

MILESTONE MOMENTS

A COLLABORATION BY
M.A.P & MINDSHEART



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October 10th is World Mental Health Day—a day dedicated to shining a bright light on mental health and well-being for everyone. Since 1992, this special day, initiated by the World Federation for Mental Health, has focused on education, awareness, and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health.

It's a day to remember that just like physical health, everyone's mental well-being needs attention and care. It is a heartfelt reminder that mental health is key to a happy and thriving family. It's a day for everyone to come together, learn, and support each other in making mental well-being a priority.

OCTOBER 2024,
ISSUE 2



**10
OCTOBER**

**WORLD
MENTAL
HEALTH
DAY**

As we recognize World Mental Health Day, we unite in a collective act of understanding and compassion. It's a day that reminds us all of the importance of our mental well-being and the shared journey we take towards nurturing it. By joining hands in awareness and action, we strengthen the bonds that make us families, communities, and ultimately, humankind.

PARENTS, you are the architects of the sanctuary called home, building an environment where young minds can flourish. Your own well-being is just as crucial as that of your children. We acknowledge the strength it takes to lead by example, to show that seeking help and practicing self-care isn't a sign of weakness, but a courageous step towards resilience.

☀️ Take this moment to breathe, to celebrate the small victories, and to remember that caring for your mind is not just a personal triumph but a gift to your children, who look to you for guidance and support.

CHILDREN, you are a boundless source of wonder and potential. Know that it's okay to feel, to question, and to speak your heart's truths. The world around you is listening, ready to offer a hug, a kind word, or a listening ear when you need it most.

🌈 Embrace today as a reminder that your feelings are valid and that there are people who cherish your smile and your tears equally.

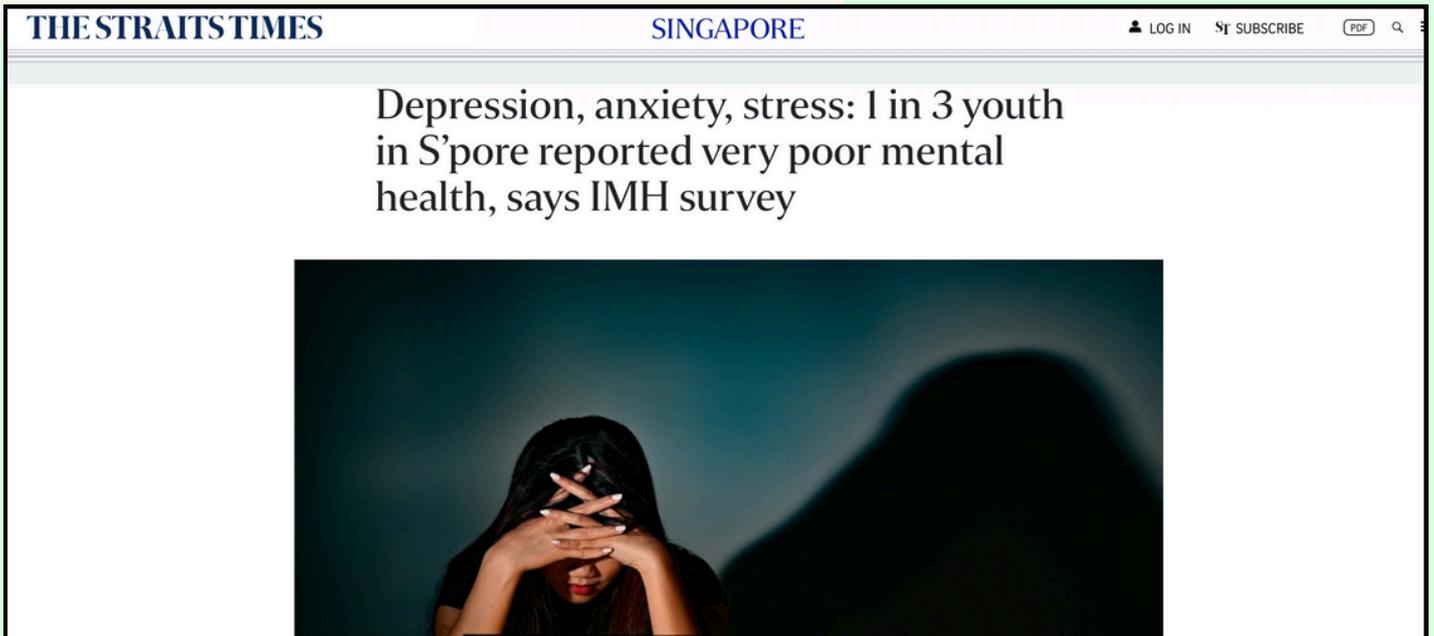
With a heart full of hope and solidarity,
Happy World Mental Health Day! 🌍❤️



TINY MINDS, MIGHTY IMPACT: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN CHILDREN



BY MOSES WONG, FELICIA CHUA
M.A.P LEARNING AND CONSULTANCY



Mental health is a key part of our children's overall health. Many kids suffer from mental health issues, especially anxiety and depression. For example, research shows that **about 7.1% of children aged 3-17 have anxiety, and 3.2% have depression**[1]. These figures show that many young people might need help with these challenges. **In Singapore, 12% of young people struggle with emotional problems, and 1 in 7 may deal with mood or anxiety disorders at some point**[2]. School stress, bullying, and family issues are common causes, leading to trouble in school, social withdrawal, and behavior changes. **With 5.6% of teens having major depression and 9.1% having an anxiety disorder**, it's clear we need to act early to support them[3].

In today's fast-paced world, children's mental health can be sidelined by academic and extracurricular demands. Yet, their emotional well-being is as crucial as physical health. **Prioritizing mental health early on equips children with skills to handle life's challenges, build solid relationships, and succeed in all life areas.**



THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

Parents and educators are essential in fostering children's mental health by creating a nurturing and understanding environment. This means **maintaining open lines of communication**, where children feel safe and encouraged to share their feelings without fear of judgment. This can be as a first step, and can be easily achieved by **actively listening to them, validating their emotions, and responding with empathy**. By demonstrating healthy coping strategies and promoting positive relationships, adults can significantly improve a child's emotional well-being.



Educators can incorporate **social-emotional learning (SEL)** when teaching children about managing emotions, setting goals, and building empathy.

Being vigilant about early signs of mental health issues is crucial. Seeking professional help from counselors or psychologists when necessary can provide children with the tools and support they need to navigate their challenges effectively. By working together, parents and educators can ensure that children develop the resilience and skills needed to thrive both emotionally and psychologically.

Children feel safe and encouraged to share their feelings without fear of judgment.



Citations:

[1] Ghandour RM, Sherman LJ, Vladutiu CJ, et al. Prevalence of Parent-Reported Mental Health Conditions Among US Children. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2020;174(11):e204083.

[2] Singapore Children's Society. (2018). *The State of Child Well-being in Singapore.*

[3] Institute of Mental Health. (2020). *Singapore Mental Health Study.*

[4] Merikangas KR, He JP, Burstein M, et al. Lifetime Prevalence of Mental Disorders in U.S. Adolescents: Results from the National Comorbidity Survey Replication – Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A). *Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry.* 2010;49(10):980-989.

[5] Bhatia SK, Bhatia SC. Childhood and Adolescent Depression. *Am Fam Physician.* 2007;75(1):73-80.

THE WELLNESS KEY - SUCCESS UNLOCKS

BY MOSES WONG, FELICIA CHUA
M.A.P LEARNING AND CONSULTANCY



Promoting transparency can pressure students to share prematurely, increasing stress.

Rising mental health awareness has transformed academia, underscoring the need to account for students' emotional and psychological health alongside intellectual ability. This focus is key to fostering an educational environment that supports student success and personal growth, preparing them for life beyond school.

UNVEILING INNER WORLDS: TRIUMPHS AND TRIALS IN THE MENTAL HEALTH ODYSSEY AMONG STUDENTS

Many educators like ourselves have noted that **increased mental health awareness aids early issue identification and intervention, preventing escalation and fostering supportive student relationships.** This also enabled us to build stronger, more understanding relationships with their students, creating a more supportive learning environment. Normalizing help-seeking encourages students to use counseling services, reducing stigma and promoting a supportive community. However, **promoting transparency can pressure students to share prematurely, increasing stress.** We have realised the complexity of promoting mental health transparency amongst students, as students are inadvertently pressured into sharing personal issues prematurely, compounding their stress. There's also **a risk of misinterpreting behaviors as disorders, leading to overdiagnosis and affecting self-perception.** Despite awareness efforts, stigma persists, causing peer judgment.



ILLUMINATING PATHS: PARENTAL WISDOM FOR NURTURING MENTAL WELLNESS

As mental health becomes a more prominent focus in education, parents are increasingly recognized as key partners in fostering a supportive environment for their children.

One key advise we would give parents is **to maintain open communication with their children by regularly checking in on their emotional well-being with open-ended questions** like, "How are you feeling today?" **Model healthy behaviors by demonstrating stress management techniques such as mindfulness or exercise. Encourage social connections by promoting healthy friendships and social interactions**, such as encouraging participation in group activities. **Promoting physical health through regular activity, a balanced diet, and adequate sleep is crucial as well.**

Always be open to collaborate with educators by maintaining a strong partnership to stay informed about your children's mental health and academic progress. Work together with educators, teachers or tutors, to identify and minimize stressors in your child's life. Above all, **always stay informed about mental health issues by reading relevant articles or attending workshops.**

By acknowledging the importance of mental well-being, we not only pave the way for improved academic performances but also invest in the development of well-rounded individuals who are ready to take on life's challenges beyond the classroom walls.

Remember, every mind matters, and when we support the mind, we unleash limitless potential.

THE SECRET TO RAISING RESILIENT CHILDREN: IT'S NOT ABOUT AVOIDING PROBLEMS, BUT COPING WITH THEM



BY GERALD BOH
CLINICAL DIRECTOR, MINDSHEART LLP

As parents in Singapore, we often strive to provide our children with the best possible education and opportunities to succeed. However, in our pursuit of academic excellence, we may inadvertently overlook a crucial aspect of our children's development - their mental well-being.

The truth is, **problems are an inevitable part of life, and it's not the problems themselves that are the issue, but how our children cope with them.** In today's fast-paced and competitive environment, Singaporean children face numerous stressors, from academic pressure to social media scrutiny. In fact, research has shown that **social media use can be a significant contributor to mental health issues among young people, creating unrealistic expectations, promoting competition, and leading to cyberbullying.**

According to a recent study, **one in five children in Singapore experience anxiety and depression**, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the issue. It's clear that we need to take a proactive approach to supporting our children's mental health and well-being.



Problems are an inevitable part of life, and it's not the problems themselves that are the issue, but how our children cope with them.



So, what can we do as parents to help our children develop the coping skills they need to navigate life's challenges? Here are a few strategies:

1. **Model healthy coping:** Create a supportive space for your child to share feelings. Listen and offer guidance.
2. **Encourage open communication:** Discuss social media risks and encourage critical thinking about online content.
3. **Teach problem-solving:** Encourage creative solutions and ask open-ended questions to develop critical thinking.
4. **Foster a growth mindset:** Teach that mistakes are part of learning and view challenges as growth opportunities.
5. **Prioritize self-care:** Encourage activities that bring joy and relaxation, like exercise or reading, to empower adaptability.

Raising resilient children is not about shielding them from problems, but about teaching them how to cope with them. By prioritizing our children's mental well-being and teaching them effective coping strategies, we **empower them to navigate life's challenges with confidence and adaptability.** Let's work together to create a supportive and nurturing environment that allows our children to thrive, both academically and emotionally.



A Story of Resilience

16-year-old Rachel struggled with anxiety and depression after being bullied online. She had been a high-achieving student, but the constant pressure to perform well and the fear of being judged by her peers took a toll on her mental health. With the support of her parents and a therapist, Rachel learned to develop coping strategies, such as mindfulness and journaling, to manage her anxiety. She also found solace in creative pursuits, such as painting and writing.

Rachel's story highlights the importance of seeking help and support when needed. Her parents recognized the signs of her struggles and encouraged her to seek professional help. With the right support, Rachel was able to develop the resilience she needed to overcome her challenges and thrive.

PSYCHOLOGY SOC

Is there a simple breathing technique or meditation method that kids can do easily to control their mind? - Rosa. K

Feeling Overwhelmed? Try the Stop-Breathe-Think-Act Strategy! 🚦 Stress and negative emotions can hit us hard, especially in today's fast-paced world. That's why it's crucial to have a go-to technique to help us regain control and stay grounded. One such strategy we recommend is the Stop-Breathe-Think-Act approach.

● **STOP:** When you start to feel overwhelmed, stop and take a moment to pause. Recognize that you're feeling stressed or upset.

👉 **BREATH:** Take a slow, deep breath. Inhale slowly, hold for a few seconds, and exhale slower and longer. This helps calm your nervous system.

● **THINK:** Reflect on what's happening. What were the thoughts that came to your mind when the situation happened? What are the facts of the situation? What's within your control and what is not? Think about what are possible ways or options moving forward.

● **ACT:** Once you've calmed down and thought things through, take appropriate action.

Incorporating this simple yet powerful strategy into your daily routine can significantly improve how you handle stress and negative emotions.

Sweedy Ngiam

Counselling Psychologist
MindsHeart

READ MORE:

[MILESTONEMOMENTS.BEEHIIV.COM](https://www.milestonemoments.beehiiv.com)

**SEND US YOUR
QUESTIONS!**

Email our team of experienced educators and psychologists at hello@mindsheart.com with the subject heading "Ask the Experts", and we'll answer selected inquiries in the next issue of Milestone Moments!

TEACHER, HELP!!!

My daughter doesn't share with me anything. I'm worried that she is stressed and that might develop into mental health issues. What can I do?

Mrs. O

Parents will need to understand that in order for effective 2-way communication to take place in the family, **children need to feel safe and secure about sharing about themselves, without any prejudgments, criticism or expectations.** It's important to keep in mind **not to jump to conclusions and/or over-assess the situation.** Stay clear-minded and prevent dwelling while attempting to find and try ways to communicate with your daughter. **Children will be able to sense our emotions, be it positive or negative, spoken or unspoken.**

Communicate your observations and concerns with your daughter's school teachers. Be open to feedback and sharing, and work together to support your daughter both academically and psychologically.

You may also take some time to think back on when did this first surfaced. Was there any specific incidents when she might feel unsafe or fearful or inferior? Share and ask her genuinely about what she felt and seek to resolve that incident. This will sprout new positive changes in the future.

Take time to organize family bonding activities to rekindle bonds with them. Build the chemistry of working together and initiate chats with them in the process. Help them regain the trust in talking to you, and they will open up more in the process.

Always remember, changes do not happen overnight. Every process takes time and children will need the time for emotional growth and regulation.

SEND US YOUR
QUESTIONS!

- Email us [here!](#)
- Drop us a [Whatsapp DM!](#)

Moses & Felicia

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Mathe-Magic

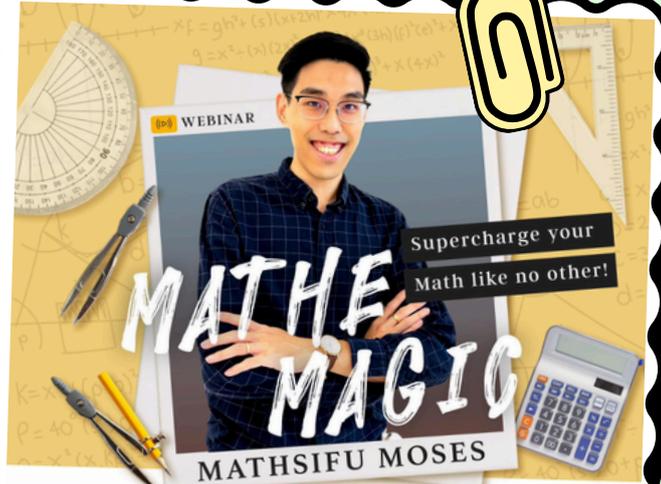
Looking for an exciting and effective way to keep your child engaged during the holidays? This workshop aims to transform the way students approach calculations and problem-solving, helping them build confidence and develop faster, more accurate math skills!

Bring one friend to enjoy 50% discount!

Workshop Highlights

- Calculations Made Simple!
- Problem Solving with Confidence
- Suitable for children aged 10-12!
- Adults are welcome to learn too!

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FOR MORE INFORMATION: ☎ -65-9745 7687

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9.30 AM



ONLINE (ZOOM)



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Mental Health Matters

