Navigating Community Mental Health Supports for Students & Families during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Tips for Discussing COVID-19 Related Anxiety with Children

- **Take care of yourself first.**

  Children look to their caregivers for reassurance. Make sure to take time to take care of yourself so you are available to support your children.

- **Remain calm.**

  Remember that children will react to both what you say and how you say it. They will pick up cues from the conversations you have with them and with others.

- **Reassure children that they are safe.**

  Let them know it is okay if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.

- **Make yourself available to listen and to talk.**

  Let children know they can come to you when they have questions.

Adapted from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html

Tips for Discussing COVID-19 Related Anxiety with Children

- **Pay attention to what children see or hear on television, radio, or online**.
  Consider reducing the amount of screen time focused on COVID-19. Too much information on one topic can lead to anxiety.

- **Provide information that is truthful and appropriate for the age and developmental level of the child**.
  Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.

- **Teach children everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs**.
  By providing this information, it gives children a sense of control to keep themselves safe.

- **If school is open, discuss any new actions that may be taken at school to help protect children and school staff.**

Adapted from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html

Montgomery County Community Resources for Children

Student Assistance Program Individual & Group Support

- Provided by Carson Valley Children's Aid
- Maria Markakis, SAP Program Supervisor, 215.233.1960 ext.305; mmarkakis@cvca-pa.org

Virtual & In-Person Mental Health Services

- Commercial Insurance: Contact insurance provider and ask for behavioral health services
- Medical Assistance Insurance: Creative Health Services Administrative Case Management, 610.326.2767

Teen Talk Line

- Provided by Access Services. This is a warm line where teens can speak or text anonymously with a peer about any issues or problems they are facing without fear of judgement. The talk/text lines are available **seven days a week from 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM**. The line is closely tied to the Montgomery County Mobile Crisis Program and is a supplement to that service. This also allows any true crisis calls to be immediately transferred to a crisis worker.
- Call 866.825.5856; Text 215.703.8411; Email: teentalkline@accessservices.org

Montgomery County Community Resources for Parents & Caregivers

Virtual Caregiver Support

Parent/Caregiver Virtual Support Groups: Virtual family support groups where individuals can connect with other parents who share similar experiences, learn about resources, receive non-judgmental support, and share stories of hope and strength. All support groups are co-facilitated by Family Peer Support Partners.

Virtual Drop In Office Hours: Weekly virtual drop in office hours, where families and community providers can learn about how the team supports families, ask questions and receive resources and support, and connect face-to-face with the Family Peer Support Partners.

Provided by:
Mental Health Partnerships Family Mentor and Advocacy Network of Montgomery County

Please contact: Clare Higgins, Program Supervisor 267.977.4930 chiggins@mhphope.org

Access Mobile Crisis

1-855-634-HOPE (4673)

- Competent and caring crisis workers will help individuals **resolve crisis situations** like depression or suicidal thoughts through telephone and mobile support when needed.

- The team is there to help with **immediate crisis** situations and *help reduce and manage recurring crisis*.

- All services are provided at no charge.

Crisis support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Additional Resources:

[Montgomery County Children's Behavioral Health Guide](#)

Questions?