(ren) hear it!
- Hang up a positive affirmation on the bathroom mirror or other location your child(ren) frequent



Work on being in love with the person in the mirror who has been through so much but is still standing.

***It is ok to make mistakes and forgive yourself!***

# Something to look forward to

- Plan short and long term things for you child(ren) to be excited about. The activity doesn't have to be big or fancy. Link these things to your goals for family, school, and community connectedness!
  - Movie Nights
  - Special dessert/treat nights
  - Reading a chapter book together
  - Day trip
  - Virtual field trip
- Consider putting dates on a family calendar or create a countdown so your family has a visual



A silhouette of a hiker with a backpack stands on a mountain peak, arms raised in triumph. In the background, Mount Fuji is visible under a soft, hazy sky. The scene is framed by a white border, which is itself set against a green and grey geometric background.

**What could you plan  
that your student could  
look forward to?**

# Foundation of cultural and/or religious beliefs

- Begin talking about and developing their values and belief systems. What values are important to them? How could these values and beliefs help create some structure and meaning in a turbulent world?



- Traditions
- Holidays
- Meaningful places
- Understanding of family history
- Symbols in your home
- Daily rituals
- Who you spend time with



# Resiliency skills

- Resilience is the ability to cope with and rise to the inevitable challenges, problems and setbacks you meet in the course of your life, and come back stronger from them. Many resiliency skills can be taught, and are often learned from age-appropriate frustration and struggle.



## **Examples to build resiliency:**

- Encourage child to try new sport/activity
- Find ways to allow your child to help others
- Celebrate when your child or someone you know overcomes a challenge
- Resist the urge to “fix” a problem, instead ask questions to help child find solution
- Embrace mistakes to promote growth mindset
- Model coping skills like deep breathing
- Help child reframe thoughts to optimism
- Exercise! It strengthens brain and lowers stress

# Predictable routines and expectations

- Kids do best with a stable routine and clear expectations. Keep a school schedule posted, have a designated place where they will work
- Lay out the expectations early and often: Consider our DIVE expectations! Invite your child to be apart of this discussion.
- Consider a checklist or using visuals
- Create a safe and positive learning environment



# Healthy habits

- This is simply basic physical health and hygiene. Find ways for them to get exercise, eat healthy foods, adequate sleep, and visit the doctor and dentist regularly.
- Build good hygiene habits into your schedule so they become second nature and are a regular part of daily life. Kids also learn to begin to take responsibility for their own healthy living choices.
- Let your child(ren) be involved: Pick out their own toothbrush, find a healthy recipe, etc.



# Warning Signs My Child Might Need More Support

- Increased mood swings
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Preoccupation with sadness or death in conversation, writing, or drawing
- Aggressive or hostile behavior, more than typical sibling/friend conflict
- Loss of interest in activities that had been enjoyable
- Increased difficulty thinking or concentrating beyond challenges of virtual learning alone
- Feeling sad, empty, or tearful nearly every day
- Frequent withdrawing from others
- Psychosomatic symptoms - stomach aches, headaches, etc, with no obvious physical reason

# What can I do if my child is struggling?

(Source: Child Mind: A Parent's Guide to Helping a Child in Distress)

- Take the child's feelings and concerns seriously
- VALIDATE and listen
- Respond with empathy before advice
- Intentional one on one conversations - increases connectedness and feelings of worth and may enable problem solving discussions
- Help child(ren) understand what they can control (like reaching out to friends and family by phone to feel closer), and what they have to let go because it is out of their control (like how long we are out of school)
- Focus on stability in routine, expectations, and expressions of care
- If your child talks about wanting to hurt or even kill themselves, please seek crisis support immediately from either a local emergency room or Howard County's **Grassroots Crisis Center at 410-531-6677**, available 24 hours a day. Research has shown that asking a child if they have thoughts of suicide will NOT put that idea in their head or make them want to consider harming themselves.

**Consider building routine 1:1 with your child each week now, even if it's just a few minutes. Undivided attention, do something they choose, and just listen. This will help build trust that there is a good time to talk, if your child really needs to.**

# Self-Care Acts for Caregivers

- Take Deep Breath
- Light a soothing candle
- Think of 3 things you are grateful for
- Call someone you love
- Order your favorite food
- Write in a journal
- Go for a walk
- Work on a puzzle
- Write a letter to a friend
- See a therapist
- Go to bed early
- Meditate
- Write down 3 good things that happened today

Monthly Self-Care Calendars:

<https://www.actionforhappiness.org/calendars>



# Resources for Additional Help

1. **Your Local Pediatrician or Medical Doctor** (keep accurate contact info handy)
2. **Howard County Bureau of Behavioral Health** 410-313-6202
3. **Grassroots 24 hour Crisis Line** 410-531-6677; 24 hours a day
4. **Grassroots Crisis Center** <https://grassrootscrisis.org/> - serves Howard County
5. **Child Mind Institute** <https://childmind.org/>
6. **Children's Mental Health Matters**  
<https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/>
7. **National Child Traumatic Stress Network** <https://www.nctsn.org/>

# DOES Student Support Staff Contacts

## **School Counselor:**

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Dayton Oaks Elementary School Counseling Canvas Page

## **School Psychologists:**

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# Questions & Answers

