



2017

Mental Health and Wellness Conference

Tools for Fostering Success at Home, in School, and throughout Life

October 21

8:00 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.



This event is a collaboration between Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax County government, and the community. In addition to presentations, exhibits will showcase local resources and services available for youth and their families.

Participants will be able to customize their day to include attending the keynote presentation, choose from multiple sessions, visit exhibits, purchase a sandwich and other snacks.

AGENDA

8:00 a.m.

Registration Begins

Resource tables open (until 1:00 p.m.)

Concessions open (until 12:45 p.m.)

9:00 – 9:50 a.m.

Breakout #1 Sessions

10:10 – 11:30 a.m.

Welcome Message

Auditorium

Scott S. Brabrand, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Keynote Speaker

Jonathan Dalton, Ph.D.
Center for Anxiety and Behavioral Change

11:45 a.m. -12:35 p.m.

Breakout #2 Sessions

12:50-1:40 p.m.

Breakout #3 Sessions



Scott S. Brabrand, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Welcome to the 2017 Mental Health and Wellness Conference

On behalf of Fairfax County Public Schools, the Fairfax County government and a number of community groups, I thank you for your attendance at this important event. Your commitment to engaging in an open and meaningful conversation around this vital topic for our students is crucial. I commend our community partners and the county government for their ongoing support in helping us foster wellness and resiliency in our students.

Schools, families and communities must work together to foster a nurturing, supportive environment for our teens. This conference is a reflection of the collective efforts made in Fairfax County to address building resiliency and overall well-being in our youth. Thank you for being a part of this community conversation.



Jonathan Dalton, Ph.D.
Keynote Speaker

Anxiety and Stress in Childhood: What to Know and How to Help

While it may not be comfortable to experience anxiety and stress, they are indispensable tools in our life that help us to focus on priorities, alert us to danger, and even aid in our day-to-day performance. Anxiety disorders, on the other hand, are serious, characterized by impairment and distress that interfere with the lives of those experiencing them, and are risk factors for depression, substance abuse, and even suicide if the anxiety disorder is not treated effectively. Tragically, anxiety disorders will affect approximately one-third of individuals prior to their 18th birthday, and half of these children will experience the onset of symptoms prior to their 7th birthday. To compound this, less than one in five children receive any care for their suffering. The wonderful news, however, is that anxiety disorders are highly treatable with specialized care. In addition, parents and other adults can take practical, yet counterintuitive steps to reduce the child's experience of anxiety if the anxiety becomes problematic. This keynote will focus on how to differentiate between healthy anxiety and stress, personal and adaptive coping strategies that can be helpful, and identifying when a child is in need of support. Additionally, beneficial treatment strategies will be explored.

Sponsored by:



Breakout Session 1: 9-9:50 a.m.

Understanding Trauma: Facilitating Home and School Partnerships

Maria Genova, Ph.D., Senior School Psychologist, FCPS
Barbara Fisher, LCSW, Senior Social Worker, FCPS

This presentation will focus on recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma, understanding how trauma reactions may influence behavioral, emotional, and academic outcomes, and how families and educators can collaborate to address these issues. Attendees will learn about home and school specific strategies and opportunities to build effective partnerships.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Supporting the Social-emotional and Educational Needs of Military Connected Youth

Becky Harris, MA, NCSP, School Psychologist, FCPS
Kristen Licciardo, MSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

Military Connected Youth (MCY) are shaped by the unique experiences they encounter living the military lifestyle. Participants will learn how this lifestyle develops protective factors and lends itself to risk factors for MCY. Topics covered during this session include: the unique challenges MCY face; the social-emotional and educational impact living the military lifestyle has on MCY; how to support MCY in your classroom/school/home; and how parents of MCY can educate schools.

Raising Children with Healthy Self-esteem in a High-pressure Culture

Rachel Bailey, M.A. CPDPE, Private Provider

We all want our children to feel good about themselves and meet their full potential. In this session, you will learn exactly what to DO and SAY so children believe in themselves and thrive, even in a culture where high-pressure standards seem unattainable.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

The Basics and Benefits of Mindfulness and Yoga

Erin Hurley, School Counselor, FCPS
Kasey Cain, School Counseling Services, FCPS

Come and learn creative ways to encourage the practice of mindfulness and yoga at home or in school.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Learn More in Less Time: Balancing Academics and Extracurriculars

Ann Dolin, M.Ed., Educational Connections

Did you know that 84% of students study by re-reading – the most inefficient way of studying? In this session, award winning author Ann Dolin, M.Ed., will teach you the top three research-based study skills students need to be successful in school, strategies to avoid procrastination while studying, and tips and tools to avoid distractions from media.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Building on Strengths to Support Hope, Engagement, and Well-being

Michele Webb, Project Manager, Student Learning Plans, FCPS
Successful people know their talents and build on those talents for the rest of their lives. Learn how to access the results of the StrengthExplorer survey in Family Connection and the resources available to help support students with their unique talents. Focusing on a strengths model with students builds hope, engagement, and well-being.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Supporting Students with their Postsecondary Transition

Matthew Johnson, Educational Specialist, School Counseling, FCPS

Transitions are scary, but leaving the house and heading to college can be even scarier for both students AND parents. In this session, parents and guardians will learn the different ways they can support their students as they transition to college.

Courageous and Mindful Parenting: Effective Communication and Strategies that Yield Top Results

Felicea Meyer-DeLoatch, School Social Worker, FCPS
Janice Dalton, Principal, FCPS

This empowering session will provide tools and techniques that will allow you to remain calm and begin to build a healthier relationship and more effective communication style among you, your child, your family, and others. This session is for anyone who wishes to improve their communication with others as well as gain positive strategies to increase their effectiveness within their home, work environment, and community.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Helping Your Child Grow Up in Today's Digital World

Rick Stegman, Educational Specialist, FCPS

Why are children so enthralled with social media? Why do they go there? What developmental needs do social media sites provide? How can adults help kids navigate today's digital world? Come learn ways to help address many of the online issues students and families face. This session will discuss issues of identity formation and social media, and how these themes tie into other internet safety issues such as sexual identity, teen sex trafficking, and cyberbullying. The session will also give actionable parenting tips and resources to use and share.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Stress Less, Laugh More: Strategies for Reducing Stress and Increasing Happiness for Families

Heather Tedesco, Ph.D., PLLC, Private Practice

Children and parents are under stress from many sources – busy schedules, high academic expectations, numerous extracurricular activities, and peer pressure. However, our bodies are not designed to withstand chronic stress and as a result, the health of today's children (and parents!) is suffering. In this session Dr. Tedesco discusses factors increasing stress on children and on parents, shares ways to recognize stress in children, gives strategies for reducing stress, and explains how parents can encourage the key characteristics research links to long-term psychological health and happiness.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Breakout Session 1: 9-9:50 a.m.

How to be a Chill Parent

Erin Sikes-Thurston, Assistant Principal, FCPS

We are a college bound society where what students are doing to get accepted into college can feel overwhelming to students and families. This session provides research about college acceptance and strategies for families to feel okay about not getting into “the treadmill of crazy.”

Executive Functioning: An In-depth Look

Michael S. Axler, Psy.D., Senior School Psychologist, FCPS
Joshua M. Kefer, Psy.D., School Psychologist, FCPS

Executive functioning is increasingly being recognized as an essential skill set for achieving successful educational, social/emotional, and behavioral outcomes. In this session participants will learn how executive functioning skills affect learning and behavior, how deficits in these areas lead to academic and behavioral difficulties, and how to detect and effectively address executive functioning challenges when they arise.

Middle School After-school Program: Encouraging Growth and Igniting Interests

Mark Emery, Administrator, After-school Programs, FCPS

What is the Middle School After-school Program exactly? It is many things: it's a safe environment where creativity, enrichment, friendships, and inspiration thrive. Students are challenged to become explorers, scientists, leaders, athletes, artists, and volunteers in the community while developing a healthy relationship with themselves as well as with others and while interacting with caring adults. It is where students build connections, social skills, resiliency, and persistence every day. The session will include a student panel and time for questions and answers.

Talking Without Words: Helping Those Who Self-Harm

Jennifer Min, Ed.S., NCSP, School Psychologist, FCPS

What are the signs that a student may be self-harming and what can parents do? This presentation will provide information on what self-harm is and what it is not, reasons teens engage in self-harm behaviors such as cutting, and how supportive adults can help them to stop harmful behaviors and begin to find better ways to express their feelings.

Parent Community Involvement to Support Youth Mental Health and Wellness

Ellen Reilly, Ed.D., Principal, FCPS
Nick Corsi, Systems of Support Advisor, FCPS
Paul Stansbery, Director of Student Services, FCPS
Beth Werfel, School Psychologist, FCPS

Presenters will give attendees an overview of the Fairfax County Youth Survey and discuss ways parents can use the data to support their own children as well as other youth in their community. The ways in which programming was developed and implemented in the McLean High School community, with the support of parents, will also be reviewed.

Could It Be Anxiety?

Amber Ong, Ph.D., School Psychologist, FCPS
Sarah Ince, MSW, LCSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

This session will explore the ways in which anxiety can manifest itself in elementary school-aged children and how it may go undetected or be misinterpreted. Session objectives are to identify symptoms of anxiety in children, know where to go for assistance, and understand ways parents and other concerned adults can support an anxious child.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Signs, Symptoms, and Why Testing is a Good Idea

Timothy Fratto, Ph.D., Neuropsychology Associates of Fairfax
ADHD is the most commonly diagnosed disorder of attention, and the diagnosis is frequently based solely on self-report symptoms. However, there is considerable evidence that self-report symptoms do not always correspond with cognitive and functional impairments which may be observed during objective assessment. This presentation will discuss the signs and symptoms of ADHD, outline the neuropsychological assessment, and cover the role of neuropsychological testing in the diagnosis and management of ADHD.

Failure to Launch in Young Adults: How to Get Your Child to be a Successful Adult

Johanna Kaplan, Ph.D., Director and Clinical Psychologist
Washington Anxiety Center of Capital Hill

“Failure to launch” has become a common colloquialism to describe the inability of young adults (ages 18-34) to develop effective methods of coping with more complicated, emerging stressors as they grow into adults. This session will also present attendees with a review of factors to identify those at risk for “failure to launch,” and discuss the benefits of using a cognitive-behavioral treatment modality. In this session, we will also discuss an intervention model which can be used to address a young adult's inability to successfully transition to an independent, functional adult and how parents/guardians can implement these skills when the child is younger.

Avoiding Power Struggles with Children and Adolescents

Tanya Hardy, M.Ed., Behavior Intervention Teacher, FCPS
Power struggles with children can be exhausting and defeating. They can be avoided, however, by utilizing a few simple strategies. The presenter will equip participants with strategies that can be used to stop power struggles before they even begin.

Offered Sessions 1 and 2

Breakout Session 2: 11:30 -12:20 p.m.

Continuing the Conversation: Follow-Up To Keynote Presentation

Practical, Yet Counterintuitive Strategies for Parents to Use to Help Children and Teens Living with Anxiety

Jonathan Dalton, Ph.D., Center for Anxiety and Behavioral Change

This breakout session will focus more deeply on specific skills that parents can use to respond to anxiety in their children and teens. In particular, we will discuss the central role that avoidance plays in anxiety, how and when parents can use planned ignoring or redirection as a response to anxiety symptoms, how offering reassurance to a child can strengthen anxiety over time, and how parents can appropriately teach their child healthy coping strategies. In addition, we will watch a brief video that demonstrates the effective use of these strategies.

Effective Communication with Your Stressed Out Kid

Cathi Cohen, LCSW, CGP, Director, In-step

Some children are born optimists. They are unfazed by disappointments and mistakes, and welcome the opportunity to take on new challenges; others, well, are not. As parents, we want to help kids develop coping skills and we constantly strive to find the proper balance between supporting our kids and fixing their problems. This session will teach parents an effective approach for communicating with their stressed out kids and teens that builds resiliency, confidence, and problem-solving abilities.

Offered Sessions 2 and 3

Strategies for Better Attendance

Quyen Duong, LCSW, Senior Social Worker, FCPS
Rachel Cherian, MSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

Temperament, adverse childhood experiences, and environmental factors may all contribute to the mental well-being of children and adolescents. How do we help these children build resilience and cope with daily stressors? Participants will learn how to recognize the signs of psychological distress and learn strategies to help children and adolescents self-regulate, leading to improved school attendance and engagement.

Offered Sessions 2 and 3

How to Successfully Manage Stress and Anger in Today's World

Andrew Rabb, School Counselor, St. Bernadette's Catholic School
Today's society is a very busy place. It can lead to many situations that are stressful and can be very challenging in terms of managing emotions. Learn tips on how to manage stressful situations and anger at the same time.

Offered Sessions 2 and 3

Promoting Social-Emotional Wellness in Students

Allie Farris, Ed.S., NCSP, School Psychologist, FCPS
Megan Davis, M.A., NCSP, School Psychologist, FCPS

This session will provide information and strategies to parents and teachers for promoting social-emotional wellness in students. The presenters will discuss strategies to identify and develop student strengths to build resiliency, foster self-esteem, maintain positive attitudes, and encourage non-academic talents. The presenters will also provide strategies to address social-emotional challenges such as anxiety, depression, perfectionism, and other behavioral challenges.

Offered Sessions 2 and 3

Game Changers: Coping Skills for Growth

Danielle Armstrong, MSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

In this interactive presentation, participants will learn a variety of coping skills. Participants will be able to identify the potential benefits and limitations of various coping skills and after practice, will be able to identify which are most effective for them personally.

Teen Stress and the Benefits of Self-care: What Parents Need to Know

Michelle Mullaley, Ph.D., Bridges Therapy and Wellness Center

A session for parents to: learn more about issues that create stress for today's teens; understand the physical/bodily reactions that take place when teens feel stress; understand common emotional and interpersonal reactions to teen stress; learn about self-care to foster positive stress management and resilience in teens; and learn about other stress management techniques.

Homework, Organization and Planning Skills (HOPS): A Systematic Approach to Organization and Planning Skills that Teaches Students Foundational Skills for Developing Executive Functioning

Christine Willing, M.Ed., NCSP, School Psychologist, FCPS
Bel Edmonson, LCSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

This presentation will review the HOPS intervention that can be used with individuals or small groups in a systematic and methodical manner to teach students how to build skills designed to increase organization, planning and time management. Advantages of the intervention include collaboration between student and teacher, increased homework completion and improving study skills, increased self-awareness and monitoring, and greater access to learning time. Information on how parents can support student growth will be shared.

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Teen Substance Misuse: Signs, Trends, and What You Can Do

Brian Maslowski, ATOD Seminar Instructor, FCPS

Mary Valad, MSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

Attendees will learn the signs and trends of adolescent substance use/misuse and discover how simple, everyday interactions can be a deterrent to these risk behaviors. Tips on communicating with youth about drugs will be presented.

Offered Sessions 2 and 3

Breakout Session 3: 12:30 -1:20 p.m.

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Offered Sessions 2 and 3

Increasing Emotional Intelligence at Home

Jeanne Veraska, Project Manager, FCPS

Laura Rotella, Director of Student Services, FCPS

This session will focus on practices that can be used at home to increase emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is instrumental to understanding behaviors, building relationships, and negotiating life challenges. Skills and strategies that can be used with all ages will be shared.

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De-stressing Your Child's Life (and Your Own) through the Use of Mindfulness

Christian Freeman, Special Education Teacher, FCPS

In the session you will learn mindfulness techniques you can use in your classroom or in your home to help your students de-stress. These mindfulness strategies are quick and beneficial coping skills that can help create a more positive and conducive environment in school, and will lead to life-long skills that can be used in any stressful situation in school and throughout life!

Understanding Social Media and Healthy Relationship with Electronics

Michelle Mullaaley, Ph.D., Bridges Therapy and Wellness Center

Learn about the most popular social media sites and why your teen's phone and electronics seem so important. Discussion will include: the benefits and risks of electronics use; the recommended limitations for electronic use and ways to limit use; factors that place a teen more at risk for internet 'addiction'; and how to help your teen establish a healthy relationship with electronics.

Homework, Organization and Planning Skills (HOPS): A Systematic Approach to Organization and Planning Skills that Teaches Students Foundational Skills for Developing Executive Functioning

Christine Willing, M.Ed., NCSP, School Psychologist, FCPS

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Offered Sessions 2 and 3

Service Learning to Support Student Goals

Mallory Joiner, Resource Teacher, FCPS

Learn about the benefits of Service Learning and how students can use their strengths and interests to create meaningful experiences in the community.

Breakout Session 3: 12:30 -1:20 p.m.

Restorative Justice in FCPS

Ulli Vaerst, Restorative Justice Resource Teacher, FCPS

Restorative justice is a philosophy based on a set of principles for responding to harm and wrongdoing that is victim centered and focuses on offender accountability to those who were harmed, as well as to the laws or rules that were broken. This session includes an overview of how restorative justice practices are being used in FCPS to build relationships that benefit the school community, and how they can be used as an alternative to traditional discipline.

Mental Health First Aid

Leo Espina-Borrero, MSW, Fairfax-Falls Church
Community Services Board
Jennifer Christy, LMFT, Fairfax-Falls Church
Community Services Board

Learn about depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. This session will provide you practical skills to approach those who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. Be part of the solution!

Our Minds Matter: A Student-led Movement Supported by the Josh Anderson Foundation

Lauren Anderson, Executive Director, Josh Anderson Foundation
Alex Gorman, School Counselor, FCPS

In this breakout session, participants will learn about *Our Minds Matter*, a student-led movement to change the school culture around mental health. Minds Matter student-led clubs aim to encourage their peers to seek help, be socially connected and build healthy habits and coping skills through school-wide awareness activities.

I Hear You! Peer Supports for Youth, Young Adults and Families

Kelly Henderson, Ph.D., Executive Director
Formed Families Forward
Jeanne Comeau, President and CEO, NAMI Northern Virginia

Peer supports for families and for youth and young adults are key to improved outcomes and increased functioning. Local family-led organizations, NAMI of Northern Virginia, the Autism Society of Northern Virginia, and Formed Families Forward, will share their family and youth support programs. Features of, and eligibility for, the programs will be shared, along with effective approaches for reaching families and youth. Participants are invited to ask questions and share their experiences.

Stress Less through the College Admissions Process

Emily Emery, Educational Specialist,
School Counseling Services, FCPS

Recent FCPS alumni will comprise this panel, focusing on the importance of finding balance in the college admission process and the importance of finding a "school that fits" versus "fitting into a school." This panel will focus on separating some of the truths-from-fiction around academic preparation and perceived necessary qualifications through the admissions process. Additionally, the panel will focus on the importance of finding a "school that fits" versus "fitting into a school."

Supporting Families with LGBT Youth

Joe Cabush, LCSW, Joe Cabush & Associates
Heather Kirby, LCSW, Kirby Creative Clinical Solutions

Many families with LGBT and gender expansive youth have unique challenges that ask us all to work toward better understanding. This session will explore ways that we can provide opportunities to become connected and affirmed. Based on our group and individual work with LGBT families and on current research, we will explore approaches that support both parents and students in their search for safety, self-determination, and connection.

The Development of Executive Functioning in Preschool and Elementary School-Aged Students

Ellen Goldberger, Ph.D., School Psychologist, FCPS
Joy Granados, LCSW, School Social Worker, FCPS

Executive function is the overarching ability through which we regulate our thinking and behavior. This domain is the foundation on which purposeful behavior is built and on which intelligence is deployed to engage effectively in the world. This session will provide information on functions such as: the ability to focus and sustain attention, inhibit impulsive behaviors for long term goal attainment, flexibility in thought and action, and working memory; the ability to manipulate information mentally and problem solve; and additional important functions.

Adaptive Skills for College Transition

Sajjad A. Khan, Ph.D., LCSW, NeuroScience, Inc.

This session will focus on the skills necessary for successful transition to college. The presentation will include discussion of executive functioning, self-regulation, and social skills. The session will cover environmental stressors, assessments, and treatment approaches. Specific conditions such as ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, and mood disorders will also be discussed.