

PIN OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELING CORNER



VOLUME 4
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MINDFULNESS: WHEN IS IT A JOKE?

WOULD YOU SAY IT TO AN ADULT?

Sometimes students make inappropriate comments toward each other because they are pressured by peers or because there is a lack of self-awareness. Students are more likely to display acts of microaggression towards other students, than they are to display them in society as a whole due to the level of comfort they feel amongst their peers. This creates a safety net for their actions because they feel that their peers are less of a threat than a stranger or an adult. If your student has to think twice about saying something to an authority figure or adult, they probably should not be saying or thinking it at all.

MODEL MINDFULNESS & ACCOUNTABILITY

We were all raised in environments where we have experienced some type of unconscious bias or profiling towards others. It is our responsibility as individuals to transform those attitudes into those of empathy and compassion. Although it may not always be a simple transition, it takes consistent practice and accountability to refine our social awareness skills. As a family, do the proper research to familiarize yourselves with topics such as microaggression, racial bias, and prejudices. Then model social awareness by practicing equity, empathy, and respect, and keep each other accountable when there are lapses of judgement.

OFFER SUPPORT

We understand this is a sensitive time in our world, especially with the unfortunate events surrounding the feuds in the Middle East. If your student feels negatively effected and unsafe at school, please educate them on promptly notifying a trusted adult at school. Hateful slurs and offensive gestures are NOT tolerated at Pin Oak MS.

ACTION OVER INTENT - Many students make remarks and do things that they view as funny or insignificant. These actions often times negatively affect others. The comments may come off as minor and infrequent, but can quickly turn into a form of microaggression. Effected students may experience anxiety, depression, and may even face backlash when setting boundaries. It is important to have conversations with our children about mindfulness and thinking before you speak. Children are sponges to what they hear and see, especially on social media and what is broadcasted on the news. As parents you have the power to filter what your children absorb. You also have the ability to teach and model what empathy and respect for individuals of ALL backgrounds should look and sound like. With that said, it is also crucial to discuss how to report concerns, such as these, to trusted adults as soon as conflicts occur so that they can be handled promptly and effectively. We understand that your student feels safest when approaching you with their concerns, but also inform them that they have trusted adults that can help them at school. Please review the guidelines on the other side of this newsletter to use as a guide in appropriately reporting concerns.

Upcoming Events

- November Theme: Gratitude
- November 1st: Homecoming Dance
- November 4th: High School Recruitment Fair
- November 7th: NJHS Induction Ceremony
- November 8th: Staff PD Day - No School
- November 14th: UIL Parent Performance
- November 15th: Color Run
- November 20th: Art Fall Pop-Up
- Nov. 25th-29th: Thanksgiving Break

HOW TO REPORT CONCERNS

REMEMBER TO REPORT CONCERNS TO [TINYURL.COM/POMSCOUNSELORS](https://tinyurl.com/pomscounselors)

Whether a student has a concern about themselves or another person, we encourage them to follow the guidelines below so that we can resolve the situation promptly and effectively. Please go over the do's and don'ts of reporting concerns that are below with your student. Also, we encourage anyone to report non-urgent concerns to the website above first. Please reserve the Say Something App for high risk situations.



**Notify a trusted adult
IMMEDIATELY,
especially at
school.**



**Wait until you
get home to
report the
concern.**



**Only report
concerns to
trusted adults.**



**Talk to peers
first about the
situation
instead of an
adult.**



**Be
detailed
when
reporting.**



**Only include parts
of the story that
are appealing to
you.**



**Be honest,
truthful, and
accountable.**



**Falsify,
manipulate, or
exaggerate
information.**



**Report non-urgent
information to
[tinyurl.com/
POMSCOUNSELORS](https://tinyurl.com/pomscounselors)**



**Report non-urgent
cases to the
Say Something
App.**



**Ask for help
if you are
unsure.**



**Hold it in and
hope that the
situation
resolves itself.**

REMINDER:

Be MINDFUL of what you say, send, or post. What may be intended as a joke or unintentional, may be taken seriously and consequences will be issued.