Hello again, I hope this newsletter finds you all well! As I mentioned in our last newsletter, a new SAC was forthcoming and I am happy to announce to you all that she is here. Please join me in welcoming the newest edition to our SAC team, Ms. Amelia Ortman! You can read a bit about her as well as which schools she will be supporting in the next slide. The schools that I will now be serving are pictured below. I am also providing my referral Form again as a reference.
Hello everyone! My name is Amelia Ortman and I am the new student assistant coordinator at Franklin Middle School, Sampson G. Smith Campus. A bit about me, I graduated from The College of New Jersey with a degree in school counseling, student assistant counseling and my counseling license. I am excited to be a part of the Franklin Middle School community and I hope to educate students on taking care of their mental and physical health so they can handle anything life throws at them!

Ms. Ortman's referral form

Ms. Ortman and her schools.
The Student Assistance Professionals in Franklin Township work in conjunction with our community, county, and state to bring a wide range of services to the faculty, staff, students, and families of our district. Programs are offered virtually as well as in person at various locations throughout the school year. Recently the Student Assistance Department was able to partner with Empower Somerset to offer three different virtual programs to our middle and elementary school students including Happy, Healthy Me, Family Unity Night, & the We're Not Buying It programs. Empower Somerset was also able to offer the Botvin Life Skills program at the RTS program.

**EMPOWER SOMERSET PRESENTS:**
**WE'RE NOT BUYING IT 2.0**
A PREVENTION PROGRAM FOCUSING ON DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS FOR SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

EmPoWER Somerset presents:
Family Unity Night
7 Weekly Sessions for Parents & Youth (10-14 yrs old)
During the months of November & December our middle school Connections students continued to meet with their advisors and mentors to work on both virtual and in-person team building activities each week. We are currently working on creating a 'mixer' event where our current Connections students along with some other bilingual ambassador students can mix and mingle with our new ELL population. The hope is to develop an Ambassadors program where there are opportunities for our ELLs to get acclimated and feel more welcomed in their new home.
The Stage House Tavern invites you & your family to be their guests at their Annual Christmas Day Luncheon on Saturday, December 25, 2021. For One Seating Only -- 12:00 until 2:00

A Very Special Guest Will be Visiting the Children. Toys are for children only - We ask that adults are not to approach the tree.

Please call the Stage House to make your reservation. Only reservations will be honored. Walk-ins will not be accepted. Deadline to make your holiday reservation is Monday, December 20th.

Dress casually to enjoy a great holiday celebration.

Stage House Restaurant & Tavern
1719 Amwell Road
Somerset, NJ
732-873-3990

Special Holiday Menu / Children’s Menu
Special Dietary Needs will be met.
As we enter into this holiday season, we wanted to share with you some information around the issues that we have been seeing in our middle and elementary schools. We also want to give you some tips regarding how to deal with these issues should you see them arise at home.

**Vaping** has become a popular smoking choice amongst teens and Franklin Township is not immune to this rise amongst our teens and preteens, included in this newsletter is some helpful information and resources.

**Conflict** is another issue that we have seen a rise in here at the middle and elementary schools. This is perhaps in part due to the pandemic and our extended time of virtual learning. Students who would normally be learning important social skills were not afforded those opportunities and are struggling to regulate their emotions and resolve conflicts.

Lastly, we have seen an increase in students who are experiencing anxiety and panic attacks. Included in this newsletter are some resources and strategies to help you and your students if and when anxiety or panic set in.
Vaping

Here's what to expect if a student is caught with a vape...

- The student is sent out to be tested for illegal substances in the vape.
- He/She must come back with a medical clearance note: upon arrival to school, the administration, the SAC, the student and a parent/guardian will meet for a re-entry meeting.
- In the re-entry meeting: we will discuss the role of the SAC and what services can be provided depending upon the results of the test.
- The student will be assigned to meet with the SAC for psychoeducational counseling sessions.

Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes.
Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items.

Helpful information on vaping, educational resources & treatment.
Conflict Resolution for Students

1. Take a step back: assess the situation and think about how you may have contributed to the conflict.
2. Talk it through with a friend or a trusted adult.
3. When re-entering the conflict with another person, use “I” statements, don’t blame, and be sure to share how you feel.
   a. “I” Statement: “When you ____________ I feel ______________ because I _______________ and what I’d like is ________________.”
4. Allow the other person to share their thoughts and feelings.
5. Is this something you can work through? Talk about a compromise? Brainstorm some ideas.
6. Say “I’m sorry” or “I forgive you” if necessary, affirm and validate each other’s experience.
7. Move on with the day.

Here is an interesting and helpful article on managing student conflict.
Anxiety & Panic Attacks → Tips/Help

1. Recognize the signs of the panic attack, whatever they may be for you: upset stomach, shaking, jaw tension, shoulder tension, butterflies in the stomach, etc.

2. Let your body go through the panic attack and keep reminding yourself, “This is temporary, I am safe” until the panic attack subsides. The panic attack will always subside, it is a feeling and feelings are temporary.

3. When you’re able to focus on the present moment: take deep breaths, talk to a loved one, focus on an activity you enjoy, and be kind to yourself through positive self talk.

Here are some resources to help you including a video and some strategies to use if you find that you or your student is having a panic attack.
Lastly, as we all prepare for the upcoming winter recess it’s still so important that we take time for self-care. Many of us hear this term being used frequently but perhaps we don’t know exactly what it means. The truth is, it can mean something different to all of us, but what’s most important about self-care is that you take time to focus on yourself and your needs, and that you find something that you personally enjoy. Give yourself time to relax, rest, and just be. Be kind to yourself, enjoy the time off, & don’t you dare feel guilty about it, you deserve it and you need it!

Click on any of the pictures here to review some resources that may help you on your journey to self-care!