

Addressing mental health and resilience in children and teens

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the lives of children and teens. Although it's normal for children and teens to experience various types of emotional distress as they develop and mature, the pandemic has brought a number of different challenges impacting emotional health, including:

- **Changes in their routines:** having to physically distance from family, friends, and community
- **Breaks in continuity of learning:** virtual learning environments, technology access and connectivity issues
- **Breaks in continuity of health care:** missed well-child and immunization visits, limited access to mental, speech, and occupational health services
- **Missed significant life events:** grief of missing celebrations, vacation plans, and/or milestone life events
- **Lost security and safety:** housing and food insecurity, increased exposure to violence and online harms, threat of physical illness, loss of parent(s) or grandparent(s) for some, and uncertainty for the future

There may be times when you're unsure if changes in their behavior are a normal part of growing up, or if it is time to discuss your concerns with a mental health professional. As a parent or caregiver, you should be on the lookout for [signs and symptoms](#).

If you are concerned about your child, know that help is available. Consider reaching out to one of these resources for information and/or support:

- [**Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\):**](#) On SAHMSA's website, you'll find a behavioral health treatment services locator, a best practices resource center, tip sheets for parents, and other support.
- [**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**](#) The Lifeline provides no cost and confidential 24/7 support to people in crisis. The website offers information on how you can get help or help to prevent suicide. Call 1-800-273-8255.
- [**National Institute of Mental Health:**](#) Find information on mental health disorders and related topics, treatment and therapies, special populations, and more.
- [**National Alliance on Mental Illness:**](#) Here you will find a variety of resources and support, including a video resource library, information on support and online discussion groups, and treatment options.
- [**COVID-19 Parental Resource Kits**](#)
- [**Ask a Health Expert, Episode 5:**](#) Help With Back-to-School Anxiety During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Listen to this Anthem-hosted podcast to learn more about how you can help ease your child's school anxiety and ways you can build your child or teen's resilience