

Dear parents,

We know physical and mental health plays a crucial role in a student's ability to succeed in school, have rewarding relationships with family members and friends and lead productive and happy lives. The pandemic has only magnified this understanding of the need to support mental health for our students. Parkway Schools is committed to working with you to educate your children and ensure that they reach their full potential inside and outside of the classroom.

In order to support the mental health of our students, we are offering a free, optional mental wellness screening for **7th grade starting on January 8th, 2024.**

The Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri's (MHA-EM) Student Wellness Program offers you the opportunity to have your child participate in an emotional health check-up called Candid, which uses a nationally recognized screening tool. The mental wellness screening program for students is free, completely voluntary, and confidential.

The Student Wellness Program can help you better understand the changes children are experiencing. No matter what your child's screening results are, the program will provide you with important information about your child.

For many, this screening will reassure you that your student is coping well or experiencing a typical range of emotions. For others, the screening can help you pinpoint a potential concern in its early stages. Early detection gives you the ability to secure supportive resources for your child and increase their ability to cope with challenges and stressors as they arise.

We hope you will take advantage of this free confidential mental health check-up for your child. [Register here.](#)

Please read the information below for more details on the screening process.

How does the wellness screening work?

The screening will be administered by mental health professionals employed by Mental Health America. The screening will be conducted in the classroom setting through a Chromebook. Your child will never be screened without your permission. All screening results will be kept confidential, stored separately from academic records, and will not be shared with your student's teachers, counselors, or administrators without your permission. The only limit to this confidentiality is if it is determined there is an immediate safety risk to your child or others, in which case information necessary to secure safety will be disclosed. There are three steps to the screening process:

Step One: Students complete a 10-15 minute questionnaire about their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, including symptoms of depression and anxiety, suicidal thinking and behavior, self-harming behavior, attention-related concerns and disruptive behavior, and use of drugs and alcohol.

Step Two: 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.

Step Three: You will be contacted by program staff regardless of your student's screening results show a potential concern. If this is the case, program staff will share the overall results with you and discuss options to obtain support, such as counseling, for your student.

Parkway Schools and Mental Health America offers the Student Wellness Program at no cost to families. It is up to you to decide if you want to obtain any additional services for your child. To register your child for the [Student Wellness Program please complete this form on the MHA-EM's website](#). The registration works best using Google Chrome browser. We encourage you to read more about the program and the [FAQ page on the website which can be found here](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact the Student Wellness Program Director Brian Kuhn at 314-970-1732 or brian.kuhn@mha-em.org with further questions.

Sincerely,

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