



SCIP NEWS BITES

www.lmep.com

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Good Health Includes Mental Health!

The label “mental health” has one of the most powerful stigmas, both public persona and personally assigned. However, the reality is that seeking help to ensure one has good mental health should not be seen as a negative, but as a sign of resourcefulness. According to a recent study conducted by American Psychological Association, 26% of adults and 20% of children experience diagnosable mental health conditions yearly. Untreated mental health concerns are associated with increased heart disease, obesity and substance abuse. When a child has untreated mental health concerns, that child is at a high risk for difficulties later in life including failure to complete high school, increased risk for attempting or completing suicide, increased risk of involvement in the correction system and mental illness as an adult. The terms mental illness and mental health tend to be interchanged, when in reality they are two different things. The Center for Disease Control uses the following definitions: **mental illness** is a condition or disorder characterized by alterations in thinking, mood or behavior associated with distress and impairment in functioning; **mental health** is a state of well-being in which individuals realize their own abilities and cope with daily stresses of life.

- Is your child experiencing difficulties or concerns that disrupt daily life?
- Does your child feel more sad than usual?
- Is your child feeling overwhelmed with life?
- Does your child have problems focusing at school?
- Does your child get so emotional that they want to or have attempted to hurt themselves, a pet or others?
- Is your child experiencing worries or anxieties that interfere with daily activities?

If you think your child is in need of mental health services you can speak with a member of your schools SCIP team for a referral to a mental health professional or speak to your primary care physician for a referral.

Because the terms mental illness and mental health are often mistakenly interchanged there are many mistruths about seeking mental health services:

<u>Myths</u>	<u>Reality</u>
Only CRAZY people go to therapy.	People seek therapy for a range of reasons in everyday life such as: depression, anxiety, life transitions like job changes, divorce, death of loved ones, parenting demands, coping with medical issues, improving relationships.
Seeing someone for mental health means that they are going to put me on a “happy pill”, not deal with the problem.	Drug therapy has become an increasing popular choice over the past decade, but research shows that therapy is just as helpful — if not more so, in some cases. You have a choice when getting treatment for depression, anxiety or other psychological concerns.
Talking to family and friends is just as effective and less embarrassing.	Support from trusted friends and family is important but trained mental health professionals can offer much more. They have received specialized education, training and experiences to help them understand and treat complex problems. It is far more than just listening, mental health professionals can recognize behaviors or thought patterns that those closest to you have stopped noticing. Mental health services are about hearing observations from an outside professional and then focusing on solutions. With a mental health professional one can be completely honest without concerns that anyone else will know what you've revealed.
Once you start therapy you'll need to stay in for many years or even the rest of your life.	Everyone moves at a different pace, therapy is very individualized. Mental health professionals goals are to empower clients to function better on their own, not to keep them as clients.
If you receive mental health services your insurance company will tell your employer or your child will be labeled at school for seeing a mental health professional.	Mental health services are rooted and bound in confidentiality. The only people that will know about your services are you, your therapist and anyone whom you give written permission for your therapist to talk to. Mental health professionals, however, have a duty to inform authorities if you threaten to harm yourself or others.



'Insta-what, Snap-who' How do we know all that they do???

If you are finding the young people in your life using different social network phone/iPod applications this article is for you! In this day of technology, new applications launch daily and our young people are quick to use these tools to stay connected. However, there are risks and dangers that we should be aware of and be talking to our kids about. Users of these apps and other social networking sources should be very aware that nothing shared should be considered private, regardless of the privacy settings that you have on your account. All photos that are posted could be subjected to being hacked, altered, used without permission or sold by the company.

Parents and educators should talk to kids about safety concerns that accompany social networking use, the appropriate sharing of personal information and online predators. Ultimately, anything that is said or done online can get copied, forwarded and used by others. Teaching our kids that anything that is posted using social networking or photo sharing is creating a digital footprint and trail, is our best defense against negative effects from these forms of technology.

- **Instagram** is a photo sharing network which allows users to add filters and effects to their pictures and share them. Users may add captions and tag (#) people in their photos. Photos can then be shared from the Instagram newsfeed on to social networking sites such as Twitter, Tumblr or Facebook. Individuals may "follow" a person to see all of the pictures that they post, comment on others photos, and have a dialogue with the owner of the photo. Like other social networking forums if privacy options are not put in place by the account holder, photos and information shared can be seen by all users. (www.instagram.com)



- **Snapchat** is a real time photo sharing app that allows users to send messages, photos or videos with a selected amount of time that the recipient is able to view the photo before it self-deletes and is gone forever (or so users believe). This app is promoted as a fast, free and fun way to share your world with others. Users need to be cautious of how much of their world they are sharing. Because users believe that they are only giving quick sneak peeks before photos disappear forever, there has been a tendency to send photos that are more risky. Users need to be aware that these photos do not truly delete forever; these photos can resurface or they can be saved by the recipient using the screenshot function. (www.snapchat.com)

Risk of Mental and Behavioral Health Problems Increase for Victims of Dating Violence

Those teens who experience dating violence are at an increased risk of substance abuse. A 5 year longitudinal study conducted by the American Academy of Pediatrics surveyed 5600 teens involved in heterosexual dating relationships and 1/3 of them reported experiencing dating violence — emotional and/or physical abuse. The AAP surveyed the same subset 5 years later and those teens who originally reported dating violence had a higher instance of depression, self-esteem issues, anti-social behaviors, sexual risk behaviors, extreme weight control behaviors, suicidal ideation and attempts, substance use (smoking, heavy episodic drinking, marijuana use, other drugs), and adult intimate partner violence.

(www.drugfree.org; www.pediatrics.aappublications.org)

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Bullying Prevention Event

Lincoln Public Schools is bringing Kirk Smalley of Stand for the Silent back to Lincoln to speak about bullying.

They will be hosting an evening community event that will be open to the public.

When: February 19, 2012

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Where: Lincoln Southeast High School
2930 S. 37th Street
Lincoln, NE

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Suicide Prevention Conference

Don't forget to get registered!

"Finding Light Through the Darkness"
Suicide Prevention Conference

March 27, 2013
8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Lincoln, NE
Holiday Inn Downtown

Additional brochures and registration forms can be found on SCIP's website at www.lmep.com/scip.aspx under the "Events" tab.