

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

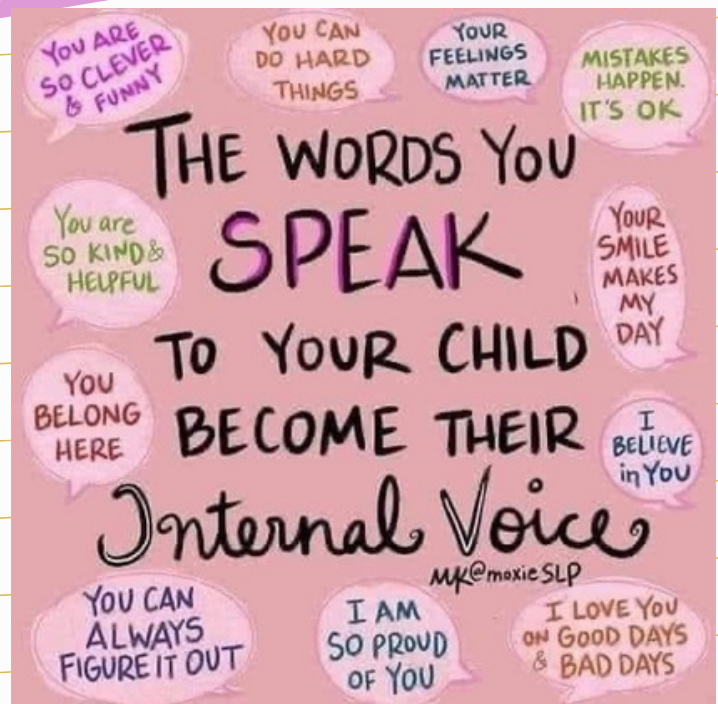
EVERYONE HAS A STORY

AUGUST 2024
EDITION

WELCOME
BACK!

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ATTENDANCE MATTERS!!!



Every missed day of school is a lost opportunity for a student to grow and learn. Chronic absenteeism is directly associated with negative school outcomes and poor achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge. High school dropouts have been found to have a significantly higher rate of absenteeism throughout their childhood. The Baldwin County Board of Education values student success and believes that students should be in attendance and on time for school. A student may not exceed nine unexcused absences per class per academic year.



Make School Attendance a Priority

- Establish a routine at home that is consistent
- Create a quiet working space to complete homework
- Eat a well-balanced, low sugar, breakfast at home or at school
- Get plenty of sleep (School age children need 9-12 hours of sleep each night and high school students need 8-10 hours of sleep each night)
- Stay connected and engaged with your child's teachers

Upcoming Dates:

- August is Children's Eye Health month
- August is Immunization Awareness Month
- August 30: National Grief Awareness Day
- September 2: Labor Day

PREVENTION & SUPPORT STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Mrs. Denita Hill

Mrs. Denita Hill is our Prevention and Support Services Supervisor. Mrs. Hill has been in education for 28 years, 21 of those years with the #BaldwinProud team. She began her career in the classroom teaching third, fourth, and fifth grades in Montgomery, AL. Mrs. Hill received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education in 1996 from Auburn University in Montgomery. The following year she earned her master's in education and in 2000, she earned her Education Specialist degree. She served as an assistant principal for Elmore County schools prior to moving to Baldwin County in 2004. She taught in Mobile County for one year and fourth grade at Rockwell Elementary School before serving as assistant principal and principal at Magnolia School. Mrs. Hill has been in her current position for ten years. When asked what she loves most about her role as Prevention and Support Services Supervisor, she stated that she loves when she can help parents and students. She deeply values courtesy and customer service. When she receives a call or is presented with a concern, she will promptly respond and assist the person to find the answer. Mrs. Hill and her husband have two children; Mason, who is starting 6th grade and Madison who is starting 2nd grade. She loves her family and enjoys spending time together. They have a dog they love, and they enjoy spending time having game nights and movie nights. Her favorite board game is Monopoly, and her favorite movies are *Heat*, *Bourne Identity*, and *Gladiator*.

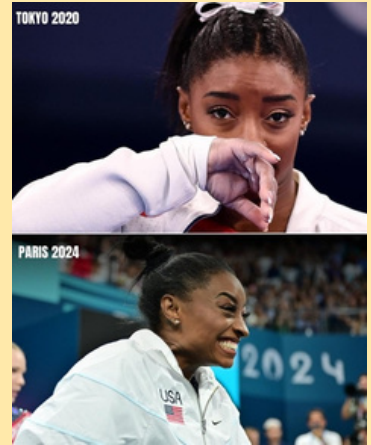
**BE THE
"I"
IN KIND**





A STORY OF RESILIENCE & TRIUMPH

Simone Biles is the most decorated gymnast in history, with 11 Olympic medals and 30 World Championship medals. The 2024 Paris Olympics were her 3rd Olympic games. She was born in 1997 in Columbus, Ohio. Her birth mother struggled with addiction and was unable to care for Simone and her siblings, so they were placed into foster care. She was adopted at age 6 by her maternal grandfather and his wife in Spring, Texas. At that time, she discovered gymnastics. She soared in her young gymnastics career winning numerous medals and awards.



Simone has openly shared her struggles with ADHD and the sexual abuse she suffered from USA Gymnastics physician, Larry Nassar. In 2017, Simone took a break from gymnastics after the 2016 Rio Games. She co-wrote an autobiography with Michelle Burford titled *Courage to Soar: A Body in Motion, A Life in Balance*. The book hit number one on New York Times best sellers. The sentencing hearing for Nassar was held in January 2018 and she did not attend stating that she “wasn’t emotionally ready to face Larry Nassar again.”

Simone withdrew from the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo (held in 2021 due to the COVID pandemic) to focus on her mental health. She was favored to win at least four of the six available gold medals but had to withdraw from most of the competition due to experiencing “twisties” a term used to describe gymnasts becoming spatially disoriented while in air. Still, she won a silver medal with her team and a bronze medal for the balance beam that year. Other athletes were inspired to share their own struggles with mental health issues. On July 7, 2022, President Joe Biden awarded Simone Biles with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest honor given to civilians.

Simone Biles

Simone’s favorite food is french fries and during an interview with NBC Today host, Hoda Kotb, she was presented with a bouquet of french fries from The Today Show. During that interview, Simone Biles shared with Kotb that she utilizes therapy as means of self-care. She also stated, “If not for my parents and adoption, I would not be here today.”



Grief Awareness

National Grief Awareness Day is August 30. Each year this day raises awareness of grief, loss, and the many ways people cope with it. Grief is a complex human emotion that everyone experiences at some point in their lives and most all experience it differently. Grief is typically caused by some form of loss which may include a loved one, a relationship, a career, future plans, a pet, or a cherished object.

Psychiatrist and pioneer of studies on dying people, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross identified five stages of grief in her 1969 book, *On Death Dying*. Those stages are: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. The stages are not necessarily experienced in a linear pattern but in most cases are experienced in no particular order or sequence.

Grief Share is a local support group that meets at various locations throughout Baldwin County.



www.griefshare.org



**Have A Fantastic
2024-2025
School Year!**