

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

December 2023 School Newsletter

Normal Youth Emotions & When to Seek Help

Any parent or teacher knows youth have strong emotions that can change quickly. Children will sometimes feel sad, stressed, excited, angry, cheerful, and afraid.

If your child is anxious about a test, answering questions in class, talking to someone they like, or playing a basketball game, that's normal. Anxiety and stress are natural reactions to things we care about. If your child is distressed or sad over a bad grade, breakup, or friend moving away, that is normal too.

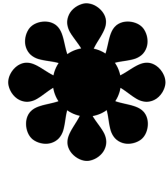
Your child is allowed to experience these emotions. Acknowledging and accepting your child's emotions can help them deal with their feelings in healthier ways. Learn more about accepting your child's emotions and building resiliency at childandadolescent.org/raising-children-who-are-resilient.

Your child might be anxious for a day or more, but that does not mean they have an anxiety disorder. And if they are diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, it does not mean the diagnosis is for a lifetime. Some mental health conditions are a response to specific circumstances. They may or may not be chronic or reoccurring.

So, when do you get help for your child?

It's better to look for behaviors that could be signs of mental health conditions instead of trying to identify unhealthy emotional reactions. Behaviors to look out for:

- Missing days in school or decline in school performance
- Avoiding friends or family and spending more time alone
- Losing interest in things they used to enjoy
- Changes in sleep habits, such as sleeping more or less
- Diet or exercising excessively, or fear of gaining weight
- Self-harm, such as cutting or burning
- Having thoughts of suicide
- Engaging in risky or destructive behaviors
- Smoking, vaping, using drugs, or drinking
- Switching between periods of no energy and elevated energy
- Thinking someone is controlling their mind or hearing things others cannot hear



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If you are worried about your child, call the local **24/7 HOPEline at 1-800-567-HOPE (4673)** or 988. Get connected to local resources by calling 211. If it is an emergency, call 911.