

The Well Viking

A Glimpse into Wellness at Palo Alto High School

Welcome Back Vikings!

We hope you had a fun and relaxing time, and you were able to knock some adventures off your bucket list. For some, the new school year will be a year of transition and exploring new paths. While for others, it will be a new opportunity to grow and continue moving toward their goal. The Wellness Center has been very busy planning for the new school year and we are excited for what lies ahead. Go Vikings!



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Paly's Wellness Center

The Wellness Center at Paly provides a safe and supportive environment where students can discuss a variety of topics in a confidential and nonjudgmental space. The center is staffed with professionals who are dedicated to improving the health, well-being, and educational outcomes of all students. Through both on-campus programming and community-based partnerships, students receive coordinated health education, assessment, counseling, and other support services to maximize student engagement and success. We are located in the Tower Building across from the Main Office. Be sure to stop by and say hello! If you would like to send us much needed snacks & tea, please check out our [Amazon Wish List](#)! Thanks!



We've had 1,640 visits to the Wellness Center so far this year!

Meet the Team



Elizabeth Spector

Mental Health and Wellness
Coordinator



Angelina Michael

Wellness Outreach Worker



Jennifer Kleckner

Health Technician

Welcome to Paly, Kate!

Meet the newest member of our Wellness Team, Kate Minutillo. Kate is stepping in as CASSY's Site Coordinator and Lead Therapist at Paly.

Kate is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and has worked with various populations including hospitalized and school aged youth, LGBTQ, and elders with cognitive impairment. She graduated with her Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of San Francisco in 2014. Welcome Kate!



CASSY (Counseling and Support Services for Youth) is Palo Alto High School's primary mental health service provider. Their mission is to destigmatize mental health services and make supporting students' social and emotional well-being the norm in our local schools.

If you are interested in school-based therapy, please reach out to your School Counselor or come to the Wellness Center located in the Tower Building, across from the Main Office.



September is Suicide Prevention Month

World Suicide Prevention Day was September 10th! We will spend the whole month of September addressing topics like coping strategies, sources of strength, and access to mental health resources. The Wellness Center sponsored a Mental Health Resource Fair on September 18th as well as an opportunity for students to get to know mental health professionals on campus on September 20th!

8 Back To School Tips Every Student Should Know



1. Your teachers are your best resource

Reach out to your teachers and ask for help. They can help you stay on top of your coursework and navigate high school.

2. Organize yourself

Get a planner. Between taking tests, doing homework, attending activities and school events, it can be really hard to keep track of everything. By keeping an updated planner you can better manage your time and know what you have to accomplish. Time management is key to success.

3. Get your sleep schedule under control

Maintain a consistent sleep schedule, even on the weekend. To help set your internal schedule, try limiting how much you sleep in on the weekends.

4. Take care of yourself

High school can be exhausting, and it will catch up with you if you don't take care of yourself. In addition to getting enough sleep; eating a balanced meal, drinking lots of water, and staying active can really make a difference in your academic life. You may also need to talk to someone about the challenges in your life, and that's okay. Check in with yourself and reach out for help when the time is right. The Wellness Center is a great place to start!

5. Find out what type of learner you are

Knowing what type of learner you are is going to help you be a better student and have better studying habits. When you determine the type of learning style that is best for you, you will have better results.

6. Try to see the bigger picture

Even though it might be hard to imagine life beyond high school, it does exist. High school is a wonderful time to make friends, so try not to limit your friendships and connections to the people in your friend groups. Reach out to people who enjoy different activities and have different opinions.

7. Get Involved

It is amazing to have something that you are passionate about and enjoy doing, so never be afraid to pursue your interests.

8. You don't have to map out your entire future now

High school students face a lot of big decisions, and sometimes it feels like you need to have your college major and career path already figured out by Senior year. But that's not the case. Rather than attempting to plan the next 10 years now, keep your options open and learn as much as you can about what's available to you.



Swing Into a Healthy School Year

Cold and Flu season is coming soon! Start practicing these healthy habits **NOW** so you are protecting yourself once it gets here:

- Wash your hands! It's the single best way to avoid a cold
- Get a flu vaccine
- Disinfect your space
- Use hand sanitizer
- Cover your nose and mouth if you are sick

SEL @ Paly

In 9th & 10th grade advisory this month, students will learn about their brains. Teens are known for being emotional and impulsive, but also for being courageous and innovative. These unique characteristics have a common source - the unique way the adolescent brain develops. By understanding this, students can learn to recognize when their more fully-developed emotional brain is overpowering their more under-developed rational brain. Using techniques as simple as a few deep breaths, students can calm their body and brain and re-engage their capacity to consider choices and consequences. Ask them to show you the “hand model” of their brain and what it means to “flip their lid”!



Links to learn more!

[Evolutionary Advantage of the Teenage Brain](#)

[The Purpose of the Teenage Brain](#)

[Mindfulness and Neural Integration](#)