

# Improving Mental Wellness in Children and Families:

*Behavioral Health Awareness and Prevention Efforts — On Our Sleeves*

## SJCSD ESE Parent Education Night

April 4<sup>th</sup> 2023

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Baptist Medical Center/Wolfson Children's Hospital

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Manager, THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health  
Wolfson Children's Hospital



# Agenda

- Introductions
- Learning objectives
- Warning signs
- Coping skills
- *On Our Sleeves*



# Poll Everywhere Instructions

Text



- 1 Text **FVARALLOSIMS029** to **37607**
- 2 Text in your message

Join today's live polling feature by  
texting in the above information



# What is your level of Behavioral Health experience?



I am a behavioral health  
clinician/researcher **A**

I have learned about and  
understand common mental  
health diagnoses/treatments **B**

I have some knowledge of  
common mental health  
diagnoses/treatments **C**

I have no familiarity with the  
behavioral health field **D**

# Learning Objectives

## At the end of this session, learners will be able to:

- Recognize common signs of emotional distress.
- Understand the concept of appraisal and identify coping styles that promote resilience.
- Recall the goals of the “On Our Sleeves” campaign and know how to access free educator resources.



# The Science of Psychology

- **Psychology:** the scientific study of behavior and mental processes
  - *Behavior:* outward or overt actions and reactions
  - *Mental processes:* internal, covert activity of our minds
- **No single perspective** to explain all human behavior and mental processes.

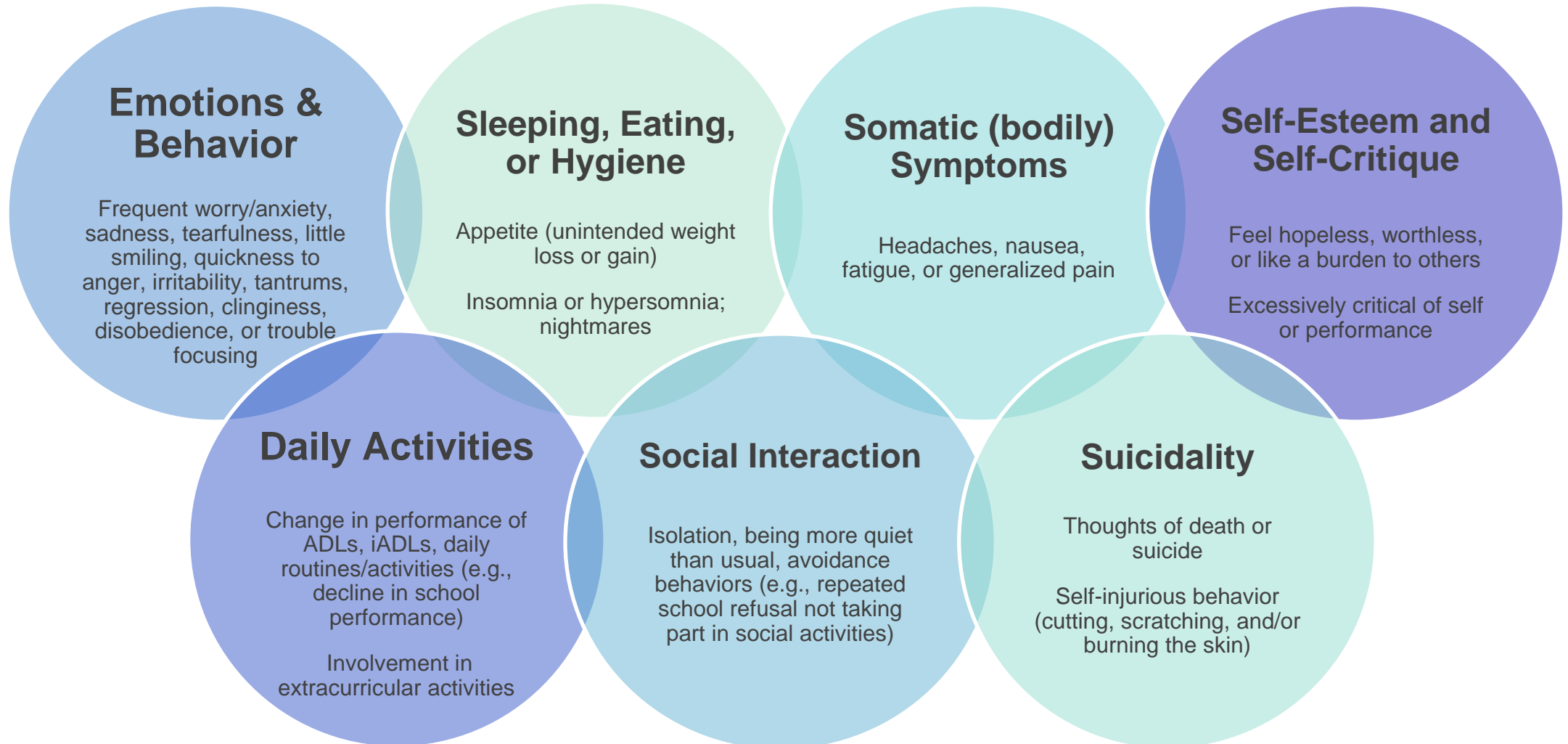
## Seven Modern Perspectives:

- Psychodynamic Perspective
- Behavioral Perspective
- Humanistic Perspective
- Cognitive Perspective
- Sociocultural Perspective
- Biopsychological Perspective
- Evolutionary Perspective



# What behaviors (verbal or non-verbal) might warrant concern for someone's emotional health?

# Warning Signs



*\*significant changes in functioning*



**What might you say if you observed a significant change in someone's functioning or affect?**

# Warning Signs: How to Show Support

**“That sounds like a difficult experience to go through.”**

**“It makes sense that you were upset and  
I’m sorry that happened.”**

**“How can I help?”**



# Stress and Coping: Dealing with Life's Stressors

- **Stressors:** events and circumstances that produce threats to our well-being or disrupt daily life.
- **Stress:** the physical and emotional response to events that threaten or challenge us.

*Consider this...*

**Are all stressors *negative*?**

**Do all stressors produce *stress*?**

Let's explore how cognition plays a role in how things are interpreted as stressful

# Appraisal and Coping

**Lazarus and Folkman (1984)** developed a theoretical model that involves two foundational processes in someone's reaction to stress:

## APPRAISAL:

evaluation of personal significance of an event, threat level, and the individual's available coping resources.



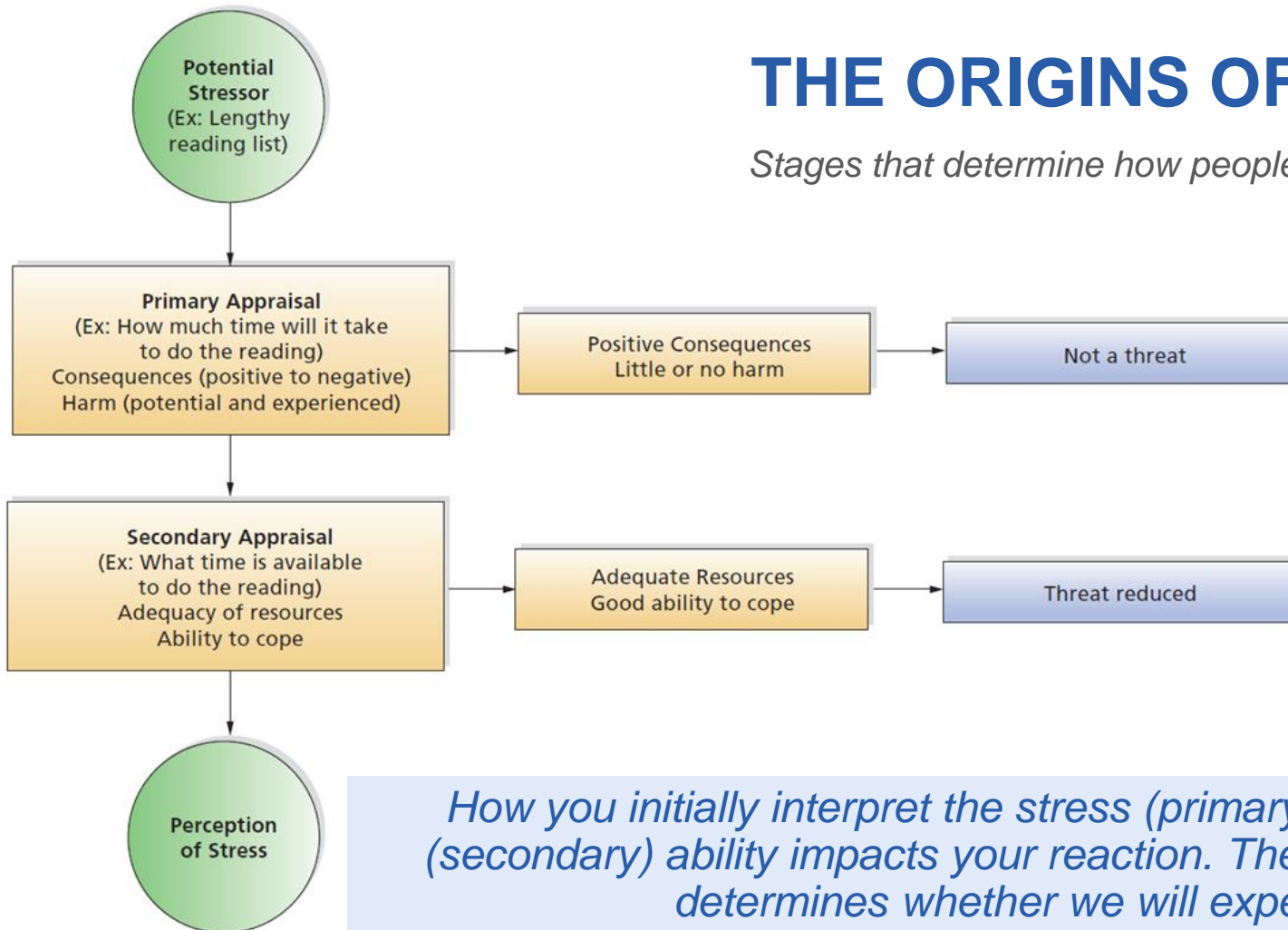
## COPING:

thoughts and behaviors a person uses in response to distress.

# Appraisal and Coping

## THE ORIGINS OF STRESS

*Stages that determine how people experience stress*



**Primary:** the assessment of an event to determine whether its implications are positive, negative, or neutral.

**Secondary:** the assessment of whether one's coping abilities and resources are adequate to overcome the harm, threat, or challenge posed by the potential stressor.

*How you initially interpret the stress (primary) and perception of tolerance/coping (secondary) ability impacts your reaction. The way we appraise a potential stressor determines whether we will experience subjective stress.*

# How can we foster positive (hopeful) primary/secondary appraisals of events or challenges?

Coaching employees through finding solutions

Listening

Ask how they can help

# Coping Skills

**Coping:** the effortful process to *control, reduce, or learn* to tolerate the threats and challenges that often lead to stress. This includes thoughts and behaviors used in response to distress.

There are four primary styles of coping:

- Problem-focused
- Emotion-focused
- Social support coping
- Defensive coping

(Feldman, 2020)



# Styles of Coping

**Problem-focused coping** attempt to manage a stressful problem or situation by directly changing situation to make it less stressful.

**Emotion-focused coping** involves conscious regulation of emotion.

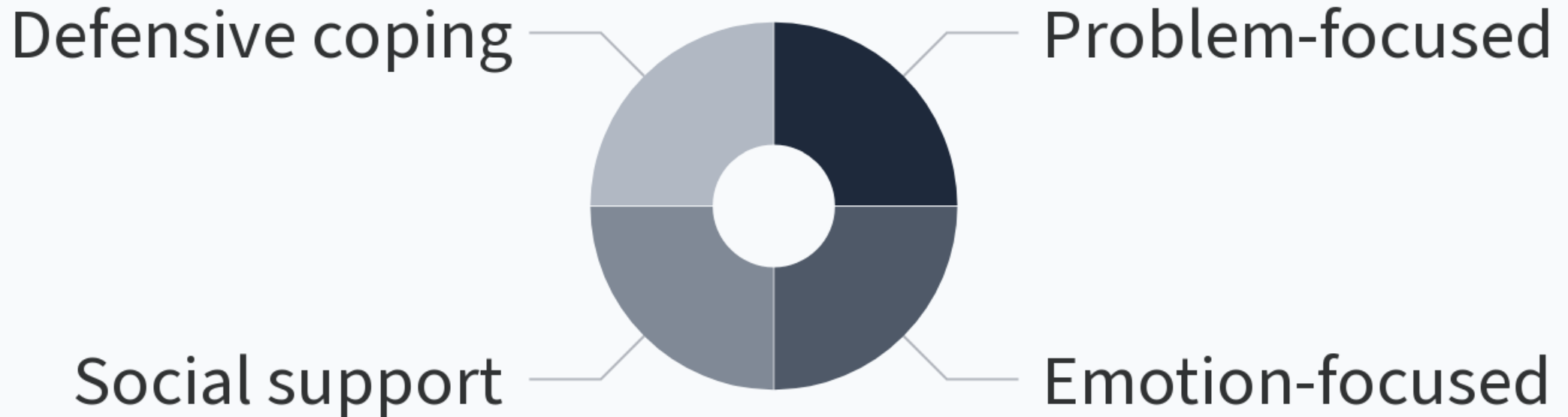
**Social support coping** assistance and comfort supplied by others.

**Defensive coping** unconscious strategies that distort or deny true nature of the situation.

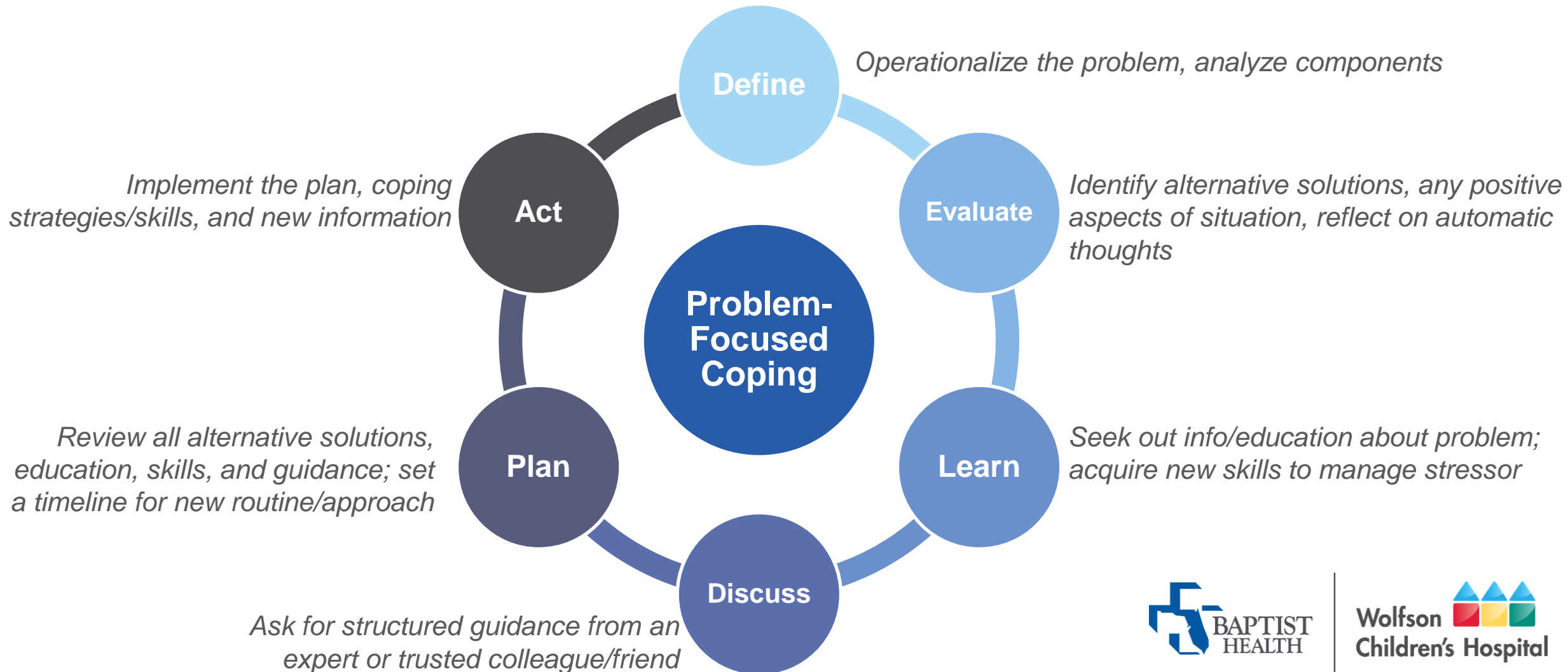


# Which style of coping do you think is best for stress reduction in school environments?

■ Problem-focused **A** ■ Emotion-focused **B** ■ Social support **C** ■ Defensive coping **D**



# Problem-Focused Coping Skills



# How can you employ a problem-focused coping style?

# Additional Coping Skills



- **Relaxation techniques**
  - Progressive muscle relaxation
  - Guided imagery
  - Deep breathing
- **Values exploration**
- **Gratitude exercises**
- **Social connection**
- **Exercise**

(Beck, 2011)

# Wolfson Children's Mental Health Efforts & Educational Resources

*On Our Sleeves*



# The Current Need

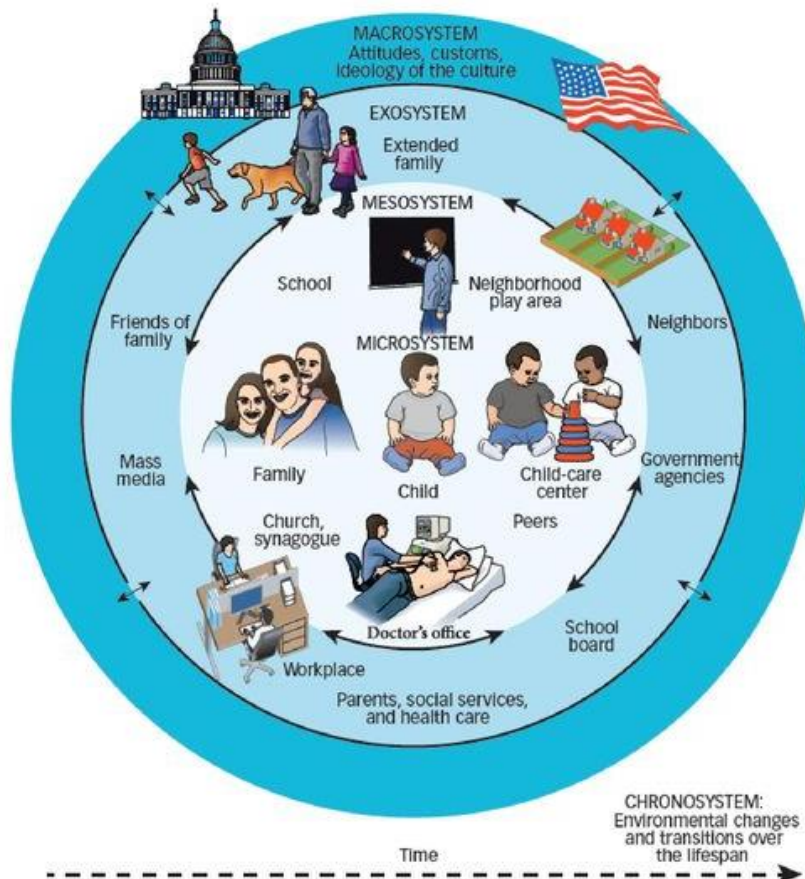
- Rise in emergency behavioral health admissions.
- **One in five** children is living with a significant mental illness.
- Most common diagnoses are **mood** (i.e., depression) and **anxiety** disorders.
- Half of all lifetime mental health issues start by **age 14**.

KIDS HAS A MENTAL  
ILLNESS. **1** IN **5**

**How can we prevent or reduce the severity of MH symptoms?**

# Bioecological Prevention Approach

## Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Model



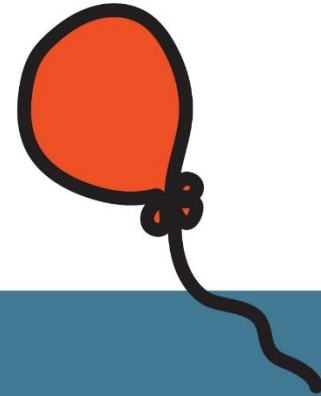
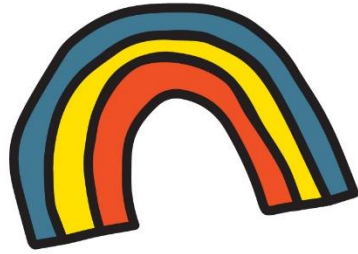
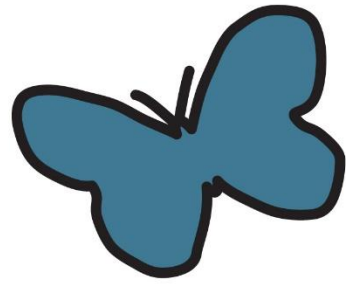
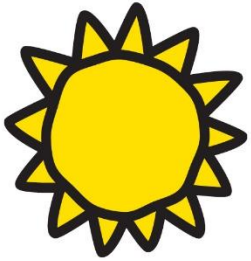
Development occurs through interactions among various contexts:

- Biological
- Cognitive
- Psychological

**Microsystem:** Immediate environments such as family, school, peer group, neighborhood, and childcare environments.

SOURCE: Adapted from Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006).

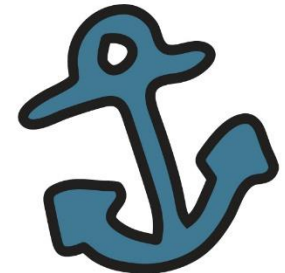
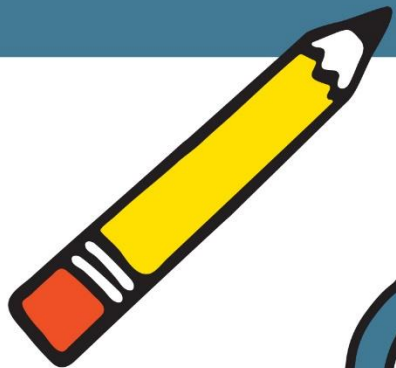




# ON OUR SLEEVES<sup>®</sup>

The Movement for  
Children's Mental Health

Wolfson   
Children's Hospital  
OF JACKSONVILLE

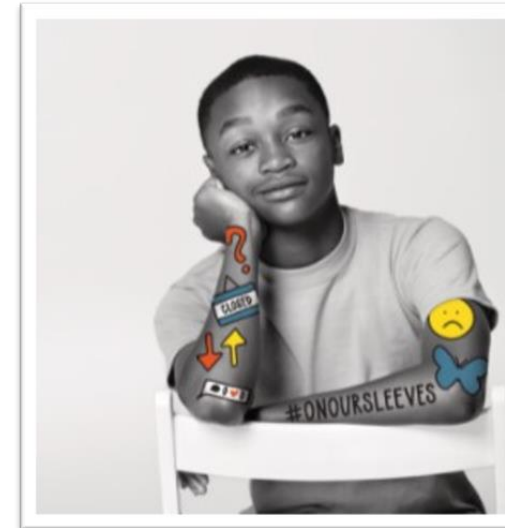


# What is On Our Sleeves?

“The movement for children’s mental health.”

*Kids don’t wear their thoughts on their sleeves, so it can be difficult to tell when they are struggling with their mental health. On Our Sleeves helps give children a voice.*

- **Goals:**
  - Break stigmas
  - Start conversations
  - ***Prevent crises*** (early intervention)



**ON OUR  
SLEEVES™**

Wolfson   
Children’s Hospital

# Implementing OOS Education

- Gather resources
- Learn the warning signs
- Start conversations
- Model and practice coping skills



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# Providing Education: Signs to Keep in Mind

## Understanding Depression and Anxiety

**On Our Sleeves** is the national movement to break stigmas around children's mental health. In partnership with *On Our Sleeves*, Wolfson Children's provides free, easy-to-use educational tools and resources online to boost mental well-being, manage mental health conditions and prevent crisis.

**Depression** is different from a typical sadness because it lasts longer and feels stronger. It causes significant changes in day-to-day activities and can increase the risk of suicide.

### Signs of Depression

- Changes in sleeping, eating, or hygiene
- Self-injury (cutting, scratching, and/or burning the skin)
- Changes in academic performance or problems at school
- Feeling hopeless, worthless, or like a burden to others
- Trouble concentrating or getting headaches
- Lack of energy or feeling fatigued
- Tearfulness, anger, irritability, negative self-talk
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Avoid and withdraw from friends or family
- Thoughts of death or suicide



## Informational postcards (child and teen versions) available for distribution

**Anxiety** is mental and physical distress due to genetics and/or things going on in your life. Anxiety can look different in every individual yet being aware of some of the signs and symptoms can help you determine when to act.



### Signs of Anxiety

- Trouble controlling thoughts/worries, panicking
- Avoiding people, places or social situations
- Irritability, restlessness, or being "on-edge"
- Shortness of breath and chest pain
- Sensation of "butterflies" in the stomach or abdominal pain/nausea
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Racing heart or flushed cheeks
- Tension-related headaches



Experiencing emotional distress can impair your ability to function day-to-day. Significant changes in the classroom, with friends, and at home are signs that someone may need additional emotional support.

Go to [WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves](https://www.wolfsonchildrens.com/OnOurSleeves) to sign up for our newsletter for up-to-date information and resources.



Use this QR code to access tools and resources.

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If you need support, call our 24/7 Kids & Teens Helpline at **904.202.7900** or text **LIFE** to **741741**. If there is an immediate safety concern, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

# Educational Materials

To help parents, caregivers and other adults start conversations with kids and teens. *(WCH resources have been translated into Spanish)*

### Trauma and Treatment in Youth

The experience of trauma in children and adolescents can take a toll on their otherwise healthy development trajectories. This may occur in children who have experienced or witnessed bullying, abuse, illness or injury, caregiver neglect, violence or natural disasters. Kids exposed to traumatic events may experience issues with attachment to caregivers, engagement with others, success in school, and forming social relationships. It's important they receive support from trusted adults to help cope with these difficult situations and emotions.

**What are the signs?**

Each child and situation is different. Some may have an emotional or physical response to these traumatic experiences. Reactions can be immediate or delayed and may differ in severity. How a child responds to trauma can also vary by age:

**Infant, Toddler and Preschoolers**

- Increased fear, sadness or fussiness
- Easily startled
- Unexplained clinginess or isolative behaviors
- Not asking caregivers for support or assistance
- Not seeking comfort, or showing little emotion when comforted by caregiver
- Observing people closely but not engaging in reciprocal social interaction
- Limited facial expressions or smiling
- Bodily complaints (stomach ache, pain, headache)
- Sleep problems

**Elementary-Age Children**

- Difficulty paying attention at school or at home
- Regressing to younger behavior (thumb sucking, bed wetting)
- Becoming more quiet or withdrawn
- Physical symptoms (nausea, sweating, headache, increased heart rate)
- Verbal expressions of sadness, hopelessness
- Social problems with peers or adults
- Decline in school performance
- Irritability, acting out behaviors, meltdowns
- Sleep problems

**Middle and High School-Age Children**

- Increased sadness, aggression or agitation
- Sleeping/eating more or less than usual
- Refusing to follow rules and talking back
- Easily startled by a loud sound or movement
- Experiencing frequent nightmares
- Sleep problems

Information developed in collaboration with the On Our Sleeves experts at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

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### Helping Children Cope with the Cycle of Deployment

Deployment is a challenging time for military families and can create many strong emotions in children. Individual reactions to this stressor may be different, even within the same family. Understanding and preparing for events and emotions in the deployment cycle can help the family cope with this uncertain time. There are specific phases of the deployment process and reactions that are common in each stage.

POSSIBLE REACTIONS IN CHILDREN & TEENS	
Pre-Deployment	From the moment of notification until deployment, families may experience denial, anger, irritability, resentment, isolation (physical and emotional), sadness and anxiety.
Deployment	Once the service member is deployed, children may feel loss, grief, guilt, fear and concern for the other parent's well-being. They may also feel sad, angry, frustrated, resentful and overwhelmed by new roles or responsibilities in the household.
Maintenance	As the deployment continues, eventually nearing its end, there are increased feelings of acceptance, adapting to the new routine/role and hopefulness.
Pre-Reunion	As the soldier's deployment nears an end, there will likely be feelings of happiness, anticipation and excitement. There may also be apprehension or anxiety about a potential change to the family routine, happiness, anticipation, and excitement.
Post-Deployment and Reintegration	Upon the parent's return, children may feel relief, happiness, role confusion, apathy, frustration, avoidance or anxiety due to potential parental conflict while adjusting to new routine and roles, followed by acceptance and eventually, stability.

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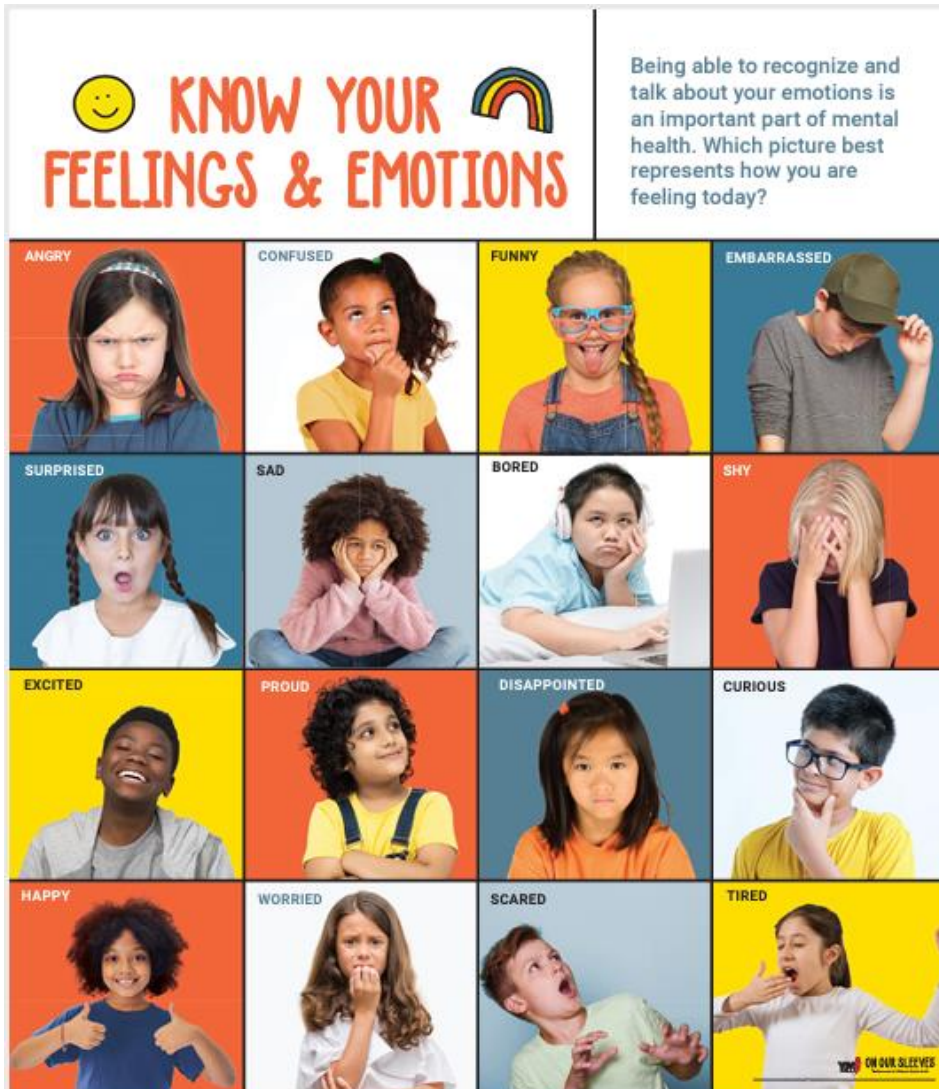
The mission of *On Our Sleeves* is to provide access to educational resources related to mental health for parents, teachers, health care professionals, and the community.

These free materials are available on [Wolfson Children's Hospital](https://www.wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves) website.

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# Educational Materials



To help children grow their vocabulary of emotions and communicate feelings, use the *Emotions Poster*.

(PDF available at [www.WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves](http://www.WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves))

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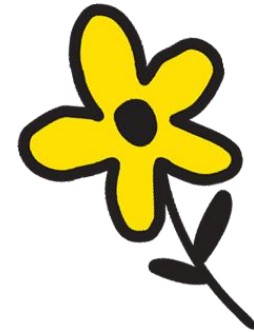
# How to Show Support

**Children look to adults during challenging times, here's how to model a supportive presence:**

- **Communicate.** When warning signs occur, adults can set a tone that emphasizes supportive concern for their well-being by checking in with them regularly.
- **Listen, validate and support.** Show active listening skills by making good eye contact and statements of validation or support to have children feel *heard*.
- **Model healthy coping.** Children are “social learners” and often mimic caregiver responses to daily situations. Encourage frequent use of coping skills by practicing some together (mindfulness and relaxation activities, exercise, art/music, deep breathing, etc.).

# How to Start Conversations

**Create opportunities to discuss how they feel by using *open-ended* conversation starters:**



- What was the best thing that happened today?
- Tell me something new you learned at school.
- What didn't go as planned today? How did you feel when that happened?
- If you could change one rule at home or school, what would it be?
- When you're sad, what's one thing that helps you feel better?
- What's your favorite thing to do? Why?



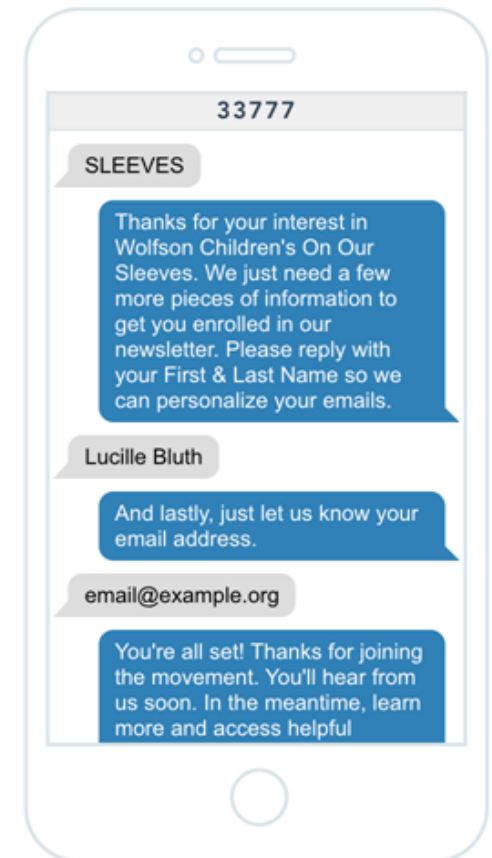
# Get Resources

## Scan the QR Code or Text SLEEVES to 33777:

- Sign up for e-newsletter.
- Download tips and tools to help facilitate conversations.
- Learn how to recognize and respond to children in or at risk of crisis.
- Access mental health support services. (**904.202.7900** the 24/7 Kids & Teen Helpline, or text **LIFE to 741741**)



*Use this QR code to access tools and resources.*





## **Jarvis Paul Ramil**

Manager, THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health

Wolfson Children's Hospital

**THE PLAYERS  
Center for Child  
Health**

**Community  
Education**

**Health  
Education**

- School Curriculum

**Prevention**

**Safe Kids Coalition**

**Sports Safety  
(Jacksonville Sports  
Medicine Program)**

**WELLcome Home**

**Institute for Child  
Abuse Prevention**

**Access**

**Kid Care  
Outreach**

**Ribault School  
Based Health  
Center**

**Family  
Connects  
(SDOH  
screening)**

**Wellness**

**Community  
Asthma  
Partnership -  
Wolfson**

**Play 60  
(Jacksonville  
Jaguars)**

**Legislative  
Advocacy**

**Florida  
Association of  
Children's  
Hospitals**

**Children's  
Hospital  
Association**

# Access and Advocacy

## Access

- Florida KidCare outreach and enrollment
- Family Links resource navigation
- Ribault School-Based Health Center

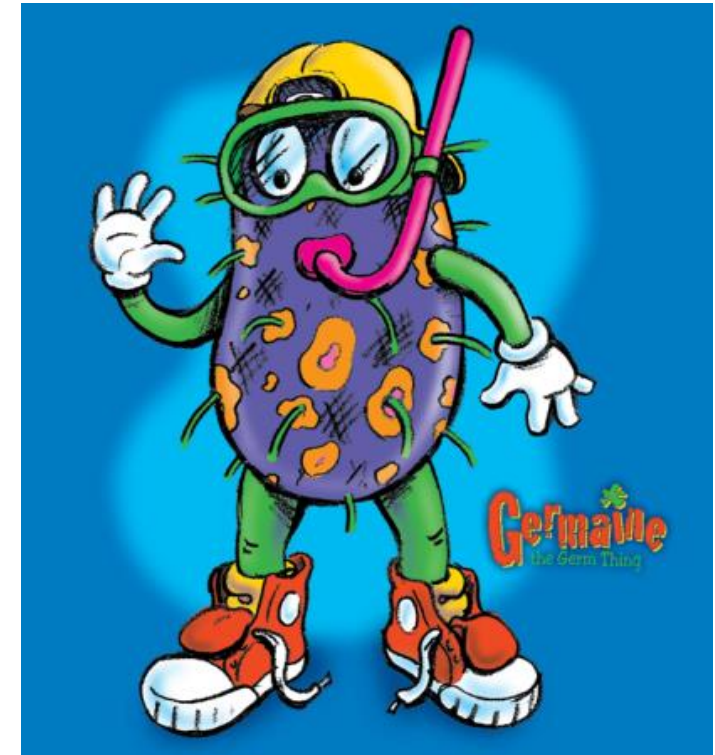


## Advocacy

- Children's Hospital Association
- Florida Association of Children's Hospitals

# Community Education

- **Goal to improve the health of the community**
- **Age-appropriate lessons that encourage and empower children**
  - **I can Eat a Rainbow**
  - **Germaine the Germ Thing**
  - **Teddy Bear Clinic**
  - **Body Safari**
  - **Mission Nutrition**



# Prevention

- **Lead organization for Safe Kids Northeast Florida Coalition**
  - Home Safety
  - Water Safety
  - Child Passenger Safety
  - Bike/Pedestrian Safety
  - Sports Safety
- **WELLcome Home**
- **Advocacy in the ED**



*International Walk to School Day  
Enterprise Learning Academy*

# Wellness

- ***Community Asthma Partnership at Wolfson***
  - A<sup>2</sup> Asthma Action
  - Easy Breathing
  - Community Classes
  - Care Coordination
  - Bedside Education



# Youth Mental Health First Aid

**“As adults, we sometimes forget how hard it was being an adolescent. When we see a kid who is just miserable at school, we might think they choose to be that way — or that it’s just part of adolescence. But in fact, they might be in a mental health crisis, one they certainly did not choose and do not want. When a teacher says, ‘How can I be helpful?’ that is a powerful question.”**

*—Alyssa Fruchtenicht, School-based Mental Health Counselor*





# Youth Mental Health First Aid

**64.1%**

of youth with major depression do not receive any mental HEALTH TREATMENT.

*Mental Health America*

**1 in 5**

teens & young adults lives with a mental HEALTH CONDITION.

*National Alliance for Mental Illness*

**5.13%**

of youth report having a substance use or ALCOHOL PROBLEM.

*Mental Health America*



**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID®**

# Youth Mental Health First Aid

## Why Youth Mental Health First Aid?

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches you **how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders**. This 8-hour training gives adults who work with youth the skills they need to reach out and provide initial support to adolescents (ages 12-18) who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care.



## WHO SHOULD TAKE IT

- Teachers
- School staff
- Coaches
- Camp counselors
- Youth group leaders
- Parents
- People who work with youth

## WHAT IT COVERS

- Common signs and symptoms of mental illnesses in this age group, including:
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Eating disorders
  - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use.
- How to interact with an adolescent in crisis.
- How to connect the adolescent with help.

## The course will teach you how to apply the ALGEE action plan:

- **Assess** for risk of suicide or harm
- **Listen** nonjudgmentally
- **Give** reassurance and information
- **Encourage** appropriate professional help
- **Encourage** self-help and other support strategies

# Youth Mental Health First Aid

Find Baptist Health's upcoming MHFA classes through Eventbrite!



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID®

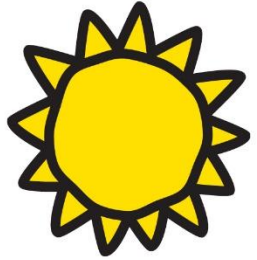
# THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health



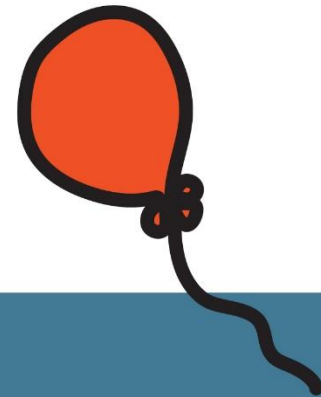
*3563 Philips Highway  
Building E, Suite 502  
Jacksonville, FL 32207*

*904-202-WELL (9355)*

*[www.wolfsonchildrens.org/theplayerscenter](http://www.wolfsonchildrens.org/theplayerscenter)*

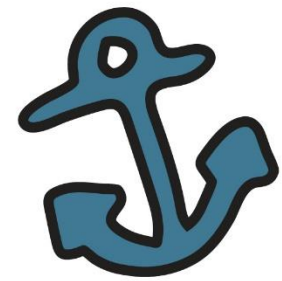
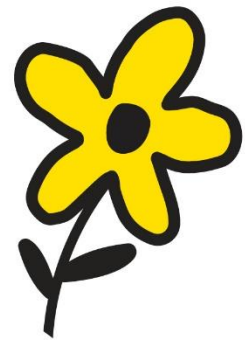


# Discussion



**ON OUR  
SLEEVES**<sup>®</sup>  
The Movement for  
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# Contact Us

## Have questions or need information about On Our Sleeves at Wolfson Children's?

- Email Vanesa Clark [Vanesa.Clark@bmcjax.com](mailto:Vanesa.Clark@bmcjax.com) (Behavioral Health Prevention Coordinator) for general inquiries, materials, and events.
- Email Dr. Varallo Sims (*Director of Education and Training, Behavioral Health Administration*) [fvara001@bmcjax.com](mailto:fvara001@bmcjax.com) for information on OOS educational tools and PDF resources.
- Visit the website: <https://www.wolfsonchildrens.com/about/on-our-sleeves-mental-health>
- Email [OnOurSleeves@bmcjax.com](mailto:OnOurSleeves@bmcjax.com)

**ON OUR  
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SLEEVES**

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