



December 2018

Plainview- Old Bethpage Central School District GUIDANCE NEWSLETTER

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Director's Message



Above: Members of the JFKHS support team that spearheaded follow-up conversations with students after the viewing of "Angst". In order from left to right, Jamie Pfeffer, Melissa Rudes, Janine Ferrante & Jessica Colombini.

This year, the Plainview-Old Bethpage School District has focused much conversation around the topic of social emotional learning (SEL). What does this mean? According to the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning, it is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. This issue of the Guidance Newsletter highlights some of the district-wide SEL activities that have been implemented with students and parents. We hope to continue these conversations throughout each building and each classroom.

Please enjoy this issue and please share your feedback with us!

But, Really... What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. This mindful awareness has specific qualities that make it different from just being attentive. These characteristics are: *intentionality* to be attentive, *openness* to be present and honest with what is happening in the moment, and *observing* what is happening rather than trying to control the experience.

- Mindfulness **IS**...
- Being aware of the present moment.*
 - Recognizing and sitting with emotions.*
 - Observing what's happening rather than trying to control it.*

- Mindfulness is **NOT**...
- Only calmness and happiness.*
 - The absence of thought.*
 - Religious*

Mindfulness helps to create space and replace **impulsive reactions** with **thoughtful responses**.

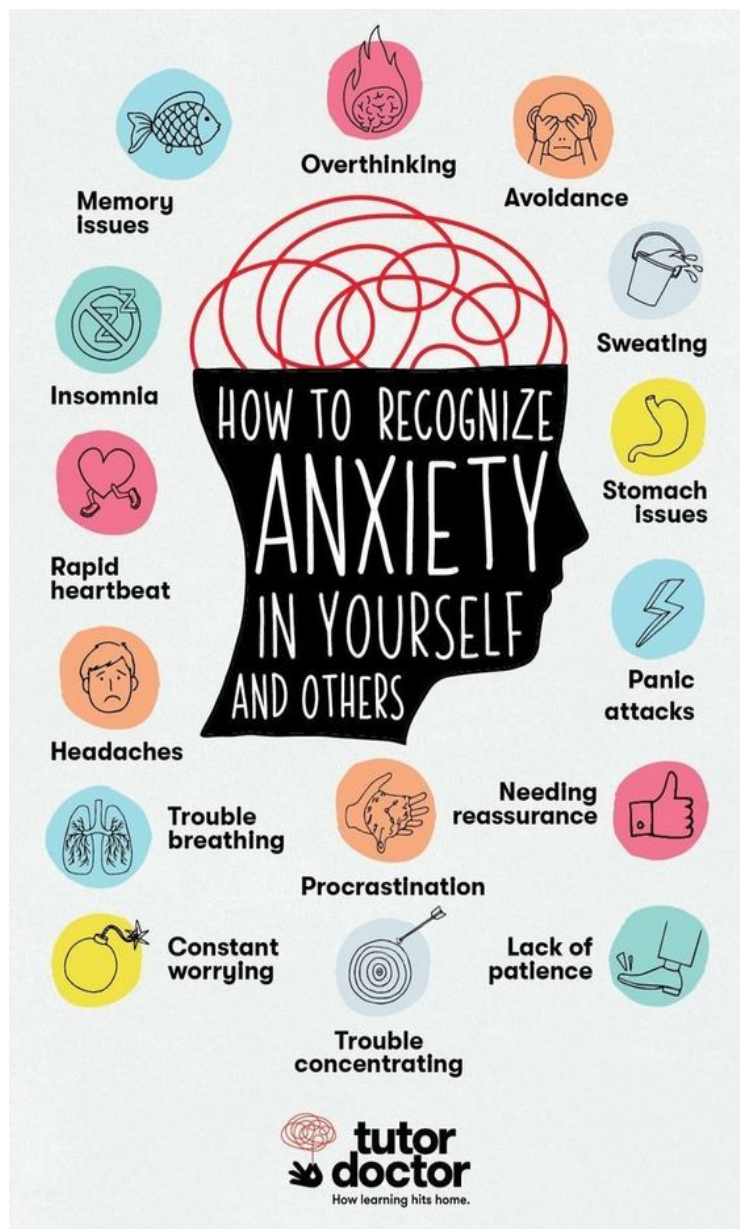
Without
Mindfulness



With
Mindfulness



Recognizing Signs Of Anxiety



13 Signs Of High Emotional Intelligence

In 1995, psychologist and science journalist, Daniel Goleman, published a book introducing most of the world to the budding concept of [emotional intelligence](#). The idea--that an ability to understand and manage emotions greatly increases our chances of success--quickly took off, and it went on to greatly influence the way people think about emotions and human behavior.

But what does emotional intelligence look like, as manifested in everyday life? Here are 13 actions that illustrate how emotional intelligence appears in the real world:

1. You think about feelings.
2. You pause.
3. You strive to control your thoughts.
4. You benefit from criticism.
5. You show authenticity.
6. You demonstrate empathy.
7. You praise others.
8. You give helpful feedback.
9. You apologize.
10. You forgive and forget.
11. You keep your commitments.
12. You help others.
13. You protect yourself from emotional sabotage.

6 Ways Families Can Encourage Positive Mental Health Habits

1. Talk openly about mental health

There is stigma surrounding mental illness which discourages people from talking about any mental health challenges they may be facing. Talking openly about mental health promotes a safe environment that will encourage them to seek support and help when it is needed.

2. Model your own healthy habits

Children learn by observing. As you model positive mental health habits, you demonstrate how to manage life's stressors. Support them in finding and developing their own strategies and interests to sustain good mental health.

3. Spend time together as a family

Children need love, time and attention. Setting time aside to be with your child produces a stronger bond, makes them feel valued and loved. Invite them to join you in an activity you enjoy to reduce stress. Incorporate these activities into your family's weekly routine and acknowledge the mental health benefits of the activity.

4. Participate in community or volunteer service

Children will meet and connect with new people. They will experience a sense of belonging and purpose, and will learn how to relate to others.

5. Encourage regular exercise

Physical exercise is one of the most effective strategies for maintaining a healthy mind. Exercising stimulates chemicals that improve our moods and allow us to channel negative energy positively .

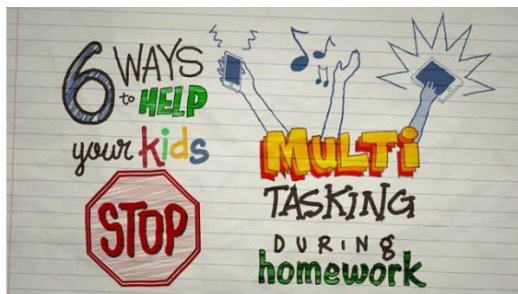
6. Praise your child's efforts and behavior

When we are praised, we feel good about ourselves, and our confidence and self-esteem increases. Praise can also help to motivate kids and encourage them to continue to try new things.

For more info: www.mentalhealthdny.org

6 Ways To Help Your Child Stop Multitasking During Homework

1. Create a homework-friendly environment by removing distractions.
2. Establish a study routine.
3. Set rules for online assignments.
4. Practice doing one task at a time.
5. Schedule time for digital activities.
6. Be a role model for your children - avoid multitasking.



Welcome to POB!

Please welcome the newest member of the POB community, Ms. Stephanie Zeidner, Elementary School Counselor. Before arriving to POB, Ms. Zeidner previously worked in the New York City Department of Education for eleven years as an elementary teacher and as a school counselor. In just a few months in POB, Ms. Zeidner has already made an impact on our students. Below are some highlights. Ms. Zeidner believes that it is hard for children to show their best selves academically when they are struggling socially or emotionally and feels honored to be able to support the personal growth of students through a partnership with school staff and parents.

WHAT HELPS VERSUS WHAT HURTS

TALKING TO SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER

 <p>"I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help."</p>	 <p>"We all go through times like this."</p>
<p>"You might not believe it now, but the way you're feeling will change."</p>	<p>"Just snap out of it. Look on the bright side."</p>
<p>"You are not alone in this. I'm here for you. We will get through this together."</p>	<p>"You'll be fine. stop worrying. Shouldn't you be better by now?"</p>
<p>"Talk to me. I'm listening."</p>	<p>"Here's my advice."</p>



URBAN JUSTICE CENTER 

Source: Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

Elementary Update

Start with Hello Initiative



The Start with Hello Initiative, based off the Sandy Hook Promise, launched in all four elementary schools the week of September 24th. This initiative teaches students how to communicate effectively and be kind to their peers. Students participated in a series of activities such as a *30 Second Hello* morning meeting activity and *mix it up* where students sat next to someone new at lunch. During this time, conversation starters were practiced and new friends were made. In addition, students created bright Hello Bubbles promoting inclusivity to welcome everyone into the building.



Classroom Lessons

Classroom lessons now focus on feelings and awareness. Feelings awareness is a vital social emotional skill that can help students express themselves using language rather than actions. Once one can identify feelings, coping strategies



can be used to help facilitate appropriate responses. Pictured are some first and fourth grade students practicing their “feelings faces” while working on how they would respond to different scenarios using the Think-Feel-Act method.



No Place for Hate

Looking forward, all POB elementary schools will be launching a No Place for Hate campaign. This anti-bullying, anti-bias program implements at least three activities focusing on acceptance and kindness. Each student will be exposed to lessons where they will learn the skills of acceptance and understanding. For more information on this campaign, please check out their website <https://nynj.adl.org/noplaceforhate/> or please reach out to our Elementary School Counselor, Stephanie Zeidner szeidner@pobschools.org



Parent Workshop on Growth Mindset

After hosting an elementary parent workshop on Growth Mindset and the power of the word “Yet”, Stephanie Zeidner shared a powerful Ted Talk. Through the link below, you can experience speaker Carol Dweck outlining her theories, research and findings in an engaging way: <https://tinyurl.com/ydhpj575>

Twitter & Resources

- To learn more about what Growth Mindset is, here is a great clip: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6qtek4>
- A great resource to see ways to support all Social Emotional areas at home is <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/>
- To see pictures of activities throughout the day, follow Mrs. Zeidner on twitter [@mrszeidnerpob](https://twitter.com/mrszeidnerpob)



In an effort to shine a light on Mental Health, the Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK High School Counseling Department offered a series of events, activities, and counseling groups during Mental Health Awareness Week this October.

To kick-off MHAW, music was played over the loudspeaker in place of the bells. School staff and students were found dancing, smiling, and singing along to uplifting pop songs and motivational Rock and Roll in between class periods. Research shows the benefits of music therapy for various mental health conditions including depression, trauma, and schizophrenia. With efforts to create a positive tone throughout the building, "Take What You Need" tear-off flyers were also displayed to offer students and faculty love, strength, peace, patience, and understanding.

The main lobby showcase was decorated by the students of GSA to highlight National Coming Out Day, October 11th, in an effort to celebrate inclusion. The school community was provided green ribbons (MHAW) and rainbow ribbons (National Coming out Day) to show support for these causes.

In addition, Social Workers Ms. Rudes mrudes@pobschools.org and Ms. Pfeffer jpfeffer@pobschools.org began weekly counseling groups at the High School during 10th period. Both groups, "Being your Best Self" and "Stress Management" are open to any student interested and will continue to run throughout the school year.

As MHAW coincided with Parent Teacher Conferences, even parents were able to parents were privy to a resource table that included a list of mental health referrals, helpful articles covering positive mental health habits, communication techniques to use with your child, and information regarding teenage mental illness.

Unity Day Takes The Middle Schools By Storm!

In honor of National Bullying Prevention Month, during the week of October 22, Mattlin and POB Middle Schools celebrated Unity Day. Unity Day serves to remind us all that our schools are united against bullying and united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Our students decorated school hallways in orange and were encouraged to wear orange. During MAP, both schools participated in an activity called Project Connect. The Project Connect chains, which are made up of orange links with student messages of unity and kindness, are currently on display at both middle schools.



Above/Below: All POBMS students were invited to participate in a fun MAP activity leading up to Unity Day called Project Connect. The Project Connect chain, which is made up of orange links with student messages of unity and kindness, is currently on display in the POBMS main lobby.



Above: MMS formed a large peace sign in the front of the school building to stand united for respect, peace, and strength. This image serves as a reminder that MMS is and will continue to be a No Place for Hate building.



Hawk Awards At Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School

POBMS is very busy celebrating students' positive behaviors and recognizing them when they help others with kindness!

Every two weeks, staff members have an opportunity to nominate students for their random acts of kindness. Students have their picture taken and their names are displayed with a star on a bulletin board for the entire year for all to see. Students are presented with a certificate to hang up at home.

Staff at POBMS enjoys nothing more than catching students demonstrating positivity. The word is out and it is catching on!

HAWK stands for:

H- Helping

A- All

W- With

K- Kindness



Above: POBMS students are recognized for helping others.

Getting And Staying Involved

For some students the college process is a few years away, while for others it is just around the corner. Although at times the process can feel daunting, there are easy steps students can take to get ahead. Being involved, both in and out of school, gives students an outlet to explore and expand their interests. Involvement offers a sense of belonging, a chance for leadership experience, and an opportunity to meet new people. Involvement even helps build the skills of time management and collaboration. These meaningful experiences can assist in the college process, as many colleges ask applicants to expand upon activities. Below are examples of short answer questions taken from 2018-2019 college applications.

The University of Michigan

If you could only do one of the activities you have listed in the Activities section of your Common Application, which one would you keep doing? Why?

Tulane University

Please briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work experiences. (250 words)

Johns Hopkins University

Successful students at John Hopkins make the biggest impact by collaborating with others, including peers, mentors, and professors. Talk about a time, in or outside the classroom, when you worked with others and what you learned from the experience.

Mr. Izzo Attends NACAC Conference



This fall, high school counselor Joseph Izzo attended the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) conference in Salt Lake City. Out of the thousands of attendees, he was one of 39 to receive an Imagine Grant from NACAC, which helped offset the cost of attending the multi day conference.

This annual conference is the “Super Bowl” for high school counselors in terms of educational sessions and networking with college admissions officers. In fact, this unique conference brings together admissions officers as well as deans and directors of admissions from many colleges and universities. Mr. Izzo attended educational sessions on test optional admissions, counseling programs, financial aid, Naviance, student athletes, college essays, and understanding the Smartphone generation. He eagerly shared the details of the conference with his JFK colleagues, and thoroughly enjoyed both the learning opportunities and chance to network with colleges and universities in the service of students and families here in POB.

SAT & ACT Concordance Tables

ACT and the College Board, with engagement from the NCAA technical committee, periodically produce concordance tables to assist in comparing scores of students who may complete different tests. The ACT and the SAT measure similar but not identical content and skills, and they employ different score scales. The ACT Composite score is based on a scale of 1 to 36, while the SAT Total score ranges from 400 to 1600.

ACT and the College Board released new concordance tables that allow users to compare scores from the new SAT® test (redesigned in 2016) and the ACT® test. These concordance tables are designed to be used by colleges, K–12 education professionals, scholarship organizations, students, policymakers, and others to inform policies, processes, and decisions. They may be used to compare SAT and ACT scores across different students, to establish policies using comparable scores from both tests, and to convert scores for use in a predictive model or index. Both ACT and the College Board have consistently advised that test scores should be used in combination with other factors—including grades—in making important decisions such as admissions.

The 2018 ACT/SAT concordance tables are now the only official concordance tables between the ACT and the SAT and should be used as the single source of reference moving forward when comparing scores on the two tests. The new concordance tables may be accessed for free on act.org/concordance and collegeboard.org/concordance.

College Decisions: Waitlist and Deferral

You receive your college admissions decision, and it says, “You have been put on a waitlist”. What does this mean? It means that you meet the admissions criteria, but the college has already filled its quota. If a spot becomes available later on, you may be offered a place; but this often occurs after May 1 and even into June.

What if you’ve been deferred? Being deferred means that your application hasn’t been accepted yet, but it might be later. If you’ve applied as an early action or early decision application, a ‘deferral’ means you will be reviewed again during the regular application timeline and are freed from any obligation to attend the school if accepted. If you applied as a regular decision applicant, then the college is likely seeking more information on which to evaluate your application (i.e. updated test scores, senior year grades, etc.).

So Now What?

- Contact your regional admission representative to update him/her with any new achievements or supplemental material since your application.
- Keep up the hard work! You may be re-evaluated based on your senior grades and extracurricular commitments.
- Reconsider the colleges that accepted you and celebrate your accomplishments!

Waitlisted Students:

- Follow the college’s instructions on how to notify the admissions office whether or not you want to stay on the waitlist. If you decide to remain on the waitlist, prepare to attend another college so you are assured to have a spot at college in the fall.
- Contact the admissions office to find out about their waitlist process. Ask the college if they rank waitlisted students.

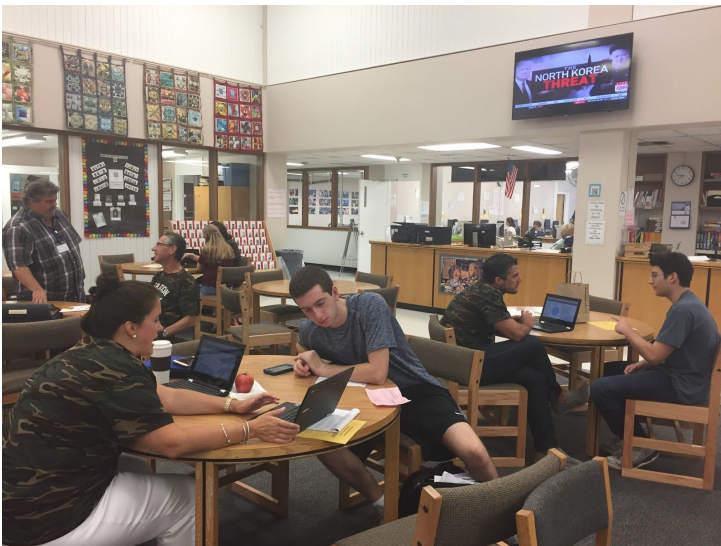
When in doubt, consult with your school counselor!



POBJFK Guidance Event Highlights

The guidance staff at POBJFK High School has had a busy fall! In addition to working with our students and families on a daily basis, there have been a number of programs to assist our students at each grade level. Below is a highlight of some of the programs to enhance our students and families' experiences at the high school.

- **Freshman Orientation:** The school counseling staff invited all incoming 9th graders and their parents to a program that included an introduction to the high school, breakout sessions and tours of the building.
- **Operation Apply:** In August, the school counselors hosted stations in the library for seniors to receive assistance on their college applications. With the help of teachers from the English Department, seniors had an opportunity to review their college essay. Other topics discussed were: Naviance, resume building, the college search, and other college related issues. The school counselors had an additional workshop in September.
- **12th Grade Information Night:** Parents and students were invited to a presentation hosted by the counseling staff detailing the college application process.
- **College 101:** The counseling staff hosted three College 101 workshops including two workshops entitled How To Communicate With College Representatives as well as Alumni Q&A Day.
- **11th Grade Information Night:** The high school counselors presented to parents and students on the important factors that impact the college search process.
- **10th Grade Information Night:** The guidance staff introduced Naviance Family Connection to sophomore students and families detailing the program's features.
- **Freshman Conferences:** Counselors host individual meetings with their freshman students and parent to review high school expectations, the role of the school counselor, present progress, resume building, and more.



Above: Counselors work with seniors on their college application process at the second annual Operation Apply program.

Right: The POBJFK guidance counseling team.





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