To:	**PerformCare Network of Providers**
From:	**PerformCare, Pennsylvania**
Date:	**March 15, 2022**
Subject:	**School Based Behavioral Health**

As many of you know, teachers, students, and school personnel may be feeling an increase in stress, uncertainty, and other unsettling emotions due to the prolonged nature of the Pandemic. Providers that deliver services in the school may also be feeling the stress of the current situation. In response to this, PerformCare is pleased to provide the following series for those who work with children and/or adolescents in the home, school, or community. Throughout this series mental health will be defined, coping skills and therapeutic techniques identified, and effective strategies for better mental health will be offered. We hope you find this series helpful. Please feel free to use and share.

Children with good mental health:

- Feel happy and positive about themselves most of the time.

- Are kind to themselves during tough times or when things don't go the way they expect.

- Enjoy life.

- Learn well.

- Get along well with family and friends.

- Can manage sad, worrying or angry feelings.

- Can bounce back from tough times.

- Are prepared to try new or challenging things.

Relationships and good mental health for students

- A positive relationship with you directly and positively affects mental health.

Here are some ideas to promote students mental health and wellbeing through supportive school relationships:

- Tell your students that you accept them, no matter what. You can also show acceptance through your body language and nonverbal communication – for example, making eye contact, giving a hug or smiling.

- Use a positive, constructive and consistent approach to guide student behavior. This means giving praise and attention when they behave well, rather than negative consequences when they behave in challenging ways.

- Make time every day to talk and listen. If a student wants to talk, try to stop what you're doing and give them your full attention.

- Enjoy time with your students doing activities they like. This could be reading together, kicking a ball, drawing, playing board games and so on.

- Work on positive ways to solve problems and manage conflict between students.

- Encourage students to connect with others in the community – for example, joining afterschool programs, helping out a community, or virtual, event, or other projects your school may have.

Emotions and good mental health for children

Children experience all sorts of emotions as part of growing up – fear, disappointment, sadness, anxiety, anger, joy, hope and so on. When children cope with big emotions or calm themselves down in difficult or emotional situations, they're likely to feel good about themselves.

Here are some ways you can help your student learn to manage emotions:

- Talk about emotions with your students, and encourage them to recognize and label their emotions. You can also let students know that it's natural to have all sorts of feelings. For example, 'It looks like you're really frustrated that your toy won't work. I can understand that'.

- Role-model a positive outlook for students – for example, 'Running all the way around the oval looks hard, but I think I can do it if I take it slow and steady', or 'I'm disappointed that my cake didn't cook properly, but that's OK – I'll try it again another time'.

- Support students when something is bothering them. For example, if a student is having trouble with friends at school, you could reassure them that you're there for them. And you could work on a plan to handle the situation.

- Help students learn to manage small worries so they don't become big problems. You can do this by gently encouraging students to do things they're anxious about instead of avoiding scary situations. For example, 'Have you thought about trying out for the school choir this year? You really enjoy singing'.

Good physical health and mental health for children

Good physical health is important for mental health. That's because being active helps students stay healthy, have more energy, feel confident, manage stress and sleep well.

Excerpted from: https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age