

# Wilton Public Schools

## Mental Health & Wellness Resource Newsletter



### CREATING A CULTURE OF CARE

*By Kimberly Zemo, LCSW  
Safe School Climate Coordinator*

Wilton Public Schools' Portrait of a Graduate includes the attribute balanced, healthy human being. Our mental health staff firmly believes this is as important as academic rigor and achievement. We work to support students' social, emotional and academic growth and resilience. Our teams respond to the needs of our students, provide interventions, connect families with outside supports and continue to identify appropriate resources and interventions. Our staff is committed to the well being of all students at all levels of intervention.

We have created this newsletter to share resources and supports with families in an effort to strengthen the home-school connection and promote wellness. We believe communicating to parents about information and resources to support children and youth is one way we can respond to the increase in mental health needs among today's youth.

We continue to focus on enhancing our universal practices for all students as well as implementing more measures for early identification of students who may need additional support and expand our increase intervention tools. We have introduced a strengths-based SEL screening tool for students in grades K-5. We offer screening tools at transition years for early identification of students who may be at risk for social and emotional concerns.

On the last page, we've identified the members of the district mental health team should you need to reach out for additional support or information. Please do not hesitate to connect with our staff if your child is struggling as we are here to partner with you in support of your child.

## Newsletter Highlights

Creating a Culture of  
Care

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Support for Parents

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Resources for Students  
and Families

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Crisis Resources for  
Students and Families

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District Mental Health  
Staff



**Wilton Public  
Schools**

# Support for Parents

## NAMI Parent Support Group

For parents with a child struggling with behavioral, emotional and mental health challenges. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Child and Adolescent Network (CAN) is a Support Group for parents of children, teens and young adults (under 21) with behavioral, emotional and mental health issues. The meeting is free, confidential, safe and led by trained volunteer facilitators who themselves have had personal experiences raising children with these concerns. Meetings are a place to speak freely and be understood without embarrassment or the fear of being judged or treated differently. Parents come from Redding, Weston, Westport, Wilton and towns in the surrounding area.

Our next meetings are Mondays, April 3rd, May 1st and June 5th from 10-11:30am, over Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89958265912>

Meeting ID: 899 5826 5912. For more information and the password: Beth at 203-984-0123 or [beth44es@gmail.com](mailto:beth44es@gmail.com) OR Vanessa 203-970-4130 or [eliasvanessa5@gmail.com](mailto:eliasvanessa5@gmail.com)

## PATHWAYS: PARENTING ADOLESCENTS TOWARD HEALTHIER WAYS

HARTFORD HEALTHCARE, INSTITUTE FOR LIVING

School refusal is a complex issue that involves the child who struggles with attendance, parents, and school systems.

The Anxiety Disorders Center at the Institute of Living is researching a treatment program that will focus on assisting parents in addressing the problem of school avoidance.

PATHWAYS will aim to help parents:

- Understand how accommodations for anxiety and depression may contribute to school avoidance.
- Learn ways to reduce accommodations.
- Create rules/structure around sleep, electronics use, and activity.

If you would like more information regarding this research, please contact Dr. Scott Hannan ([scott.hannan@hhchealth.org](mailto:scott.hannan@hhchealth.org)). If you know a family that would be interested in the program, please call (860) 545-7999 and ask about the PATHWAYS parenting program.

## Grief Resources

Family Centers, [The Center for Hope](#)

[Regional Hospice](#), Healing Hearts Program for Grief and Loss

Additional [Grief resources](#): WPS Website

## Helpful Articles

[A Teen Mental Health Primer](#)

[Prevention: A Resource for Parents and Caregivers](#) (young children and suicide prevention)

[Healthy Coping Skills for Teenagers: 10 ways to relieve stress & anxiety](#)

[Children and Mental Health: Is this just a stage?](#)

## Wilton Social Services Wilton Youth Services

Wilton Social Services: Sarah Heath, LPC, 203-834-6238  
[sarah.heath@wiltonct.org](mailto:sarah.heath@wiltonct.org)

Provides information and referrals to local, state and federal social service programs, financial assistance, short-term counseling, and programming.

Wilton Youth Services: Trinity Haswell, LCSW, 203-834-6241  
[trinity.haswell@wiltonct.org](mailto:trinity.haswell@wiltonct.org)

Addresses social, emotional, and behavioral needs of Wilton's young people. WYS provides information on all things child-related, referrals, consultation with parents and professionals, case management, problem assessment, and counseling services. Youth Services, along with the Director of Social Services, offers assistance to families with financial need to ensure children can access extracurricular activities.

[Resource list for Wilton Youth and Caregivers](#)

## Laurel House [rtor.org](http://rtor.org)

[rtor.org](http://rtor.org) is a gateway to mental health resources. We offer a free online service that helps people connect with expert treatment and support. Contact a Resource Specialist Now for free personalized help, support, and referrals to mental health providers in your community.

## CRISIS RESOURCES:

**IF YOU OR YOUR CHILD IS IN CRISIS, THERE ARE SUPPORT RESOURCES AVAILABLE 24/7.**

### Child or Adult Mobile Crisis Dial 211

If you or your child are in need of in person (or phone) assistance for immediate behavioral/mental health concerns, dial 211 and press 1 for mobile crisis assistance, then for youth support, press 1 or for adult support, press 2. Mobile Crisis is available to come to your home from 7am-10pm. The phone line is staffed to offer support 24/7.

### Crisis Text Line

Crisis Text Line is a free service that serves anyone, in any type of crisis 24/7. Text HOME to 741741

### Homelessness/Housing

2-1-1 serves as the front door into the State of Connecticut's Coordinated Access Networks (CANS). If you, or someone you know, is at risk of having to leave their home and having nowhere to stay, please dial 2-1-1- and press Option 3 to speak with a 2-1-1 Housing Crisis Specialist. The line is open daily from 8am-4pm.

### Kids in Crisis 203-661-1991

Need help? Not sure? Whether you're a child, parent, relative, teacher, therapist, doctor, neighbor, friend, or anyone else concerned about the welfare of a child, any time of the day or night, there is always a live counselor on the end of the phone. These trained Crisis Counselors are available to provide immediate help and assess services needed to address and work through any situation.

### Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Dial 988

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free & confidential support for people in distress, prevention & crisis resources for you or your loved ones. We can all help prevent suicide.

### Trevor Project

1-866-488-7386 OR

Text START to 678-678

24/7 Helpline. "Our trained counselors understand the challenges LGBTQ young people face. They will listen without judgment. All of your conversations are confidential, and you can share as much or as little as you'd like."

### Domestic Violence Crisis Services

(203) 588-9097 or call/text the Ct Safe Connect Hotline at 888-774-2900. 24/7 Hotline. Free. Confidential.

## DISTRICT RESOURCES

### Who to Contact

**District Mental Health Staff**  
Main Number: 203-762-3381

### School Counselors

Elena White, Miller Driscoll School ext 3276  
Ethan Bourque, Cider Mill School ext 4275  
Anne McManus, Middlebrook School (8) ext 5267  
William Gerundo, Middlebrook School (7) ext 5252  
Bonnie O'Brien, Middlebrook School (6) ext 5253  
Pam Scott, WHS (9) ext 6243  
Debbie Marino, WHS (9) ext 6292  
Matt Rosen, WHS ext 6272  
Jaclyn Porco, WHS ext 6222  
Jen Verdura, WHS ext 6209  
Dann Pompa, WHS ext 6212  
Jen Vonella, WHS ext 6210

### School Psychologists

Mary Todd Goodspeed, Miller Driscoll School ext 3336  
Adrienne Matta-King, Miller Driscoll School ext 3308  
Heidi Powell, Miller Driscoll School ext 3264  
Ariana Diaz, Cider Mill School ext 4207  
Eileen Montgomery, Cider Mill School ext 4303  
Jacqueline Monahan, Cider Mill School ext 4293  
Michelle Porter, Middlebrook School ext 5243  
Cathy Ludwig, Middlebrook School ext 5255  
Beth Shapiro, Middlebrook School ext 5256  
Sophia Covington-Morales, WHS ext 6359  
Debra Corso, WHS ext 6601  
Christina Dunaj, WHS ext 6296

### School Social Workers

Jim Martin, Miller Driscoll/Cider Mill School ext 3301  
Kara Falcone, Cider Mill School ext 4208  
Bonnie Schnitzler, Middlebrook School ext 5008  
Kathy Weiss, WHS ext 6286  
Nicole Mok, WHS ext 6293  
Liza Starnino, WHS ext 6608  
Alison Hourani, Genesis ext 6606

### Teen Talk Counselor

Cassandra Lucien ext 6278

### District Safe School Climate Coordinator

Kim Zemo ext 6219