

Back to School Wellness Spotlight

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Rooted in Support: How Family and Community Foster a Successful School Year

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CEO/Clinical Director

As the back-to-school season approaches, it's more important than ever to recognize the vital role that community and family play in a student's success—both academically and emotionally. While school supplies, schedules, and syllabi are essential, the support systems surrounding students are what truly help them thrive.

A Strong Foundation at Home

Families provide the emotional grounding children need to face academic pressures, social challenges, and the transition into new routines. Whether it's helping with homework, offering encouragement, preparing healthy meals, or simply being present at the end of a long day, consistent support from caregivers fosters resilience and confidence. A loving, stable home environment creates a sense of security that allows students to focus and grow.

The Power of Community Connections

When families, teachers, local organizations, and neighbors come together, they create a network that empowers students. Community involvement—whether through mentorship programs, extracurricular activities, tutoring services, or school partnerships—helps students feel seen, supported, and engaged. Local businesses and organizations can also play a role by sponsoring school events or providing resources that reduce barriers to success.

Prioritizing Mental and Emotional Wellness

The return to school can bring stress for students, parents, and educators alike. Community-based wellness programs, counseling resources, and mindfulness initiatives offer much-needed support. By normalizing conversations around mental health and providing access to holistic care, we help students learn to manage stress and develop lifelong coping skills.

Working Together for a Brighter Year

This school year, consider how your family and community can work together to promote balance, emotional wellness, and academic achievement. Small acts—like checking in regularly, attending school events, or joining local wellness initiatives—can make a lasting impact. Schools are not isolated institutions; they thrive when they are part of a larger ecosystem of care.

Because when students know they're not alone—when they feel supported by family, teachers, and their community—they gain the confidence and resilience to face both academic and personal challenges. Support systems help them thrive not just in school, but in all areas of life.

Let's come together to create that foundation. By working as a unified community, we can make this school year one of strength, connection, and lasting success for every student.



Healing, Growth, and Heart: My Journey at Florida Acupuncture and Counseling, Inc.

By Marie Milton

Working as a clinical administrative assistant at Florida Acupuncture and Counseling, Inc. has been more than just a job for me—it's been a meaningful part of my personal journey toward healing, growth, and purpose. Every day, I have the privilege of helping create a safe and welcoming space where clients feel seen, heard, and supported from the moment they walk through our doors. I don't take that lightly. I know what it feels like to carry invisible pain, to walk into a place hoping for relief and understanding. That's why I do everything I can to make our clients feel like they matter—because they do.

Part of what drives me in this work is my own healing journey. I've been through things in my life that left lasting wounds, and for a long time, I carried that hurt in silence. But I've made it a priority to heal from my past so I can become the best version of myself—not just for me, but for the people I love and serve. I'm passionate about learning new things, especially anything that helps me grow emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Whether it's reading about trauma recovery, taking a new course, or simply reflecting on my experiences, I believe growth is a lifelong process. And the more I grow, the more I'm able to pour into others.

Helping people feel seen and loved is at the core of who I am. Whether I'm answering a phone call, listening to a client's concerns, or encouraging someone on a tough day, I want every interaction to come from a place of compassion. Outside of work, I express that same love through cooking—something I genuinely enjoy. There's something special about preparing a meal that nourishes not just the body, but the heart. It's one of the ways I take care of my family and show up for my partner. Supporting his dreams is important to me, just like he supports mine. We're a team, and cheering each other on is one of the most beautiful parts of our relationship.

I believe that healing is possible, even after the deepest wounds. I believe that growth is always within reach, no matter where you've been or what you've been through. And I believe that love—whether it's expressed through a kind word, a home-cooked meal, a gentle smile, or a heartfelt conversation—has the power to transform lives in ways that often go unseen but are always deeply felt.

At Florida Acupuncture and Counseling, Inc., I get to live that belief every day. I witness firsthand how compassion, connection, and care can create space for real healing to begin. Whether I'm offering support to a client, lending a listening ear to a coworker, or simply being a steady presence in someone's day, I'm reminded that even small acts of love can make a big difference. Being part of this team and this mission is more than a job to me—it's a calling. And for that, I'm truly grateful.



Staff Profile Highlights: Black Business Month Edition



Dr. K. A. Shakoor

DAOM

Class Instructor for Yoga and Qi Gong, Spiritual Life Coach (he/him)

I've dedicated my life to the study, practice, and teaching of energetic systems for over 50 years. My journey began as a student of ancient healing traditions, and over the decades, I've had the honor of learning directly from masters across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. These experiences shaped my path not only as a practitioner, but as a teacher, mentor, and guide for others seeking healing and personal transformation.

For more than 40 years, I've shared these teachings in a wide variety of spaces—including public and private schools, hospitals, mental health facilities, law enforcement agencies, sports teams, and private groups. My goal is always the same: to empower individuals with tools to restore balance, build resilience, and reconnect with their inner wisdom. For the past 30 years, I've also served as a Spiritual Life Coach, helping clients navigate life's challenges with intention, clarity, and purpose.

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As an instructor at Florida Acupuncture and Counseling, Inc., I offer classes in Yoga and Qi Gong that blend movement, breathwork, and mindfulness to support emotional and physical well-being. I believe that these ancient practices are powerful tools for healing trauma, managing stress, and deepening self-awareness—whether you are just beginning your wellness journey or looking to deepen your practice.



Chevron Williams, RMHCI

Registered Mental Health Counselor Intern (she/her)

I'm a dedicated counselor passionate about helping individuals, couples, and families heal and grow. I use cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational counseling, and reflective techniques to support clients through life's challenges.

My experience includes working with trauma, anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance abuse, relationship issues, spirituality, and multicultural concerns. I also enjoy working with veterans and clients navigating ODD and life transitions, always aiming to create a safe, supportive space for healing.



Gabrielle Luke, LMT

Licensed Massage Therapist (she/her)

With a background in chiropractic, physical therapy, fitness, and three years of massage experience, I completed my training at the Florida School of Massage. I specialize in relaxation and Swedish massage, with additional skills in neuromuscular and connective tissue techniques. I'm passionate about creating personalized sessions tailored to each client's unique needs and believe that meaningful therapeutic relationships are essential to lasting wellness. My goal is to provide a supportive space where clients feel cared for and empowered in their healing. License #: MA98571 Establishment Lic# MM 42694





Survive & Thrive This School Year with Acupuncture, Counseling, and Massage Therapy

The back-to-school season often brings a mix of excitement and pressure. Whether you're a student, parent, or educator, the transition into new routines can feel overwhelming. Prioritizing self-care is one of the best ways to stay focused, balanced, and healthy throughout the school year.

At Florida Acupuncture and Counseling, Inc., we offer a comprehensive approach to wellness through acupuncture, counseling, and massage therapy—three powerful tools that support both your body and mind.

Acupuncture: Calm the Mind, Support the Body

Acupuncture is a gentle, effective way to reduce stress and restore balance. When your nervous system is regulated, everything from sleep to digestion improves. Benefits include:

- Reduced anxiety and improved mood
- Better sleep and mental clarity
- Strengthened immune system
- Relief from headaches, muscle tension, and fatigue

Counseling: Build Resilience and Emotional Clarity

Mental health matters year-round, but especially during times of transition. Counseling offers a space to process stress, develop healthy coping skills, and strengthen emotional well-being.

Counseling can help with:

- Managing anxiety and school-related stress
- Building focus, motivation, and confidence
- Navigating relationship and family dynamics
- Supporting teens and children through change

Massage Therapy: Reset and Recharge

Physical stress builds up quickly during the school year. Whether from long commutes, computer work, or nonstop caregiving, massage therapy offers real relief. Massage benefits include:

- Relief from neck, back, and shoulder pain
- Improved posture and flexibility
- Lowered stress and cortisol levels
- Deeper relaxation and better sleep

Self-Care Is Not a Luxury—It's a Strategy

Between school schedules, work demands, and family responsibilities, it's easy to put your own well-being on the back burner. But ongoing stress can drain your energy, focus, and emotional balance. That's why self-care isn't just a treat—it's a strategy for staying healthy and resilient.

This school year, make space for yourself. When you care for your well-being, you're better able to care for everything—and everyone—else.

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