



# Wellness Today

For Parents & Families

## Resources for Additional Help

**Mental Health America (MHA) Back-to-School Toolkit** provides free resources, information, and tools.

**MHA Anxiety Test Screening Tool** can help determine if your child has anxiety.

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** offers information regarding mental health conditions and support groups for families.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** (English and Spanish) 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress.  
1-800-273-8255

**Crisis Text Line** is the free, 24/7, confidential text message service for people in crisis. Text HOME to 7417414



## New School Year, New Emotions Helping Kids Conquer Anxiety

A new school year can bring many emotions, including anxiety. Anxiety is a common feeling of nervousness or worry. When those feelings stop your children from having fun or doing normal activities, they may need help reducing their anxiety.

### How to Help

- **Breathe.** Practice calming breathing together by taking slow, deep breaths.
- **Challenge negative or irrational thoughts** by having your children ask themselves questions such as “What evidence is there that makes this thought true or not true?” or “If it did happen, what could I do to cope?”
- **Plan.** Help your children prioritize and break down tasks into smaller, doable steps.
- **Be calm.** Model confident and calm behavior for your children.
- **Establish an at-home routine.** Schedule time for

homework, fun, meals, and a bedtime routine.

- **Support a healthy lifestyle.** Provide healthy meals and time for physical activity. Maintain an appropriate curfew so your children get enough sleep.
- **Identify thoughts and name emotions.** Describe to your children what you observe and ask in a clarifying manner if that is what is occurring. Asking if, rather than telling what, your children are feeling helps them develop greater ability to name and tame their emotions. For example, “I see you frowning and not talking much. Are you feeling sad?”
- **Communicate.** Set aside time to talk one-on-one with your children. Connect emotionally by listening and giving eye contact. Validate concerns and avoid lecturing.
- **Get help.** Talk to teachers about any concerns you have about your children. If you are concerned your children have an anxiety disorder, talk with a counselor, doctor, therapist, or other mental health expert.