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P. 314-544-3800

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O'FALLON, MO 63366
P. 636-281-1990

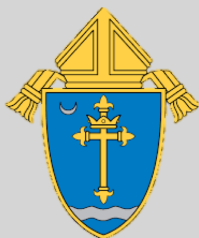
UNION OFFICE
FRANKLIN COUNTY FAMILY
RESOURCE CENTER
500 CLARK AVENUE
UNION, MO 63084
P. 636-583-1800

FLORISSANT OFFICE
1385 HARKEE DRIVE
FLORISSANT, MO 63031
P. 314-831-1533

HERCULANEUM OFFICE
1349 MCNUTT STREET, 63048
P. 636-638-2203

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SCHOOL TOOLS

AUGUST 2021

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back to another school year! As we embark on a new year of learning during Covid, we can assume that there may be mixed feelings by both parents and students about the return to school.

Some students are excited to be back in person with friends, teachers, and the ability to work hands on in class. Others may be struggling with saying goodbye to the comforts of at-home learning, may be returning to a social situation that is difficult for them at school, separation from caregivers, or anxiety regarding health safety at school. During this time, parents may be seeing out-of-character behavior and emotions arising in their children, and teachers will be navigating a variety of emotional responses from their students.

At Saint Louis Counseling, we understand that mental health support for both caregivers and children is needed now more than ever. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your school's therapist or our offices for the help you may need.

When to Seek Help for Your Child:

Most children need time to adjust back to in-person learning and a new structure to their days. However, persistent concerns may warrant extra support for your child.

- If your child is having severe meltdowns at drop-off time for more than two or three weeks.
- If your child is unable to recover or stay at school for more than three or four weeks.
- If your child's worries are causing frequent trips to the nurse or school refusal due to stomach aches, headaches, etc.
- If you notice substantial behavioral or academic concerns that are not improving as your child adjusts back into in-person learning.

(c) Child Mind Institute

RETURNING TO SCHOOL (AND WORK):

As children return to in-person learning and many parents return to workplaces, we may see a spike in anxiety, behavioral concerns and fear of separation in students. Child Mind Institute has provided tips in how to navigate this transition back to school and work:

1. Validate their feelings. Respond to your child's fears to let them know you hear them and understand them, and are proud of them for what they are accomplishing at school.

2. Set the tone & help them think positive. Try not to lead with your own anxiety or ask leading questions, such as "are you nervous about returning?" Ask open questions to gauge your child's thoughts and feelings.

- **Emphasize safety measures.** Remind your child that sometimes we have to take small risks to do important things, and to remain cautious but trustful of the school and public health experts' efforts to keep them safe.
- **Practice separating.** For students who are anxious about separation, practice small moments of separation to prepare for school days (i.e., kids playing in room by themselves independently).
- **Set a routine but prepare for flexibility.** Try to stick to an at-home routine that provides some structure for your student, while also having the conversation that, at times, plans may need to be adjusted due to our changing environment.