

This summer, the State Board of Education passed new rules for schools to provide a minimum of five (5) hours of instruction to students in grades 6 – 12 related to youth mental health awareness and assistance, substance use and abuse, and human trafficking awareness. The instruction will advance each year through developmentally appropriate skill building and must address the following topics:

- Recognition of signs and symptoms of mental health disorders
- Prevention of mental health disorders
- Mental health awareness and assistance
- How to reduce the stigma around mental health disorders
- Awareness of resources, including local school and community resources
- The process for accessing treatment
- Strategies to develop healthy coping techniques
- Strategies to support a peer, friend, or family member with a mental health disorder
- Prevention of suicide; and
- Prevention of the abuse of and addiction to alcohol, nicotine, and drugs

As part of its commitment to educating today's students to succeed in tomorrow's world, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) is providing a high quality mental and emotional health curriculum to our students. The focus of this instruction is to foster a safe and nurturing learning environment that enables students to thrive both academically and socially. The curriculum is designed to encourage student interaction with relevant topics, provide opportunities for students to define and understand emotions and behaviors, and build the confidence to make more positive, healthy choices.

The curriculum will be delivered to students during the school day. There is no statutory waiver option from the instruction; however, all materials will be available in Canvas for convenient access for absent students or those who may wish to revisit the resources.

As a parent, this is an excellent opportunity for conversation about mental and emotional health with your child. If you would like more information about what your child will be learning related to mental health instruction, please visit: <https://www.browardschools.com/mentalhealthinstruction>.