



FAIRFIELD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

4840 Fairfield Road, Fairfield, PA 17320

www.fairfieldpaschools.org

November 20, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The pandemic has been hard on a lot of families. It has taken away some of the security and consistency we experienced in the world pre-COVID. As adults, we have the ability to use higher level thinking to help us realistically look at situations, understand what is in our control, and then make well-thought out decisions. For children whose brains are not fully developed until their mid-20s, this does not happen as seamlessly. Experiencing 'hard' feelings (e.g. anxiety, sadness, anger, etc.) for a period of time may result in concerns for emotional health. If your child is experiencing any of the following signs, please consult your pediatrician or contact your school counselor for more resources.

*In young children**

- Have frequent tantrums or are intensely irritable much of the time
- Often talk about fears or worries
- Complain about frequent stomach aches or headaches
- Are in constant motion and cannot sit quietly (*except* when watching videos or playing video games)
- Sleep too much or too little, have frequent nightmares, or seem sleepy during the day
- Are not interested in playing with other children or have difficulty making friends
- Struggle academically or have experienced a recent decline in grades
- Repeat actions or check things many times out of fear that something bad may happen

*In older children and adolescents**

- Have lost interest in things that they used to enjoy
- Have low energy
- Sleep too much or too little, or seem sleepy throughout the day
- Are spending more and more time alone, and avoid social activities with friends and family
- Fear gaining weight, or diet or exercise excessively
- Engage in risky or destructive behavior alone or with friends
- Have thoughts of suicide
- Have periods of highly elevated energy and activity, and require much less sleep than usual
- Say that they think someone is trying to control their mind or they hear things that other people cannot hear

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health. (2020). Child and adolescent mental health. Retrieved from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/index.shtml>

You know your child better than anyone - you are their best advocate. If you feel something is not right (even if it's not on the list above) please reach out to discuss your concerns.

School Counseling Contacts

Elementary - Danielle Mikesell-Redding, PhD, NCC, LPC
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