

Orange County Schools

Children's Mental Health Awareness

May 2018

Why should schools participate in Children's Mental Health Awareness?

The goals of this joint effort between Orange County Schools (OCS) and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) are to:

- Raise awareness about the mental health needs of students
- Advocate for resources
- Recognize that everyone benefits from improved mental health
- Create a school climate of acceptance and support
- Show support for our students who struggle with mental illness
- Decrease stigma

Important Dates & Information

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week: **May 7th - May 11th**

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day: **May 10th (Wear Green Day)**

Campaign Color Theme: **GREEN**

Statement:

This May Orange County Schools and Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools are participating in a joint effort to raise awareness about the mental health needs of students. For the first time, every school in OCS will participate in Children's Mental Health Awareness Week May 7 -11th. Schools will provide information to parents, students, and staff on the importance of self-care in order to manage stress and anxiety. The mental health of our students is important 12 months of the year, and we are going to take this time to recognize just how essential good mental health is to our students' overall well being. Please join us in wearing green on May 10th to show support for Children's Mental Health Awareness.

Sample School Activities

- Student groups design and create a bulletin board advertising mental health related topic.
- Advertise self-care tips to students, parents, and staff through school wide announcements and email.
- Provide staff development on a mental health related topic: Self Care, Compassion Fatigue, Trauma Informed Classrooms, How to Recognize and Support Students Struggling with Mental Health.
- Engage in a classroom discussion or Community Building Circle as part of the Restorative Justice Model.
 - Round 1: On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 (I have no energy and am not ready for school at all) and 5 (I feel good today and am ready), what number are you and why?
 - Round 2: What is one way that you take care of yourself when you are really upset or stressed out?
 - Round 3: When you see that a classmate is upset what is one way that you can help them?
- Design a class art activity. Have students each construct a sign advertising a self care tip to help a person when they are upset or stressed. Hang them in your classroom or in the hall for other students to see. *(Suggested age: elementary and middle school)*