

## Menlo School Well-Being Initiatives 2017-2018

At Menlo, we offer a range of supports for students—some highly visible, some less so—as they navigate their teenage years.

1. **Advocacy programs** in both divisions are set up as small groups of students who meet regularly with an “advocate” (a coach, teacher, or staff member who serves as an advisor and regular point of contact). Advocacies discuss a wide range of issues that come up for the students, and it serves as a forum for discussion and support.
2. **Open Session** program in Advocacy which fosters social emotional learning by developing skills in self-awareness, active listening, empathy, resilience, and personal and group problem-solving. Since both the Middle and Upper School adopted the program in 2015, all faculty receive training from the Institute for social and emotional learning in Open Session procedures and techniques.
3. **Digital Citizenship** lesson series are taught in each grade level of the Middle School in all core classes using Common Sense Media curriculum.
4. **Community Circle** provides a regular discussion forum in the Upper School run by student moderators. Topics have included mental health at Menlo, Black Lives Matter, body image, and safeguarding viewpoint diversity at Menlo. Community Circle was created to provide Upper School students a safe and supportive space to explore and discuss issues.
5. **Hearts Project** was initiated last year in the Middle School in efforts to increase inclusivity, empathy, and community bonds. Topics ranged from bullying, self-esteem, sexual identity, and family structure.
6. **Mental Health @ Menlo** is a club in the Upper School that engages students in efforts and campaigns to improve emotional wellness and decrease mental health stigma. The club draws on content from various community partners and programs such as Sources of Strength, LETS Bring Change 2 Mind, as well as Safe Space and Children’s Health Council where several students serve on steering committees. Last year students organized a screening of the documentary “Embrace” and an all school assembly.
7. **Sources of Strength** program was launched in fall of 2015 in the Upper School. This national program in suicide prevention trains Upper School students to serve as peer support coupled with faculty and staff mentors.
8. **LETS Bring Change 2 Mind** campaign and curriculum incorporated into Menlo’s initiatives reduces stigma surrounding mental illness and promotes a culture of acceptance and authenticity on campus.
9. **New schedule** launched last year in both the Middle and Upper Schools pushes back the start of classes every day. The main drivers of the new schedule were our desire to promote healthier sleep habits and more balance for our students by reducing the number of classes offered on a given day.

10. **Online communication tool**, Haiku, for teacher/student communication and homework planning. We do not post grades online nor do we provide parents with online access.
11. **Fostering a culture of independent learners**. Menlo strives to create opportunities for students to stretch outside their comfort zones by providing a supportive safety net.
12. **Student Concerns Committees** in the Upper School and Middle School bring together in teams of faculty and administrators to discuss students were concerns have been raised and to address and strategize necessary interventions.
13. **Discipline Committee** in the Upper School incorporates students on the committee to more actively support the student going through the discipline process. In addition, the student is allowed to bring an adult faculty member to help as a sounding board while going through the challenging process.
14. **Every 15 Minutes Program** is put on once every four years, so all students experience the program which is a realistic portrayal of the serious consequences of drinking and driving.
15. **Academic Support Center** for Upper School and Middle School offers academic support for students. The academic Support Center is staffed by teachers and the Academic Support Coordinators.
16. **M-BEST club** is open to Upper School and Middle School students to expose them to the computer science industry and develop a passion and comfort in various scientific fields.
17. **Mindfulness** infused into various Middle School and Upper School programs.
18. **Human Skills** is a Social Emotional Learning program that students take all three years of Middle School. Created and facilitated by the Middle School Counselor, these classes provide a trusting environment for students to explore the pre-teen and teen experience. Topics include effective communication, self-esteem, digital citizenship, brain fitness, media literacy, healthy relationships and gender identity.
19. **Strong teacher/student relationships**. Students and parents annually and consistently praise the availability, support and strong relationships Upper School and Middle School students establish with their teachers. The school builds in time in the schedule for students/teachers to connect. Class sizes average 16 students per class.
20. **Full-time Counselors** are in both the Upper School and Middle School with a second part time counselor added in the Upper School.
21. **School Nurse** coordinates health care services for all students and communicates with teacher regarding any medical accommodations needed for students.
22. **Psychological Services Crisis Response Team** - The counseling department has put together a team of outside support to enlist for crisis counseling and to provide a safety net in the event of a crisis in our community.
23. **College counseling** is focused on the "right fit" and works with students starting at the end of freshman year and throughout their time at Menlo. In the online Naviance program only students can upload data. Parents have a read only function. This encourages student autonomy in the college application process.
24. **Diversity and Inclusion Director** delivers programs and opportunities that foster meaningful dialogue on race and socio-economic class.

25. **Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism** developed by the National Association of Independent Schools will be offered to all students, faculty, staff, parents, trustees, and alumni this year. The goal is to assess the climate at Menlo and measure our progress in meeting our diversity aspirations.
26. **Students are surveyed** with the High School Student Engagement Survey every other year since 2007; results are used in a reflective manner to ensure students' needs are met.
27. **Stanford Survey of Adolescent School Experiences** was administered by Challenge Success last year. This online survey measures middle and high school students' perspectives on homework, extracurricular activities, sleep, physical health, stress, parent expectations, academic engagement, academic integrity, and teacher support.
28. **Parents bi-annually surveyed** in both Upper School and Middle School. Results are used to set strategic agenda and to create a solid sense of how the students are managing in their college lives.
29. **Freshman Seminar and Arts Rotation. The Freshman Seminar Program** fosters social emotional learning and character development through rich courses in Ethics, Mindfulness, Social Justice and Human Behavior. In the Art Rotation, student experience an overview of Drama, Chorus, Studio Arts and Dance.
30. **First semester freshman grades are not posted on transcripts.** Since 2015, freshman receive grades for the first three quarters, but only their end-of-year grade is recorded on the transcript. This is to reduce stress and help students transition into high school.
31. **Menlo Parent Groups** provide a small informal community for 9th grade parents and guardians to connect and share information, giving them a window into their students' academic and social experience at Menlo. Experienced Menlo parents facilitate the small groups and help 9th grade parents navigate their child's transition to Menlo's high school life.
32. **Parent Teacher conferences** occur twice a year in the Middle School. Spring conferences are student-led to provide them with the opportunity to celebrate, reflect on, and communicate their efforts and achievements in a supportive environment with parents and teachers. Additional conferences may be requested by teachers or parents.
33. **Parent Education Conference** brings together inspiring thought leaders to support Menlo's parents and faculty in raising engaged, confident and curious children. Last year's 16th Annual conference included Dr. Robert Sapolsky and a panel of experts in the field of adolescent development.
34. **Two Teen Advisory Boards of Menlo students and others from the surrounding community working separately with Children's Health Council and SafeSpace specifically focusing on teen wellness and mental health.**