Your Employee and Family Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Coping With Anxiety as Your Children go Back to School



As children go back to school, parents have to face how in-person education has changed after the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this, you may be feeling a new wave of anxiety or worry. However, staying calm and positive by keeping informed and up-to-date can help you and your family adjust to this new normal.

Keep up with guidelines

Make sure you are informed of current guidelines and ready for any new changes in rules as they are announced. This is the best way to keep calm in the midst of uncertainty.

Find out what the plan is for your school. Check your local school board online to learn more about the guidelines your school will be following.

Engage with your community. If there's an email list for your child's school ask to be on it so that you can get current updates.

Don't rely too much on social media. While it can be nice to receive moral support from friends, sometimes people post articles from biased news sources or opinions presented as fact. Consult **Health Canada** for information and advice.

Talk about safety with your kids

Communicating openly about current events in an age-appropriate manner can help your children understand how important it is to follow physical distancing and face covering guidelines. It can also encourage your children to open up and talk to you if they are feeling worried or upset about returning to school.

Ask your children how they feel about going back to school. Talk to them about what they are (and aren't) comfortable with, and see if you can help find ways to make them more comfortable. For instance, if they aren't comfortable taking the bus, is it possible to arrange a carpool with other parents?

Go through a safety routine with your kids. Remind them of the rules about masks, hand sanitizer, and physical distancing. You can help them feel prepared by creating a nightly routine of making sure that they have a clean mask and hand sanitizer in their backpack before each school day.

Prepare for questions and be honest about what you do and do not know. It is important to be direct but age-appropriate with your child. They may be getting their information from the internet, television, or their friends. Share with them the information that you've learned from reliable news or government sites. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell them that you will do your best to find out.

Talk to your partner or co-parent and try to map out the changes ahead for your family. It can be difficult to predict what this school year will hold, but keeping communication open will help you make unified decisions in the best interest of your child.

Take advantage of your assistance program

If you feel worried or anxious about your kids going back to school, your assistance program can help. Caring counsellors are available to help talk you through your concerns, 24/7.

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