

Dear GCS Parents,

I, Rhonda Chavis am a North Carolina licensed school counselor with over 20 years of experience. Although retiring 4 years ago from the school system, my heart and mind is still focused on the incredible challenges that adolescents/young adults face and have faced in recent years. Specifically, I've been concerned about the declining mental health and over all well-being of students (and parents) due to the devastating effects of Covid 19.

I'm certified in Youth Mental Health First Aid by the National Council for Behavioral Health. I am a member of the North Carolina School Counselor Association, International School Counselor Association and Association of International Educators and Leaders of Color. I've worked for GCS and overseas in Egypt, South Korea and Argentina via International School Services. In years past, I also served as project coordinator for the YES College Tour & the Now and Later Mentoring Program, both sponsored by Saint James Presbyterian Church.

Your adolescent/young adult is invited to participate in a Youth Mental Health Retreat. If you'd like for your child to participate at no cost to you, please contact your child's School Counselor directly and request that they complete a referral form on behalf of your child/ren.

OBJECTIVE:

The Youth Mental Health Healing Retreat is geared towards underserved and underrepresented GCS students. Specifically, those dealing with grief and loss due to Covid but not limited to grief due to the pandemic. Students dealing with increased anxiety, stress and bullying etc.

GOALS:

Students will be guided to develop a self-care plan in at least 8 domains, including mental, physical, and spiritual plans to help them cope and give them hope. There will be opportunities for Brief Individual & Small Group Counseling, Yoga, Mindful Meditation, Artistic Expressions, Grief Therapy, plenty of outside space, hiking trails, waterfalls, etc. A college tour of Appalachian State University and other educational and fun activities.

COST:

Retreat is FREE of charge. This is a community service project sponsored by Phytolive Organic Community Outreach.

OUTCOMES:

Students' success will be indicated by a written self-care plan, students acknowledging a greater sense of community support, self-empowerment, improved social skills and a more positive outlook on life and their futures.

PROJECT OUTLINE:

The inaugural Youth Mental Health Healing Retreat will take place on February 11-13, 2022 in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina at Valley Crucis Conference Center. Information will be sent to GCS/ School Counselors the first week of January 2022. The project coordinator will meet with each approved student by January 28 and conduct a parent orientation on January 31, 2022.

Thank you so much for your consideration,
Rhonda Chavis
Project Coordinator
Phytolive Organic Community Outreach
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