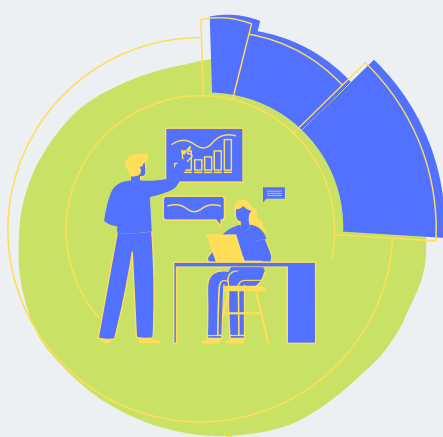


MENTAL HEALTH: LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

Jessye Norman School Of The Arts

WHAT DOES MENTAL HEALTH EVEN MEAN?

Mental health is basically what it sounds like, the health of our minds! It includes all emotional, psychological, and social aspects that make up our well-being. It plays a huge role in how we think, feel, act, react, respond to stress, and make choices. Mental health issues are anything that affects our well-being or normal thinking. These can begin as early as childhood or even in later life! Common things that may contribute to mental health issues are genetics, family history, trauma, or abuse. Mental health illnesses can cause you to feel all different ways. You may feel sadder than usual, tired all the time, angry or mad, or even have pain in parts of your body.



ARE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES COMMON?

Mental health issues are actually more common than you think! That's why it is so important to seek help if you or your child begin to show any of the beginning signs. Millions of children and adults deal with mental health issues daily, with 1 out of 5 adults and 1 out of 6 children having struggles with mental health issues in the United States. Depression is the most common mental health issue that adults in the United States deal with, affecting almost 8% of our population. Suicide is the second more common cause of death in people between 10-34 years of age in the United States. In our neighborhood of Richmond County, 3.68% of early deaths are because of suicide.

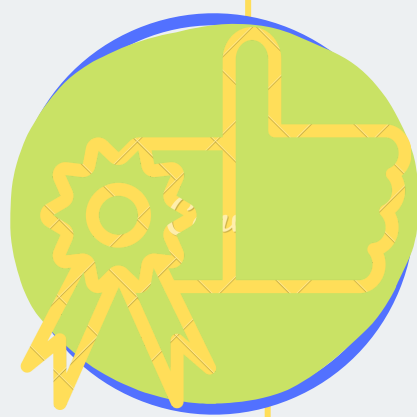
HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD OR I NEED HELP?

As a parent, sometimes it can be hard to see if your child is struggling with mental health issues. Some of the most common symptoms seen in children are changes in focus ability, losing interest in things they used to love, changes in how much they eat, sleeping more or less than usual, and lots of emotional outbursts. If you notice these things in your child, try to talk to them about it and how they are feeling! Children often are scared to talk to their parents when they start feeling this way. Sometimes, parents can be so focused on caring for their children, that they forget to take care of themselves! If you start to notice you are feeling sadder than usual, are not able to sleep or are sleeping more than normal, feel like you have had changes in your friendships and work relationships, or feel super stressed all the time, you may need to reach out for help. For both your child and yourself, it may be helpful to seek help from mental health services that can help you or your child start to feel better!



IS SEEKING MENTAL HEALTH EVEN WORTH IT?

Seeking mental health help can be super helpful and is super important! Mental health illness can cause problems with your body's health, make you more likely to get sick, cause problems with your heart, and even affect the choices you make. There are a huge amount of benefits seen in children seeking mental health help! It helps the child talk about the things they have been feeling, improves their success in school, makes them feel physically better, and lessens the chance of risky behaviors. Seeking help, as a parent, is also super beneficial! It helps decrease stress, allows for you to talk about your emotions, betters your relationship with your child/others, and improves your physical health.



WHY DOESN'T EVERYONE SEEK MENTAL HEALTH HELP?

Sadly, the United States' population has caused mental health issues and getting mental health help to have a bad reputation. Because of this, many people feel embarrassed, ashamed, or even worried others will think of them as "crazy". Children and parents also often think that they will be able to handle their problems by themselves. Even when children or parents do want to seek mental health help, they often run into problems with having the time to spend seeking help, do not have transportation, or the services are too expensive. The biggest barrier to seeking mental health help is not knowing how to find help or what mental health services are available in the community. Luckily, we at Jessye Norman School of the Arts have your back and are ready to give you the help you need and other ways to get it!



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR MY CHILD AND ME

All of the listed resources and activities are great ways to start improving both you and your child's mental health!

Resources Within Jessye Norman School of the Arts

- It's a Stretch! Yoga Class: Every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30 pm - 6:16 pm. Starts June 8th and ends August 12th
- Beginner Tap Class: Every Wednesday from 10:30 am - 11:30am
- Ballroom and Swing Dance Fun - The Dancer's Crash Course: Every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm

Resources Outside of Jessye Norman School of the Arts

- Sources of Strength (offered in both English and Spanish): A website that has different activities, wellness plans, emotion checks, and music playlists that help to improve mental health.
- 2x2 Series: Daily Self-Care Tips and Support for Managing Life is a series of WebEx events designed to provide individuals with tools to manage stress, grief, work/life balance, and wellness.

