

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

March 2022 School Newsletter

Helping Your Child Cope and Getting Them More Support

The continuing stress, fear, grief, and uncertainty caused by the pandemic have deeply affected children and teens. Anxiety and depression doubled in youth during 2021. There was a 50% increase in suicide related emergency visits in girls ages 12-17 in 2021. These increases led to the surgeon general issuing an [advisory on the youth mental health crisis](#) this December.

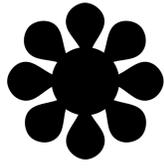
Your child might not be okay.

Check-in with them. Ask how they are feeling. Learn how to start these conversations at www.letstalk.care. Feeling anxious, angry, hopeless, or anxious are all normal reactions to stress. But if these feelings are constant and overwhelming, it could be a sign they need more support during this time.

Signs your child might need help:

- **Changes in mood that are not usual for your child.** This can look like ongoing irritability, hopelessness, anger, or frequent conflicts with others.
- **Changes in behavior.** If your teen who spends lots of time with friends stops texting or spending time with them, that is a cause for concern.
- **A loss of interest in activities.** If your child loves practicing sports or music or reading or baking but stops, that is a cause for concern.
- **Changes in sleeping habits.** This can look like a hard time falling asleep or staying asleep or sleeping all the time.
- **Changes in appetite, weight, or eating patterns.** This can look like never being hungry or eating all the time.
- **Problems with memory, thinking, or concentration.**
- **Loss of interest in school or academic effort that was previously there.**
- **Changes in appearance.** This can look like not taking care of basic personal hygiene.
- **An increase in risky or reckless behavior.** Examples of this include alcohol and drug use.
- **Talk about death or suicide.** Take any talk about suicide seriously. For local support call the HOPEline at 1-800-567-4673 or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK. You can also text the Crisis Text Line by texting 'TALK' to 741741. Use 911 when self-harming actions are happening or about to happen.

Help them cope by keeping a regular sleep schedule and eating schedule, spending time outdoors, exercising and stretching, and keeping up with everyday activities such as school & extracurriculars. Some other ways to cope are to limit exposure to news & social media, help them do things they enjoy, practice mindful techniques [here](#), spend time connecting with your child, and have frequent talks about how they're doing.



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We all need help sometimes. Your child is likely dealing with more stress and grief than ever before. Getting them professional help now could make all the difference.

Call [211](#) for local mental health and social service resources. Get them in-person or telehealth therapy. Set up an appointment with your pediatrician for a depression screening.