

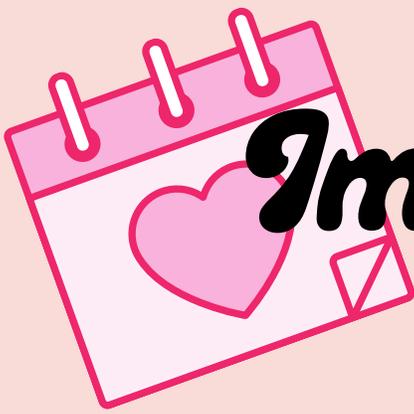
# Good News

## February 2022

I TRY TO  
*Stay* POSITIVE,  
BUT SOMETIMES  
I CAN'T DO IT &  
THAT'S OKAY.

@POSITIVELYPRESENT

used with permission by Dana DiPirro @positivelypresent



# **Important Dates**

*February 1-24th* **11th Grade Family College Meetings continue**

*February 3rd* **Course Drop Deadline**

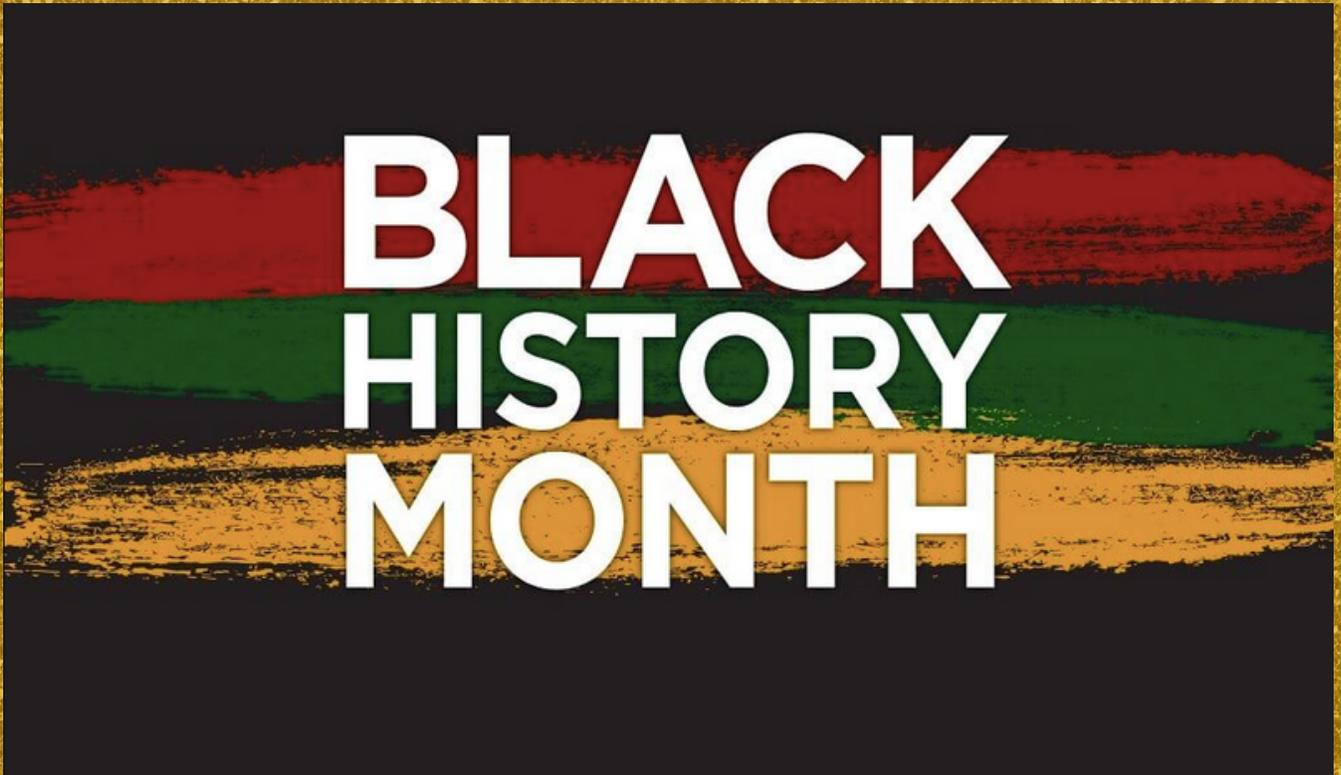
*February 17th* **9th Grade Registration Class Meeting during Adviser Group**

*February 22nd* **11th Grade Registration Class Meeting during Adviser Group**

*February 24th* **10th Grade Registration Class Meeting during Adviser Group**

*February 24th* **9th Grade February Monthly Meet Up during Adviser Group**

*February is*



**Black History Month is celebrated each February and is an opportunity for Americans to learn more about a significant and too often neglected or misrepresented piece of our nation's history.**

**Want to learn more?**

**Scan below.**



Mindfulness is awareness created by paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, without judgement

# 5 ways to

# Have Mindful Conversations

Mindfulness efforts can lead to mental health growth, stress reduction, and an improvement in overall well-being.

1

Check your natural pace of speech and intentionally slow it down. Speak slower. Listen harder. Take longer to respond.

2

Be curious. Genuinely ask questions with the intention to learn more about the person or topic.

3

Set a goal to remain totally present. Whenever your mind wanders, or distracting thoughts creep in, remind yourself of this goal and try again.

4

NOTICE. Notice your posture. Notice your inhales and exhales. Notice how you feel. Notice the words use. Do this during and after a conversation.

5

During conversation, pay attention to how often you have negative, judgemental, or closed minded thoughts.

# Dear Junior Students,

I can't believe that it's already the second semester of junior year!! I say this every year but where has the time gone? That's one step closer to senior year, graduation and college. In order to assist and support students and families through the college planning process that takes place this year, Mercy's Counselors will continue to provide services to all junior students and their parents in an Individual College Planning Meeting. These meetings have been available to parents/students beginning in November and take place through February. I have enjoyed getting to know my junior students better and really look forward to hearing about their goals. Parents and guardians have been very supportive through this process as well. These meetings take place in-person at Mercy High School during the months of January and February.

\*Per the Oakland County mandate, masks are required to be properly worn while in the school and we thank you in advance for your support.\*

**This is an opportunity for you and your student to meet with their Counselor to focus on the following:**

- Review of transcript to discuss high school grade trends
- Discussion about: college admission tests (ACT/SAT) and test preparation, building a college list, and identifying colleges the student has an interest in

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Sharing resources that can assist parents and students in the planning process

- Discuss student and Counselor roles and responsibilities during the college planning and admissions process

**To best prepare for the Individual College Planning Meeting, students and parents have important responsibilities:**

- Students will need to complete the College Interest Questionnaire found in the Survey section of SCOIR, at least two days prior to the meeting. The information gathered will enable us to provide guidance and direction specific to your student's interests and needs in regard to college planning.

- Parents will need to complete a "Parent Brag Sheet" which allows you to tell us about your student to help assist us when writing a letter of recommendation and building a college list. *(This form can be accessed in your SCOIR parent account: once logged in, you will see the Surveys link under your name in the left corner. An invitation to SCOIR was previously sent to parents. If you did not set-up your Parent SCOIR account please email Ms. Tosha Willis at [twillis@mhsmi.org](mailto:twillis@mhsmi.org).)*

- Parents also need to schedule the Individual College Planning Meeting online. These meetings will run through February. Registration will close 4 days prior to each available meeting date.

When scheduling your meeting, please be sure to schedule a time that works with your schedule and your student's schedule.

Counseling will continue our College Planning Meetings through the end of February so we still have a month left to meet. I

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encourage you to sign up if you haven't already done so. Please contact your student's counselor if the days and times listed do not work for you.

We look forward to working with you in this exciting process!

To schedule your College Planning Meeting, visit

**[www.ptcfast.com/parentlogin.php](http://www.ptcfast.com/parentlogin.php)**

and use the following entry code:

- **LAST NAMES A-G** (Mrs. Bennetts) - Please use this code:  
UF81395113
- **LAST NAMES H-O** (Mrs. Hessler) - Please use this code:  
SP91391528
- **LAST NAMES P-Z** (Mrs. Casey) - Please use this code:  
59P1395142

# MEET *Pearl*



*Scan here to  
check out Finch!*

I love exploring apps that promote mental health and self-care. So many of us are completely attached to our phones, so I am really into the idea of adding healthy habits to our lives, through the devices we already interact with daily. There are a lot of apps out there that promote positive mental health choices and support, and I'd like to introduce you to one today, called

## **FINCH**

The Finch app provides you with a virtual self-care pet (a Finch). The premise is that you end up taking care of your Finch by taking care of yourself. On top of this app to being a lightweight and cute way to promote healthy care of self, the activities, coping skills, and quizzes are all legitimate and vetted through credible resources.

**Want to know more? Scan above to download yourself, or read on if you're interested in my experience with Finch.**

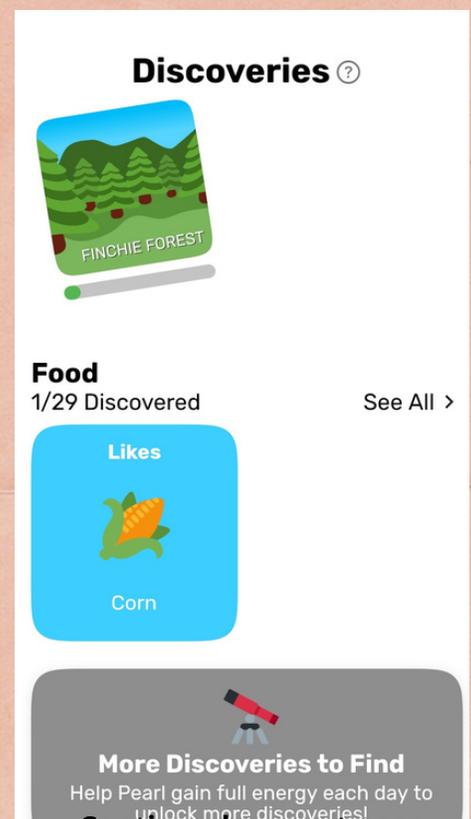
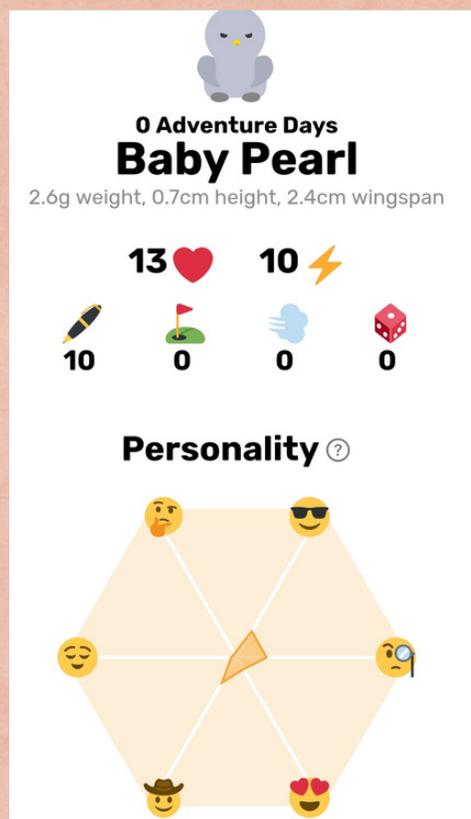
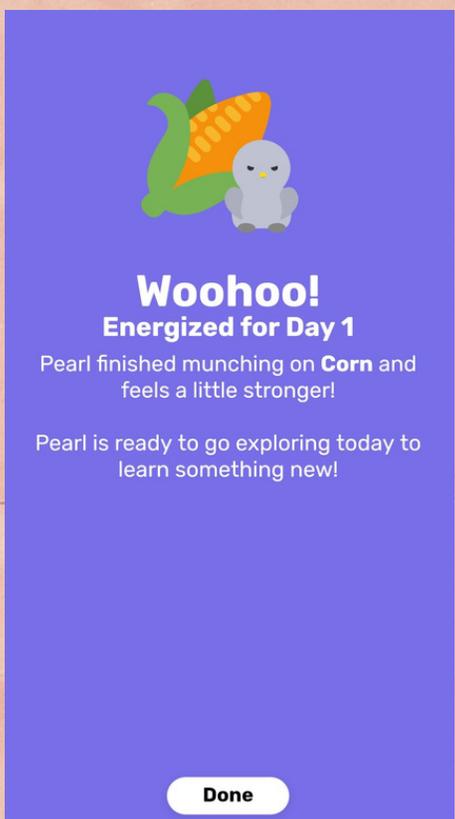
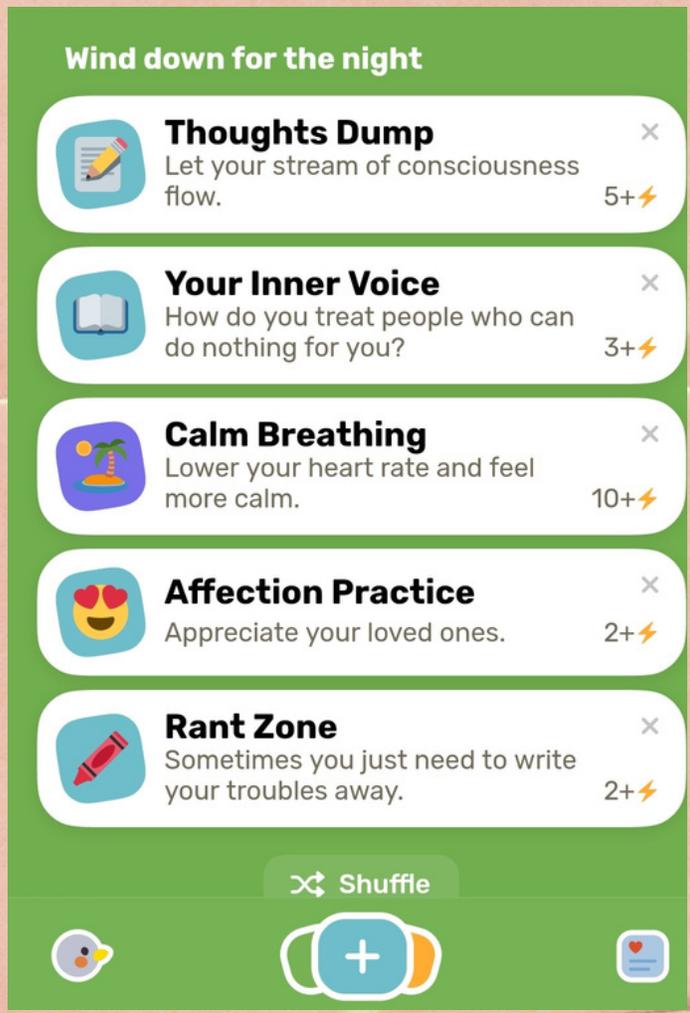
The Finch app is free, with an available paid, premium version and options for in-app purchases. (I have only explored the free options so far) After hatching my baby Finch, I named them Pearl and was then immediately encouraged to try a few simple healthy activities, in order to give them energy for the day.

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With each coping skill or healthy activity I try, Pearl gets energy for their day. The app encourages mindfulness, journaling, basic self-care, and tracking of habits and moods.

There is also a little "SOS Kit" that can be accessed whenever it need an immediate mental health or self-care intervention.

I get pretty gentle reminders to take care of myself and Pearl and to set self-care micro goals for my day. Each goal I attempt results in food, activity, growth, and development for my adorable Finch!

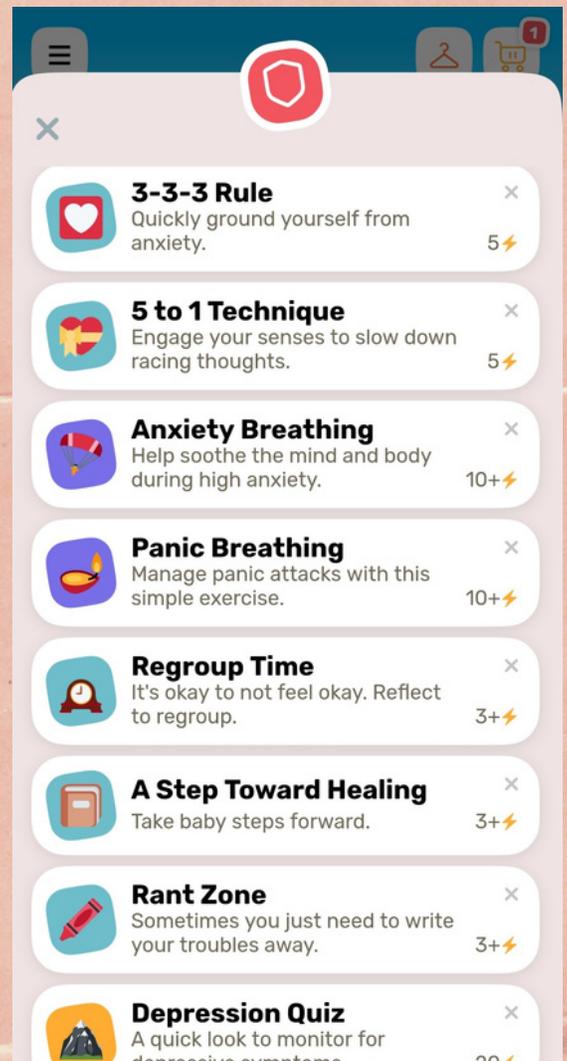
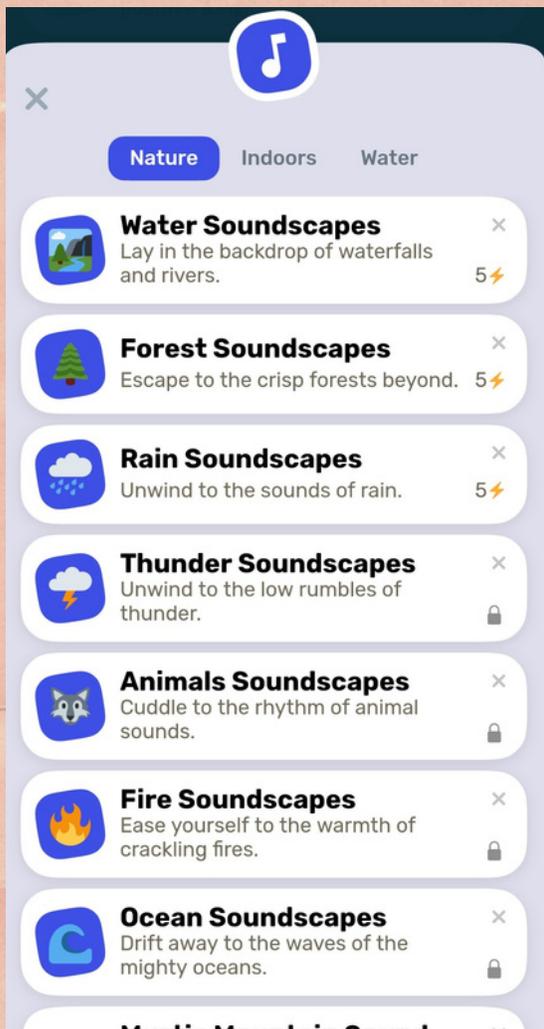


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The Finch app offers some really great practices to cope with stress and opportunities to assess my current mood.



There is even a section of Soundscapes which can be a cool tool for relaxation or help falling asleep.



So, if you are looking for an easy way to roll self-care into your day or gently improve your mental health, I highly recommend downloading Finch.

Not sure where to start? Try checking in with your Finch each day during Adviser Group.



# COLLEGE CORNER

## *Accepted, Deferred, Postponed, Denied, OH MY!!*

Over the past few weeks, many colleges have released their admission decisions. We have students in our building who are ecstatic, some who are sad and some who are in limbo. These emotions, paired with the talk outside of the school regarding decisions can create a lot of angst for seniors.

It's important to place all these decisions in context of what they are - a moment in the path of a person's life. They are not a statement on who the student is or their worth. If a student is denied, it stings. It hurts being told no. Let's flip the narrative. A student took a risk, they put themselves out there - that's brave.

Deferrals (postponed - UM) can create different feelings. The sadness that there is not an acceptance, but also an uncertainty about what is next. With no decision being rendered, the student is left waiting. It's important for students to follow the directions in their portal for the college if they are deferred and it is important to start to look at other options. This could turn into an acceptance, but have a plan just in case it does not.

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A few years ago, I heard the term, "redirection" instead of denial - and I love it! Denied implies the end of a pathway. In reality, a pathway has just been redirected. Parents, teachers, aunts, uncles, almost all adults have been redirected at some point in their lives - we can be great support and teachers for our seniors as they navigate these feelings. Feel the feels. It's ok to be mad, angry, disappointed or sad. Then, focus on the pathways that remain. Our seniors are more than a decision in a portal.

**There are some great resources regarding deferrals and college decisions:**

**Coach T Cry** and this one about **Deferred!**

Coach Cry spoke to our students last spring on the topics of college admissions, essays and more!

**InstaCollegeAdmission**

This blog by Rick Clark, Georgia Tech, talks about

**3 Messages Parents of High Schoolers need to hear about college admissions.**

## What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?

For some teens, this question serves as a springboard for a great discussion regarding dreams for the future. For others, the question causes uneasiness.

Typically as we have these discussions with students, those who are undecided are almost apologetic that they do not know what they want to do. Before we jump into some helpful tips, let's place the whole conversation in context of our current working world.

New Careers are forming every 18 months right now. That's not new jobs, this is careers. The careers many of our students will engage in aren't even around yet. User Experience degrees did not exist 10 years ago, now they are popping up at many colleges across the country (check out MSU's Experience Architecture degree to learn about this industry).

Kelly Services, headquartered in Troy, has a whole office that studies what the future of work could look like. I enjoy reading the monthly trends reports Kelly distributes. You can find these reports [here](#).

So what does this have to do with your Mercy Marlin?

1 - Not knowing what you want to do is ok. There is a lifetime of experiences ahead that will shape each individual's world of work.

2 - At the end of January, the 10th-12th grade counselors were in 10th grade religion classes helping them get started on the [YouScience career inventory](#) on Scoir. This unique inventory not only looks at interests, but also aptitudes to help explore careers. Counselors will

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briefly discuss the inventory with your student during course selection. There is actually a guide students can download and share with you to help get the discussion going.

3 - Juniors - if you did not have a chance to take this inventory (last year's school schedule was a bit funky) jump onto SCOIR and start the assessment in your Career section of your SCOIR profile.

4- As you talk about careers, talk about what classes or projects your student has liked the best. What have they not enjoyed? Knowing what you don't want to do helps in figuring out what you do want to do!

So how do you pick a college if you don't know what you want to study?!? In many cases, colleges will have multiple career pathways within their school. SCOIR is a great resource for students to explore colleges based on majors and careers. Your Mercy Counselor is always a great resource to support your student in their post-high school exploration plan!

**Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Holly Bennetts**



# *Take 10 Minutes for* **STRESS RELIEF**

Sometimes all it takes is 10 minutes to reduce stress.

The key to coping is to find what works for **you**.

Here are a few options to try, when coping with stress.

## *Move it Out*

AS LITTLE AS 10 MINUTES OF MOVEMENT EACH DAY CAN MAKE A MAJOR POSITIVE IMPACT ON OUR PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH. AS LITTLE AS 10 MINUTES OF MOVEMENT CAN RELEASE STRESS IN A STRESSFUL MOMENT TOO! GO FOR A RUN OR WALK, PLAY A SPORT, DANCE, OR SIMPLY JUMP AROUND IN YOUR BEDROOM. JUST MOVE YOUR BODY!

## *Write it Out*

THERE IS SO MUCH RESEARCH OUT THERE TO SUPPORT THE POWER OF JOURNALING. TAKE 10 MINUTES TO WRITE OUT YOUR STRESSORS AND HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THEM. THE POINT IS TO TAKE THOSE THOUGHTS OUT OF YOUR HEAD AND PLACE THEM SOMEWHERE ELSE. BONUS POINTS IF YOU READ THEM OUT LOUD AFTER WRITING THEM!

## *Rock it Out*

MUSIC CAN BE SUCH A POWERFUL TOOL. MAKE YOURSELF A FEEL GOOD PLAYLIST WITH 10 MINUTES WORTH OF SONGS THAT YOU CAN SING AND DANCE TO.

## *Talk it Out*

SOMETIMES ALL WE NEED IS A VENT SESH!

HAVE A 10 MINUTE CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE YOU TRUST. EXPRESS IT WITH YOUR WORDS.

**National School Counseling Week**  
**February 7th-11th 2022**



***Swing by and show some love to our  
Counseling Department members!***

**MERCY HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT VISION STATEMENT**

**THE MERCY HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT STRIVES TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENT THAT CELEBRATES AND SUPPORTS EACH STUDENT'S INDIVIDUAL GIFTS, GOALS, AND GROWTH. THIS DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES THE POTENTIAL IN EVERY CHILD AND ENVISIONS A PROMISING FUTURE FOR ALL MERCY STUDENTS: FILLED WITH ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT, MEANINGFUL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND EMOTIONAL WELL- BEING.**

# LOOKING FOR HELPFUL WAYS TO SUPPORT A FRIEND IN NEED?

SCAN HERE



## *In case you need this today:*

you matter

you are worthy

we see you

you are exactly  
where you should be

you are lovable and  
you are loved

you are important

(even when you don't feel it)

you've got this

(whatever "this" is!)

your feelings matter

we love you

With Love,  
Mercy Counseling Department