

Adam - Meeting called to order, 6:35

Minutes from previous meeting approved with correction

Financial Report – no questions

Guest speaker, Whitney Owens, Water's Edge Counseling

Notes on presentation included below

Current business updates:

- PTA is working to finalize plans for school beautification, both exterior and updates to the lobby
- Working to finalize teacher grants being offered to the academic teachers.
 - Announcement regarding recipients will be made at the next meeting.

Upcoming events:

- School beautification day scheduled for 2/29, please join us
- Next general membership meeting scheduled for 4/21.
 - Guest speaker in attendance TBD

Meeting adjourned 7:06pm

Notes on Whitney Owens Presentation

Water's Edge Counseling has worked with SAA and their students, love the opportunity to speak with everyone and offer resources

PowerPoint will be coming and can be posted on social media and shared with families

Begin with some statistics from the CDC

- 31.8% of adolescents (ages 13-18) show symptoms of anxiety
- 8% have severity that requires clinical needs
- 38% are female and 27% are male
 - Utilizing these statistics, approximately 285 students at SAA could be affected by anxiety, at varying levels
 - Risks are greater among students at high achieving schools and those with busy/high demand schedules

When do you know there is an issue?

- You should be concerned and know there is an issue with your students with the anxiety interferes with the ability to function with things in everyday life

What are the different/clinical forms of anxiety?

- General Anxiety Disorder – This is the most common form. Those dealing with this get caught up in the “what ifs...”

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) – thoughts and/or compulsions that are consistent (for example: constantly checking locked doors, more than frequent hand washing, etc.)
- Social Anxiety Disorder – do not want to attend or participate in social gatherings/events because of fears of what others may think
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – trauma can be affected and processed in many ways. The anxiety can be triggered by a variety of things (sounds, etc.) and can cause people to experience nightmares
- Panic Attacks – physical reactions to anxiety, which may include – but not be limited to – shaking, increased breathing. It is important to try and identify the trigger, not just the symptoms

Most recognizable symptoms of anxiety

- Eating problems – typically eating less
- Sleeping difficulties – constantly feeling tired
- Restless feelings
- Difficulty focusing
- Easily upset
- Withdrawal from activities and/or doing things you enjoy
- Avoid friends
- Overwhelming feeling of impending doom
- Physical reactions which can include uncontrolled crying, sweating, shortness of breath, tingling in hands/feet

Common causes of anxiety

- Higher expectations on teens, now more than ever, from all facets – mostly themselves
- Technology is an easy substitute to focusing their feelings
- Comparison to others
- General fears of safety and how feelings respond, for example shootings on the rise

How can we help?

- Deal with our own anxiety – a parent's feelings can be placed onto your students
- Take care of yourself, so you can then take care of your teen
- Slow down! We, as a society, are just very busy
- Ask yourself, does this create more peace or more anxiety for family happiness
- Decrease use of technology
- Spending time with your teen

The key is consistency and creating a safe place. A home full of love and acceptance, that is void of judgement and shame.

What are some treatments for anxiety disorders?

- Lifestyle changes – healthy eating, exercise, better sleep, journaling (very effective)
- Reframing thoughts and provide a different perspective on things

- Psychotherapy – counseling, approximately 6-8 sessions to show improvements (about 80%)
- Medications – about 20% require meds to assist

How to intervene

1. Create a plan for moving forward
2. Talk to your teen about your concerns in a loving way and allow them time to process. Give them power in their own treatment
3. Call to schedule a counseling appointment