

ISU PARENT FORUM

# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

FRIDAY 06 FEBRUARY | 8.30AM - 9.30AM  
Dr Gibbons Hall | Refreshments Provided



Join our Junior School Counsellor, Cath, and Senior School Counsellor, Sekai, for an interactive and practical session focused on nurturing resilience, emotional wellbeing, and positive mental health—at home and in school.



# Mental Health Matters

## Practical Strategies for Parents

*Supporting Children at Home and School*





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# ACTIVITY:

## Share Your Knowledge



Take 3 minutes to answer:

- What do school counsellors do?
- What is mental health?

# Today's Journey



## Nurturing Resilience

Building inner strength through challenges



## Emotional Wellbeing

Understanding and managing feelings



## Strategies at Home

Creating a supportive environment



## Supporting at School

Partnering with educators

# Why Mental Health Matters

1 in 5

children experience  
mental health  
challenges

50%

of lifetime mental  
health conditions begin  
by age 14

75%

begin by age 24

*Early support makes a lasting difference*

Source: National Institute of Mental Health



# Nurturing Resilience



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# ACTIVITY: Share Your Experience



Take 2 minutes:

- Think of a time you faced a challenge
- What strengths did you show?
- How did you cope?

# What is Resilience?

## Resilience is:

- The ability to bounce back from difficulties
- Adapting well to stress, adversity, or trauma
- Growing stronger through challenges
- A skill that can be learned and strengthened



## Think of it like...

*A tree in a storm bends but doesn't break.*

*Its roots grow deeper, making it stronger for the next storm.*

# Building Blocks of Resilience



## Connection

Strong relationships with family, friends, mentors



## Competence

Feeling capable and confident in abilities



## Coping Skills

Healthy ways to manage stress and emotions



## Character

Sense of purpose, values, and self-worth

# ACTIVITY: Share Your Experience



Take 5 minutes:

- Think of a time your child faced a challenge
- What strengths did they show?
- How did they cope?
- What is similar/different in the way you and your child handle challenges?
- What skills might you help develop in your child to build resilience?

# Practical Strategies for Building Resilience

1

## Model Resilience

*Share your own challenges and how you cope*

3

## Encourage Problem-Solving

*Ask "What could you try?" before solving for them*

5

## Create Safe Risks

*Let them try new things in supportive environments*

2

## Reframe Failure

*"What did you learn?" instead of "You failed"*

4

## Celebrate Effort

*Praise persistence, not just results*

6

## Build Support Networks

*Help them connect with peers, mentors, community*



# Emotional Wellbeing



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# Understanding Emotions

*All emotions are valid and serve a purpose*

Anger

Protects boundaries, signals injustice

Sadness

Helps process loss, invites support

Fear

Keeps us safe, prepares for action

Joy

Builds connection, motivates growth

Anxiety

Alerts to potential problems

# ACTIVITY:

## Create an Emotion Check-in



### At home this week

- Create a simple feelings chart with 5-8 emotions and faces
- Post it where everyone can see (fridge, hallway)
- Each family member uses a magnet or sticker to show their current feeling
- Do daily check-ins: "How are you feeling today?"
- No judgment - just awareness and connection

# The 5 Pillars of Emotional Wellbeing



## Expression

Naming and  
sharing  
feelings



## Regulation

Managing  
emotional  
responses



## Connection

Healthy  
relationships



## Movement

Physical  
activity for  
mood



## Rest

Sleep and  
downtime



# Coping Strategies Toolbox

Help your child build their personal toolkit:

## Physical

Deep breathing, exercise, yoga, dancing, squeezing stress ball

## Creative

Drawing, music, writing, building, crafting

## Social

Talk to friend, hug, play with pet, family time

## Mindful

5-4-3-2-1 senses, meditation, nature walk, gratitude

## Cognitive

Positive self-talk, problem-solving, reframing thoughts



# ACTIVITY: Calm-Down Kit



## What to Include:

- Stress ball or fidget
- Favorite photo
- Calming scent
- Headphones/music
- Journal or coloring
- Breathing guide card

## Action Step:

This week, create a calm-down kit WITH your child. Let them choose items that help them feel better. Keep it accessible!