

# STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH: ANXIETY AND THE STUDENT WELLNESS PROGRAM

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**S**TUDENT **W**ELLNESS **P**ROGRAM





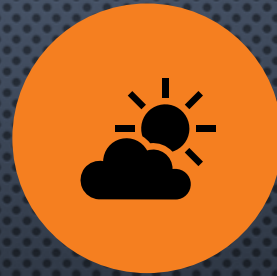
Anxiety has become an interchangeable term: Anxiety disorder v. anxious feelings



Difficult emotions are okay




Childhood is a time of new emotions- Hard to put words to



Our anxiety clouds us: we want to save

# EMOTIONS VS. MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS



A black and white photograph of three children running through a grassy field. The child in the foreground is wearing a plaid shirt and a beanie, running towards the camera. Two other children are running behind them, also towards the camera. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

# Prevention of an Anxious Generation

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Experience Successes and Failures

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Limit Screen Time/ Access to Devices

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Allow for time without adult supervision

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Get into nature

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Sleepovers/ Sleep Away Experiences

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Create Child Friendly Neighborhoods

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Talk about difficult things/ Listen to their thoughts

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Acknowledge your own anxiousness

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# What do we do if our child is Anxious?

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Encourage conversation (Family/ Safe Adults)

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Acknowledge the challenge and the feelings

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Use coping skills to calm down but to also work toward solutions

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Acknowledge your own anxiousness

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Seek help if needed

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# What do we do if we are worried about an Anxiety Disorder?

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Seek professional support (Counselors: Julie Herrmann, Lauren Turner Mental Health Specialist: Rachael Johnson)

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The Student Wellness Program

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Encourage Conversation

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Acknowledge the challenge and the feelings

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Acknowledge your own anxiousness

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# HOW DO WE KNOW?

## DRASTIC AND SUSTAINED CHANGE

- YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD
- FEARFUL OF THINGS THEY HAVE NOT BEEN FEARFUL OF IN THE PAST/ AVOIDANCE
- CHANGE IN EATING AND SLEEP PATTERNS
- INCREASED IRRITABILITY
- TROUBLE TURNING THEIR BRAIN OFF/ ALWAYS ON EDGE
- COMPLAINING OF PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS (HEADACHES, STOMACHACHES, MUSCLE TENSION)
- SELF-HARMING/SUICIDAL IDEATION
- OTHER UNHEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS
- THE STUDENT WELLNESS PROGRAM





# Crisis Response vs. Prevention/ Early Detection

## Crisis Response

Intervention comes in response to a crisis

Intervention is seen only for those in crisis

Need for Intervention is immediate

We believe that mental wellness is only affected by crisis moments

## Prevention/ Early Detection

50% percent of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24

Changes the conversation around mental health

The system is not in constant crisis response mode

Acknowledge that mental health is important no matter the degree



# ONE SOLUTION



**S**TUDENT **W**ELLNESS **P**ROGRAM

The goal of Mental Health America's Student Wellness Program (SWP) is to enhance every young person's learning and living by offering students, families, and schools' insight, language, knowledge, and support in understanding the necessity of and need for mental health in a child's education.



# SWP IMPLEMENTATION

## Identify

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Students complete a 10-15 minute questionnaire about their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, including symptoms of depression and anxiety, suicidal thinking and behavior, self-harm, attention-related concerns and disruptive behavior, and use of drugs and alcohol.

## Support

Students whose answers reveal a potential concern and students who ask for help will meet with a trained mental health professional in private to determine if a further evaluation would be helpful.

## Connect

Parents of guardians are contacted by SWP staff to discuss their student's screening results and discuss options to obtain support (such as counseling), and help make those connections.



# What You Can Expect

- We will meet with 5th-grade students between **April 14-16**.
- Reminder email a few days before- talk to your student about being signed up
- Students will take the screening tool on their Chromebook in groups no larger than 10.
- Regardless of screening results, you will hear from us.
- We will meet with students who screen positive for a one-on-one conversation.
- Schedule a time to meet with the parent/guardian to share the results.
- Offer recommendations for next steps, including referral, release of information for the school counselor, middle school counseling team, etc.
- Continued check-ins until connections have been made.





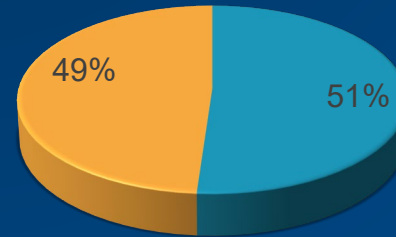
# IMPACT

2023/2024 School Year



## 614 STUDENTS

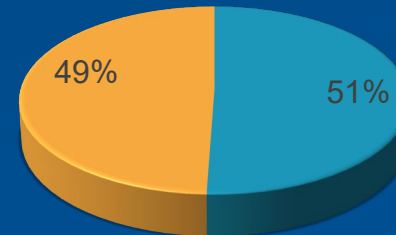
Parkway Schools received mental health screenings 2023/24



51% (314) were identified as needing mental health support

## 261 Parkway 5<sup>th</sup> Graders

received mental health screenings in 2023/24



51% (132) have been identified as needing mental health support





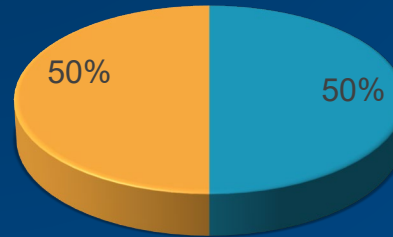
# IMPACT

2023/2024 School Year



## 18 HENRY STUDENTS

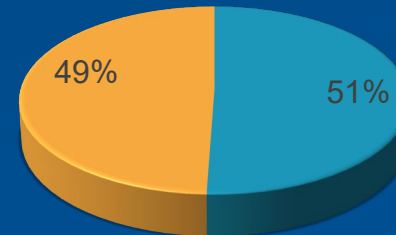
received mental health screenings  
2023/24



50% (9) were  
identified as needing  
mental health support

## 261 Parkway 5<sup>th</sup> Graders

received mental health screenings  
in 2023/24



51% (132) have been  
identified as needing  
mental health support





2024/2025 School Year



**S**TUDENT **W**ELLNESS **P**ROGRAM

# Registration is Open!

SWP will be at Henry  
April 14-16, 2025





# THANK YOU

## WE ARE WORKING TO ENHANCE EVERY STUDENT'S LEARNING AND LIVING.

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