Mental Health is:

- **Feeling Good** – Does the child/youth smile and look happy throughout part of the day? Feel good about her/himself? Have confidence in abilities?

- **Doing Well** – Does the child/youth have at least one friend? Get along with adults? Able to cope with challenges? Able to talk about her/his feelings?

As you interact with students throughout the school day, pay attention to signs of mental health.

**Tips for Promoting Positive Mental Health**

- **Tune into and acknowledge unique character strengths** (e.g. kind, loving, patient, caring, creative, humorous, and persistent) and praise her/him. “It was kind of you to help Ben with his Math problems.”

- **Show an interest.** Call her/him by name. Ask about his/her weekend.

- **Encourage children to do activities that they perceive to be fun.** Help them explore different hobbies and identify personal interests. Doing enjoyable activities helps promote mental health.

- **Recognize children’s moods and encourage them to talk about their feelings.** Listen. Show respect.

- **Help children to keep stress in check** by doing deep breathing or repeating a positive affirmation. Break down challenging activities into reasonable chunks.

- **Promote enjoyable physical activity.** Exercise helps promote mental health.

- **Encourage healthy eating and sleep.**

- **Teach by example.** Be positive and upbeat about life. If you are feeling sad or worried, express your feelings appropriately.

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