



Mental Health &
Recovery Services
Board of Allen,
Auglaize, and
Hardin Counties

September 2020 School Newsletter Article

Managing You and Your Student's Anxiety

Parents and students may be experiencing increased anxiety since the pandemic began. Sending your children back to school could also mean even more anxiety, fear, and stress. Whether you're worried about their physical health, effects on their social lives and mental health, or any of the other concerns surrounding COVID-19 and its impact, these feelings are valid. There are healthy ways to manage those feelings for both you and your children.

General signs of anxiety include excessive worrying, difficulty sleeping, fatigue, feeling nervous or restless, feeling agitated, difficulty concentrating, gastrointestinal problems, tense muscles, or panic attacks. Students can show the same signs as well when experiencing anxiety.

Additional signs to look out for are significant jumps in grades, feeling overwhelmed by their workload, frequent nightmares, changes in eating habits, unexplained outbursts or feeling on edge, and changes in their social interactions or self-induced isolation, especially with social media or other ways they've maintained connections during the pandemic.

Parents can manage their anxious feelings or help their children with these tips:

- Pause what you are doing and breathe. Notice how you feel. Name those feelings. Take deep breaths.
- Limit your intake of upsetting content. This includes the news, social media, and local gossip.
- Keep a gratitude journal or create time where family members all share something positive.
- Get active. Take a walk, go for a bike ride, play tag with your kids, etc.
- Eat healthy. Make healthy food choices to keep your energy up and mind functioning well.
- Get creative. Art or crafts can help us process feelings and relax in fun ways.
- Stay connected to your people. Reach out to someone you trust to share your feelings.
- If you or your children are overwhelmed or unsafe, call our Hopeline at 1-800-567-4673. Or text 741 741.

We're all experiencing many new and/or heightened emotions. Be kind to yourself and your mind. Help your children be kind to themselves as well.