

Children and Mental Health

PARENT GUIDE - AGES 3 -12



Should Your Child Get Help?

If your child is experiencing these symptoms and they interfere with daily functioning, consider seeking help

- Frequent tantrums/irritability
- Frequent stomachaches/headaches—with no known medical cause
- In constant motion/unable to sit quietly
- Sleep too much/too little
- Not interested in playing with others or making friends
- Often talks about fears/worries
- Recent decline in academic performance

If this behavior is causing the child or family distress, we encourage that you seek help.

Do not wait for symptoms to show to begin conversations about mental wellness. Equipping your child with positive social and emotional skills is the best prevention measure.

NOTE: if a child's behavior is unsafe or if a child talks about wanting to hurt themselves and/or others
SEEK HELP IMMEDIATELY

What are the First Steps?

1. **Talk to your child's teacher/counselor**—Ask what child's behavior is like in school, daycare, or on the playground?
2. **Talk to your child's Pediatrician**—Describe the behavior, and report what you have observed and learned from others
3. **Ask for a referral to a mental health professional**—Make sure this professional has experience working with children

Valuable Mental Health Skills

1. **Self Awareness** is knowing your **emotions** and **thoughts** and how they **affect** your **behavior**
2. **Self-Management** is knowing how to regulate your **emotions**, **thoughts**, and **behaviors**
3. **Social Awareness** is knowing how to **understand** and **respect** the **perspectives of others** and to **recognize** family, school, and community resources/supports.

Community Resources

- Your child's pediatrician
- Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) at Children's Hospital—513-636-4124
- Find a mental health professional—www.mindpeacecincinnati.org
- Mental Health Access Point (MHAP)—www.mentalhealthaccesspoint.org • 513-558-8888
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline • 800-273-8255
- Crisis Text Line: Text "START" to 741-741

Educational Resources

- 1N5—1N5.org
 - Resources for parents
 - Resources for students
 - Video stories
 - Resources to deal with Covid-19
- National Institute of Mental Illness—nimh.nih.gov
- Child Mind Institute—childmind.org
- Mental Health America—mhnational.org
- NAMI—nami.org
- Cincinnati Children's Medical Center—Adapting for Life Program—cincinnatichildrens.org/service/a/suicide-awareness
- Nationwide Children's Hospital—On Our Sleeves—nationwidechildrens.org/giving/on-our-sleeves

