

# Guidance

*A note from our  
Mental Wellness Provider,  
Ms. Cheviron:*



This year has presented all of us with many challenges and on many different levels. Not only have we been faced repeatedly with uncertainty, but we've been asked to be more flexible than ever as things outside of our control have changed and ended with little to no warning. Most of us have noticed that there have been times when we have really struggled and we've noticed that in our kids, too. Now, as much as ever, having conversations about our mental health is essential to staying well. If you've been wondering how to start these conversation with your child, or get connected to the care you need, we are here to support you through it with some tips and resources!



You don't need any magic tricks or words to begin talking with your child about mental health. The best thing you can do to get the conversation started is to ask genuine questions while providing your full presence and attention. Listening without judgement, being patient, and showing empathy are all ways to validate someone's feelings and reminds them that it is safe to talk about these things. Two simple questions can go a long way in supporting our youth (and us grown-ups, too for that matter); **WHAT DO YOU NEED RIGHT NOW** and **HOW CAN I HELP YOU?** Keep in mind, these talks are more about practice than perfection. The more you can make these conversations part of your family norm, the more likely your child is to feel comfortable opening up

about the important, and critical, things when they come up.

Our teens are key collaborators in helping to reduce stigma and normalize conversations about mental health and wellbeing. If your child has a passion for this topic, there are many ways to get involved including a mental health club at AHS called Bring Change to Mind. This is a positive outlet for students to work together to turn their ideas into actions and help make an impactful change related to our school culture and how we address and support mental wellbeing. Encouraging our kids to be a mental health advocate and to ask for support when needed are both important steps we can take as guardians and role models in their lives.

If you notice that your child is needing more direct support for their own mental health needs, we offer Mental Wellness Services at school in the form of peer groups and are partnered with Cummins Behavioral Health to offer school-based, individual therapy. Hendricks County Health Partnership also offers a vast amount of community resources, including a comprehensive list of mental health and counseling providers in the area. To access that list, please go to this website: <https://www.hendrickshealthpartnership.org/mental-health-and-counseling.html>.

