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Must-Know Words

Mental / Emotional Wellness

is the ability to successfully handle life's stresses and adapt to change and difficult times.

Mental Health is a person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well-being.

Mental Health Counseling

encompasses the services that trained professionals provide to clients who seek help in dealing with issues that affect their lives.



Mental Health Awareness Dates

This Month: August 2023

Day

- 6 [Friendship Day](#)
- 8 [Happiness Happens Day](#)

Next Month: September 2023

Month

- [Children's Good Manners Month](#)
- [Self-Improvement Month](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Awareness Month](#)

Week

- 10-16 [National Suicide Prevention Week](#)
- 17-23 [Student Sleep Health Week](#)

Day

- 10 [World Suicide Prevention Day](#)
- 21 [International Day of Peace](#)



Note: This newsletter includes links to external resources.

Back to School Transitions

Welcome (Back)!

August is a time of transitions as children go (back) to school: routines change, schedules get busier, responsibilities grow, expectations increase, life, academic, and social stressors arise, and more. In the days and weeks following times of transition, it's normal to have lots of feelings as we adjust.

Tips for Supporting Your Student During Back-to-School

- Establish routines early. Children thrive on routines. Structuring homework time, meals, and bedtimes can help their minds, bodies, and moods. Establish places for their backpack/supplies and a quiet workspace for doing homework, as well as routines for preparing for the next day.
- Communicate the expectations you have for your child and their routines, behaviors, communication with you, etc.
- Connect with and encourage open communication between you and your child. Ask your child open-ended questions, such as the best and worst parts of their day, what they felt excited about, how they're feeling about school, and more.
- Listen and support: Acknowledge their feelings and offer them coping strategies for difficult feelings
- Use effective communication techniques and incorporate positive feedback to connect with them and acknowledge what they're doing well
- Maintain an optimistic tone and positive attitude with children
- Exercise compassion when your child has big feelings
- Read books or watch educational cartoons about things you may be concerned about for your child
- Discuss any ongoing or significant concerns with your child's healthcare providers, teachers, or administrators
- Know and keep an eye out for any warning signs or symptoms that your child's mental health is of concern.



Mental Health Supports at Galileo

If you have a concern for your student, Galileo offers several supports for students. In most cases, your child's teacher will most often be the first person you contact to express concerns and/or ask for support for your student. Galileo also offers a Care Team which is a team of staff members who can respond to support students with a variety of concerns, such as behavioral concerns, relationship concerns, extra support in the classroom, basic emotional support and coping strategies, and more.

Each of Galileo's campuses also have at least one licensed mental health counselor on-staff. Generally, students who may benefit from our student counseling services:

- experience impairment in functioning within the school setting and possibly other environments as well,
- are exhibiting signs or symptoms of psychological or psychological distress, and
- are not already engaged in therapy/psychiatric care elsewhere.

Counseling Services - Getting Your Child Started

If you believe your child may be in need of mental health counseling services on-campus, you may reach out to your child's teacher and/or the Care Team. They can submit a referral form which will initiate an informal check-in and/or a formal screening process. Once your child has been screened and it is determined that they meet criteria for our school-based services, the following steps will be completed next:

- Complete the Informed Consent for Client Rights Statement and Consent for Counseling Services form (sent to you by the counselor)
- Participate in a Biopsychosocial Interview (this is how we gather pertinent history regarding your child)
- Sign and return the Treatment Plan (hard copy sent home with your child that needs to be signed and returned to the counselor)

Standard Counseling Office Hours

Academic Year 2023-2024

Monday-Friday: 8:30am - 3:30pm

Closed Weekends, School Holidays & School Breaks

A Note About Availability:

Scheduled meetings are preferred. Unexpected student needs may arise at any time, however, so meetings may need to be canceled or rescheduled as needed and without prior notice.

Meet the Counselors!

Riverbend Campus

Ms. Rebecca "Becky" Stone, MA, LMHC, QS-MHC

rebecca.stone@galileogiftedschool.org | Phone: 321-249-9221 ext. 381 | Office: 181-B



Hi! I'm
Ms. Becky!

Quick Facts About Rebecca:

- Florida License MH13264
- MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with Honors, Rollins College (2012)
- BA in Psychology from UCF (2007)

Ms. Stone happily joined the Galileo Family in the 2023-2024 academic year. Ms. Stone is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and a Qualified Supervisor for Registered Mental Health Counselor Interns in the state of Florida. Some of her professional experiences include owning and operating her own therapy private practice since 2017 as well as providing mental health-related training programs to a variety of groups, mental health counseling to high school and college students, education support to K-9th grade students, student success coaching, and higher education administration. She is passionate about supporting students' mental health and holistic wellbeing and helping her clients achieve their therapeutic goals and living happier, healthier, more productive lives. When not at Galileo, Ms. Stone enjoys spending time with family and friends, coaching youth ice hockey, volunteering, and engaging in her own self-care.

Skyway Campus

Ms. Caitlin Hilligas, MA, LMHC

caitlin.hilligas@galileogiftedschool.org | Phone: 407-638-9696 ext. 3601



Hi! I'm
Ms. Caitlin!

Quick Facts About Caitlin:

- Florida License MH16314
- MA in Clinical Psychology, Univ. of Central Florida (2016)
- BS in Psychology from Northwest Missouri State Univ. (2014)

Ms. Hilligas has been a Galileo Dragon since August 2020. Ms. Hilligas is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor in the state of Florida. She moved from the Midwest to the Sunshine State in 2014 and earned her Master's in Clinical Psychology from the University of Central Florida. She is passionate about working with kiddos of all ages, especially those who may be having a hard time understanding or expressing their emotions. Ms. Hilligas enjoys reading, sitting poolside, eating tacos, and spending quality time with her husband, Spenser, and their pets: Dorian, Oliver, and Oakley.

Adysen "Ady" Cohen, BA, Master's Level Intern

adysen.cohen@galileogiftedschool.org | Phone: 407-638-9696 ext. 3601



Hi! I'm
Ms. Ady!

Quick Facts About Ady:

- Current MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling graduate student, UCF
- BA in Psychology and Forensic Science from Syracuse University (2020)

Ms. Cohen is currently a graduate student at the University of Central Florida earning her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She earned her B.A. in Psychology and Forensic Science in 2020 from Syracuse University where she also played Division One Women's Ice Hockey. She is excited to be completing her internship at Galileo with Ms. Hilligas as her supervisor and she looks forward to working with students of all ages after she finishes her master's degree and begins her professional career.



Emergency Mental Health Resources

Galileo's mental health services are offered to students during the school day when school is in session. After-hours support is not available through GSSL counselors. **The following resources are available 24/7. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.**

<p>NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE</p> <p>The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.</p> <p>Call 988 or 1-800-273-8255.</p>	<p>DEVEREUX'S MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM</p> <p>Devereux's Mobile Crisis Clinicians are available to respond within 60 minutes to de-escalate mental health and behavioral crises 24/7/365 by calling 211 and requesting Mobile Crisis Services.</p>
<p>CRISIS TEXT/CHAT LINE</p> <p>Text HOME to 741741 (cell and data rates may apply), chat online at www.crisistextline.org, or <u>message on WhatsApp</u>.</p>	<p>FLORIDA CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE</p> <p>To report a case of child abuse, neglect or abandonment, call the Florida Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).</p>

For additional resources to support youth with emotional health needs, as well as a local resource directory, visit: namigo.org/resources/local-resources or www.seminolechildren.org



Tell Us What You Think!

Your feedback matters! Help us help you by submitting the Mental Health Matters Newsletter Feedback form.