

**Union High
School**

Counselors' Newsletter

"Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals."

Summer 2017

FYI:

Summer Hours

Three members of our counseling team will be available Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-3:00 pm. Please contact one of these counselors for questions you have over the summer.

-Jennifer Walters
(12th)

918-357-7202

-Debbie Weber
(11th)

918-357-7208

-Amanda Stuckey
(10th)

918-357-6332

College Visits

Going anywhere for summer vacation? Whether you're planning to cross multiple state lines or just spending some time across Oklahoma, there are plenty of opportunities to do

some college exploration along the way! Making a quick stop along your trip to nearby colleges while on summer travels is a great way to expose students to various college campuses. Exposure

to multiple campuses can help students make a more informed decision on what kind of atmosphere, campus size, and student population. As well as make decisions on other factors they want for their college experience.

Mindfulness for Parents

Mindfulness is one of the new buzz words we are starting to hear. But, what does mindfulness really mean? Mindfulness is being in the present, noticing our thoughts and feelings, and living in the moment. With the world at our fingertips, it is becoming more important to slow down and pay attention to what is really going on around us and within us. Being mindful of our feelings also has a great impact on the relationship we as parents have with our teenager.

Mindfulness does not mean parents have to express enthusiasm and understanding when teens slam the door out of anger. Mindfulness means to pause. Pause before responding. Parents should take note of

their own feelings and ask themselves "why do I feel this way.?" This bit of introspection will hopefully provide a response that does not escalate personal feelings. If there are consequences, they can and sometimes should be delayed until both parents and teens have time to reflect on the situation.

Something teenagers consistently say is "my parents don't listen to me." What does it mean to really listen? Practicing mindfulness helps all of us to stay in the moment as children try to explain something. Often times parents are preparing their response to a situation rather than listening to the child. It is okay to have silence in a conversation. Silence gives

room for careful thought which in turn enhances trust and respect. When there is silence, the conversation can be more meaningful. If teenagers give parents the silent treatment, be grateful. This gives them time to reassess and learn from what just happened.

In the words of Karen Mazenmiller, "Wait for the door to open. It will. Because there was never a door to begin with. You are not strangers. You are not enemies." Children want parents in their life, even when they say they do not. Give them supportive space. Right now, they are trying to wrestle with their changing world and learning how to make sense of the new normal of being a teenager.

Article Sources:

www.mindful.org

Psychologytoday.com

Union High School Counselors

Class of 2018

Donna Castle A-K

Jennifer Walters L-Z

Class of 2019

Debbie Weber A-F

Casey Machado G-N

Megan Kennedy O-Z

Class of 2020

Amanda Stuckey A-K

Katherine Partridge L-Z

**Union Public
Schools**

Schedule Pick-Up

Hours and Dates

**Sophomores: August
14th**

Juniors: August 11th

Seniors: August 10th

11:00 am-6:00 pm

Grief

Death and grief will affect the lives of everyone at some point. Although most adults have felt the void after losing someone special, many children face it for the first time during their teenage years. Under ordinary circumstances, teenagers are experiencing changes in their behavior, their feelings and their relationships - so when they are faced with a significant loss, their lives suddenly become more complex and uncertain. During this time parents, teachers, or friends can be a critical lifeline for a grieving child. When dealing with a grieving teen, there are six basic principles to keep in mind:

Grieving is a teen's natural reaction to death. However, it doesn't feel natural so teens need help in accepting the reality and working through it.

Each teen's grieving experience is unique. Although many adults are aware of the "five stages of grief", the path is an individual one and teens often need adults to accompany them along the way.

There are no right and wrong ways to grieve, nor is there is a set of rules or a particular pattern to follow when dealing with a loss. There are however, helpful and unhelpful choices that teens can make. Talking with close family and friends, journaling, or drawing are a few healthy choices for teens when dealing with emotions.

Every death is unique and is experienced differently. The relationship between the teen and deceased, as well as the personality of the teen, both play a part in how the teen deals with the death.

The grieving process is influenced by many issues. Support systems, circumstances of the death, the relationship with the person who died, and the age and emotional development of the teen are all factors in a teen's grieving process

Grief is ongoing. Grief does not end...but it does change its appearance and intensity.

Apart from recognizing the stages of grief and familiarizing ourselves with the above principles, the greatest gift we can give a suffering child is ourselves. Stopping what we are doing and giving them our full attention, provides a safe and caring environment for them to express emotions. The gentle reminder that life continues, despite the pain, is something for them to hold on to. When young people begin to remember the life of the person - more than the death - the healing process will begin. With both love and support adults can help this experience be a valuable part of a teen's personal growth and development.

Resources: Dougy Center. How to Help a Grieving Teen. Fitzgerald, Helen. "The Grieving Teen". American Hospice Foundation. Schonfield, David. The Grieving Student. A Teacher's Guide.

Summer Credit Recovery

- Dates: June 5th-July 27th
- Where: UHS Room 2701-2702
- Lab Hours: 8:00AM- 12:00PM Monday-Thursday

- Enrollment: May 1st- June 29th
- Cost: \$30/one class \$60/more than 1

***Contact your counselor for questions**