

# Counselor's Corner

## October 2021



### A Child's Physical And Mental Health Are Both Important

It is easy for parents to identify their child's physical needs: nutritious food, warm clothes when it's cold, a safe place to live. However, a child's mental and emotional needs may not be as obvious. Good mental health allows children to think clearly, develop socially and learn new skills. Additionally, good friends and encouraging words from adults are all important for helping children develop self-confidence, high self-esteem, and a healthy emotional outlook on life.

#### What Every Child Needs for Good Mental Health

- Give children unconditional love
- Nurture children's confidence and self-esteem
- Encourage Children to Play
- Provide appropriate guidance and instructive discipline
- Open communication

#### When to seek help

Parents and family members are usually the first to notice if a child has problems with emotions or behavior. Your observations with those of teachers and other caregivers may lead you to seek help for your child. If you suspect a problem or have questions, consult your pediatrician, or contact a mental health professional.

#### Warning Signs

The following signs may indicate the need for professional assistance or evaluation:

- Decline in school performance
- Poor grades despite strong efforts
- Regular worry or anxiety
- Repeated refusal to go to school or take part in normal children's activities
- Persistent nightmares
- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums
- Depression, sadness or irritability

#### Where to seek help

Information and referrals regarding the types of services that are available for children may be obtained from:

- Mental health organizations, hotlines and libraries
- Other professionals such as the child's pediatrician or school counselor
- Family network organizations
- Community-based psychiatric care
- Crisis outreach teams
- Family resource centers and support groups
- Health services
- Protection and advocacy groups and organizations
- Self-help and support groups

#### Other Resources

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org)

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
Phone: 703-684-7710 [www.ffcmh.org](http://www.ffcmh.org)

National Association of School Psychologists  
Phone 301-657-0270 [www.naspweb.org](http://www.naspweb.org)

Adapted from: Mental Health America What every Child Needs for Good Mental Health. For a full view of the article, visit: <https://www.mhanational.org/what-every-child-needs-good-mental-health>