

Wellness Wednesday's for Parents

How to support you and your child's mental health during the pandemic?

Since the start of the pandemic, we have all experienced disruptions in one way or another to what our daily life and routines looked like. It is important to take care of your mental health during this time. You can do this by exercising, journaling, healthy eating, safely interacting with others and talking to a mental health professional. Children may struggle with their own challenges too (e.g., decrease in opportunities for social interactions, mask wearing and adjusting to the new social distancing recommendations). Take time to listen to your child. Allow for your child to fully express how they are feeling and address their concerns as they come. Children can also benefit from exercising, healthy eating habits, journaling and speaking to a mental health professional if needed. Reach out to your child's school teacher if/when you feel your child is struggling. Maintaining open communication with your child's school will help you and your child feel more supported.

Social media

Further research is needed to determine the true impacts social media can have on mental health. Yet, current research studies have shown that social media can have both positive and negative consequences. Social media can be used to provide and maintain relationships/connections that all human beings need. However, social media platforms can also have a detrimental effect on an individual's wellness by increasing anxiety and depression (Karim, Oyewande, Abdalla, Chaudhry Ehsanullah, & Khan, 2020).

Strategies to manage anxiety

Strategies can be used both at school and at home to help your child manage their anxiety. Deep breathing is a strategy that adult caregivers can practice with their child. Deep breathing allows the lungs and heart to receive more oxygen which ultimately calms the body. Counting and using positive self-talk are other strategies that can be used with your child when they appear overwhelmed and anxious.

How to find a therapist

Go to psychologytoday.com and enter your Zip Code and insurance information to find local therapists. For a list of more local therapy options, contact Nikki Christensen.

Getting to know the Wellness Wednesday's Team:

*Nikki Christensen, MSW is a School Social Worker at Fontana JT8 School District. Nikki received her Bachelor of Social Work degree from Illinois State University and her Master of Social Work degree from University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. Nikki has experience working with elementary, middle, and high school students, adults with developmental disabilities, and the elderly population. Nikki can be reached at 262-275-6881 ext. 219.

*Irene Corzo, LPC is a therapist and owner of Irene Corzo and Associates, LLC in Lake Geneva. Irene has 17 years of clinical experience working with families, children, adults and couples. Irene specializes in addressing mood disorders, coaching and helping clients improve their overall quality of life. Irene can be reached at 262-374-4970.