

# Mental Health Intervention Newsletter

## Winter 2019



### Our Vision

The Mental Health Innovators Team at RCPS meets throughout the school year to build awareness, promote healthy social-emotional development, and support those experiencing mental health challenges. The MHI Team consists of School Counselors, Therapeutic Day Treatment Counselors, and the School Psychologist.

### Social Media

There is much talk and worry over the impact that social media may be having on teenagers. Many studies in the UK and United States have suggested that Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as well as extreme gaming apps, may have a direct correlation with increased feelings of depression, anxiety, sleep deprivation, poor body image, addiction, social isolation and loneliness. In the book, *The Big Disconnect*, Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair, a clinical psychologist states, "There is no question that kids are missing out on very critical social skills." Young people are missing the more personal aspects of communication, such as, reading body language, recognizing facial

expressions, and having healthy personal interactions; talking!

Taking this into consideration, it is suggested that parents focus on balance, monitor their child's phone use, teach mindful use of social media, turn off notifications, and enforce a phone free time at bedtime and overnight.

### Parent Strategies to Limit Screen Time

- ❖ Make screen time a privilege
- ❖ Create a schedule
- ❖ Model healthy usage habits
- ❖ Establish clear rules and boundaries (ex: device curfew, no electronics during meal times, no electronics in the bedroom)
- ❖ Create screen-free days
- ❖ Encourage social and physical activity
- ❖ Provide education about social media, gaming, online risks, etc.

### Parental Controls

- ❖ Many cell phones provide ways for parents to limit screen time and purchases, control access to the content a child views, monitor a child's activities, and preserve family privacy.  
Directions can be found by typing "Parental controls for \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., iPhone, Android)" into your internet browser.
- ❖ Consider contacting your cell phone provider for parental control options available to customers at no cost. Information can be found online. For example, if Sprint is your provider, search for "Sprint parental controls."
- ❖ To set up parental controls on Google Play: Open the Play Store app, tap the menu in the top left corner (☰), tap Settings, tap Parental Controls, Turn Parent Controls on, Create a PIN, Tap the type of content you want to filter, and Choose how to filter or restrict access.

## RCPS Cell Phone/Personal Electronic Devices Possession Policy



1. All electronic devices must remain out of sight and turned off during the academic school day. This includes travel to and from school on a school bus.
2. If a student possesses such a device other than as permitted in this school rule, the device will be confiscated from the student and returned only to the student's parent.
3. Students who have a communication device confiscated more than one time will lose the privilege for the remainder of the school year.
4. Students are not to use cell phones during the academic school day, including calling their parents, unless it is being used for instructional purposes at the direction of the student's teacher.
5. School phones in the main office will continue to be available for students to call parents for legitimate reasons.
6. Students who use their cell phones during the academic day may lose the privilege of having a cell phone with them at school for the remainder of the year.
7. **Note: Use of personal electronic devices to record (video and/or audio) self or others is strictly prohibited. Violations will result in severe penalties up to suspension and court action.**

## Internet Resources

<i>Google's new "Be Internet Awesome," a fun way for kids to learn to make smart online decisions</i>	<a href="https://blog.google/technology/families/be-internet-awesome-helping-kids-make-smart-decisions-online/">https://blog.google/technology/families/be-internet-awesome-helping-kids-make-smart-decisions-online/</a>
<i>Parent internet safety guides</i>	<a href="https://internetsafety101.org/parentsguidetosocialmedia">https://internetsafety101.org/parentsguidetosocialmedia</a>
<i>Screentime management apps</i>	<a href="https://www.screenagersmovie.com/parenting-apps/">https://www.screenagersmovie.com/parenting-apps/</a>
<i>Family contracts for cell phone use &amp; online safety</i>	<a href="http://www.safekids.com/safety-advice-tools">http://www.safekids.com/safety-advice-tools</a>
<i>Digital awareness for parents and prevention of cyberbullying</i>	<a href="https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/digital-awareness-for-parents/index.html">https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/digital-awareness-for-parents/index.html</a>

## School Safety Summit

February 20, 2019

*WHO SHOULD ATTEND:* Parents, Students (grades 6-12), & Community Members

*DINNER (available for purchase):* 5:00pm • RCHS Commons

*SCHOOL SAFETY SUMMIT:* 6:00 - 8:00pm • RCHS Auditorium

*KIDS' EVENTS (grades 5 and younger):* 6:00 - 8:00PM • RCHS Gymnasium

## Social Media Safety Class

March 19, 2019

Provided by Workforce Solutions/Lord Fairfax Community College

6:00 - 7:30pm • RCES

## Coming Soon

*SCREENAGERS: Growing up in the Digital Age*

*Screenagers* explores parents' struggles over social media, video games, academics and internet addiction. Through poignant, and unexpectedly funny stories, along with surprising insights from authors, psychologists, and brain scientists, *SCREENAGERS* reveals how tech time impacts kids' development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate the digital world and find balance. Check out the movie trailer at <https://www.screenagersmovie.com/trailer/>.