

Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health

C&A Cares Newsletter

October 9, 2020



Challenges to the New Year

School is back in session! This year looks a bit different than previous years. For teachers and parents, we want to acknowledge some of the challenges that you may find with your children both inside and outside of the classroom. We want you to feel prepared to help your kids manage the changes that they are also experiencing this year. Below are a few helpful tips and resources for you to read and share with your children throughout this year.

Keeping the Classroom Positive:

Mental

- Complete daily or weekly mental health check-ins in the classroom.
- Check-ins may be a simple conversation or utilizing visuals.
- Students need to feel heard and have their feelings validated.

Physical

- For younger children, seeing everyone in a mask might be scary at first. To overcome this fear, have each parent send a picture of the student to place on their desk.
- A picture will help kids feel more comfortable around new friends and a new teacher. Pictures will also help the classroom seem more comfortable and inviting.

If staying in the same classroom all day, here are some tools:

- Have fidgets available for each kid
- Have large stretch rubber bands over the feet of each chair for kids to move their legs throughout the day.
- Incorporate movement in classroom when possible
- Lead students in yoga and progressive muscle relaxation.



Fidgeting is

- An act of moving about restlessly in a way that is not socially recognized as essential to ongoing tasks or events.
- Making small movements with your body, usually your hands and feet. It's associated with not paying attention.

For Guardians:

Guardians – an increase in stress and anxiety is normal. Change leads to stress, both in positive and difficult ways. It is not your job to eliminate this stress, but help your child manage it in healthy, appropriate ways.

- Before school starts, remind your child that school is exciting and special. School is full of opportunities to learn and make new friends.
- Focus on parts of school your child likes- lunch, art, reading, etc.and stay positive.
- Complete daily or weekly mental health check-ins at home. Start a conversation or use visuals to represent feelings. Validate your child's feelings.
- If your child is transitioning to a new school, they may be experiencing a higher level of worry or anxiety not knowing what to expect.
- Pick out a new outfit or write a positive note and think about all the exciting things the next day will bring.
- Keep consistent communication with your child's teachers. This will help successes and challenges your child is experiencing and also provides conversation topics.



C&A's Prevention Program Manager Sarah Hough wrote this content. If your child is struggling with staying focused in class, please call 330-433-6075.



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