

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO: PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY'S MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE PANDEMIC



Through a ThoughtExchange, we asked students in Grade 4-12 to share their thoughts and feelings about being back in school. Students shared that they were happy to be back learning and seeing their friends. They also expressed frustration with the protective measures in place; concern for the health and well-being of their friends and family; and disappointment over the loss of events and activities. As we start this new year and the virus continues to impact our lives, here are some ways we can protect the mental health of our families:

- Normalize that your child/youth is feeling anxious- anxious feelings help us to take care of ourselves and motivates us to wear masks, wash our hands, and practice physical distancing
- Engage in calm, proactive conversations with your child/youth about COVID-19- empathize that they may be feeling nervous but that there are effective ways to stay safe
- Find out if what they are hearing or what they think is true- refer to reliable, helpful sources of information ([NWHU](#), [Public Health Ontario](#) and [Ministry of Health](#))
- Empathize with them when they experience disappointment due to cancelled events and activities- listen to and acknowledge their frustration, provide coping strategies, and help them to look for the positive

For more information, check out these articles from Child Mind® Institute:

[Anxiety and Coping with the Coronavirus](#)

[How to Help Your Kids Handle Disappointment](#)

For more information, please contact the RRDSB Mental Health Leader at:

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