



Back-to-School for Families and Students | *Article*

Tackling Transition and School Anxiety With Your Child

Change is a big part of childhood. Starting a new school year, entering puberty or returning to a routine after time away can all bring stress. Kids often feel unsure about what comes next. As a parent, you play an important role in helping your child manage these moments with confidence.

Understanding childhood anxiety around change

If your child feels worried about going back to school, they are not alone. Research shows that about 64 percent of kids feel some form of school-related anxiety. They may worry about making friends, keeping up with schoolwork or meeting new teachers. Even small changes can feel like a big deal.

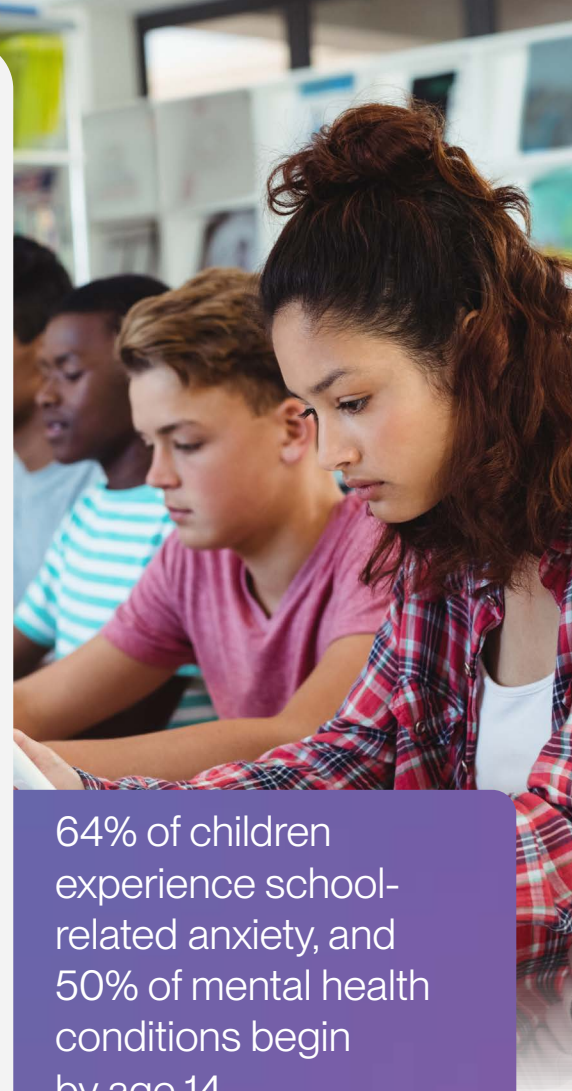
For older children, puberty adds another level of stress. Many teens feel self-conscious about the changes in their bodies. They may compare themselves to others or worry about fitting in. Puberty happens at different times for different kids. Some grow early while others grow later, and both patterns are normal. It is important to remind your child that everyone develops at their own pace.

Identity and mental health in adolescence

Puberty is not just about physical growth. It is also a time when many mental health conditions begin. About half of all mental health conditions start by age 14. It is also a period when kids explore who they are, including their gender and sexual identity. These questions can be confusing, and feeling different from peers can create stress.

Create a safe space for open, judgment-free talks. Let your child know that it is okay to explore their identity and to share their emotions. Supportive places — at home, with friends or through counseling — help kids move through these changes with confidence.

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64% of children experience school-related anxiety, and 50% of mental health conditions begin by age 14.

Nemours Children's Health & American Psychological Association

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Back-to-School for Families and Students Toolkit

Visit [LucetHealth.com](https://www.LucetHealth.com) for more resources.



Helping kids return to school after time away

Returning to school after a long break or a health issue can be overwhelming. Your child may worry about falling behind, reconnecting with classmates or feeling judged. You can help by:

Communicating with the school

Talk with teachers, counselors or a care management team. Work together on a plan that includes academic and emotional support.

Encouraging a gradual return

If possible, ease back into school with half-days or a reduced schedule. This can make the transition less stressful.

Connecting with support networks

Therapy, support groups or online communities can help your child feel understood and supported.

Using care management services

Many health plans offer care managers who help guide daily wellness needs. They can support your child as they adjust.

How parents can be proactive

Some stress during transitions is normal, but it is important to notice when anxiety becomes more serious. Watch for changes in mood, sleep, appetite or social behavior that last more than a couple of weeks. Complaints of headaches or stomachaches, or strong efforts to avoid school, may signal the need for more support.

Start with a simple, supportive conversation. You might say, “I’ve noticed you seem worried about school lately. Do you want to talk about it?” Listen without judgment. Normalize their feelings and offer help. If the concerns continue, reach out to a counselor, pediatrician or mental health professional.

#BackToSchool #StudentMentalHealth

If you or your kids need help with mental health at school, you can contact the [National Alliance for Mental Illness](#) by calling 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) or text NAMI to 62640.

Reviewed by Medical Director, Doctor of Medicine and Director of Clinical Operations.

