



Counselor's Corner

November/December 2018

Minimizing Stress during the Holiday Season

The month of November and December is a time to celebrate the holidays with our loved ones. The holidays can be a busy time of the year and stress can be more common during these times. The stressors of the holidays can impact both children and their families. It is helpful to work as a family to cope with any stressors that arise and create fulfilling memories during the holiday season.

The Importance of Routines: During the holiday season it can be easy to have a change in routines. Engage in conversation with your children about any changes to help prepare them. After an event or activity, it is important to return to your routine and stay consistent (e.g. waking up/getting ready in the morning, meal and bed times). Returning to a usual routine can help children smoothly transition back to school after the holiday breaks.

Get Moving- Be Active: Children often realize when adults are feeling stressed or overscheduled. Schedule a time for your children or your family as a whole to eliminate technology and participate in outside activities (e.g. walking, sports games, exercise, scavenger hunts, gardening). The fresh air can help release anxious emotions and maintain a positive mindset.

Schedule Quiet Time/Space: Take the time to incorporate quiet time without overstimulation. Ask your children what calm activities they like to participate in, especially during eventful days (e.g. coloring, drawing, reading, watching a movie, taking a walk).

Avoid Overscheduling: Minimize the amount of activities scheduled by prioritizing and deciding as a family which events are necessary to attend. Ensure that your children are receiving enough sleep. It is recommended that children receive an average of 9-12 hours of sleep per night to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Lend a Helping Hand: Provide your children with different tasks that they can help with to prepare for the holidays (e.g. cleaning, setting the table, choosing a gift). Praise and offer positive reinforcement for their assistance, independence and responsible behaviors. Engage in conversations with your children about the meaning of the holidays and giving back to others and the community.

Be Present: Set an intention for the day, especially when your days are filled with several activities and events. Practice gratitude by asking your children to express things in their life that they are thankful for. Disconnect and focus on the laughter, connection and love spread throughout this time of year. Consider participating in deep breathing, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation and/or yoga.

Resources used for this edition of the Counselor's Corner:

https://www.ssdmo.org/rotate_features/11_10/11-10_HolidayStress.html

<https://childmind.org/article/how-to-take-the-stress-out-of-the-holidays/>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/holiday-stress-and-anxiety-in-children-620516>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/sleep/Pages/Healthy-Sleep-Habits-How-Many-Hours-Does-Your-Child-Need.aspx>

For further details or information, please contact your child's guidance counselor:

Mrs. Kelly B. Maire

Angelo L. Tomaso School
(908) 753-5300 x 5305
kblessing-maire@warrentboe.org

Ms. Alyssa Pech

Central School
(908) 753-5300 x 5205
apech@warrentboe.org

Dr. Kelly Stankiewicz

Mount Horeb School
(908) 753-5300 x 5405
kellystankiewicz@warrentboe.org

Ms. Alexandra Pranzo

Woodland School
(908) 7730-5300 x 5505
apranzo@warrentboe.org

Ms. Lauren Regal

Middle School - 6th grade
(908) 753-5300 x5009

lregal@warrentboe.org

Ms. Helen Scully

Middle School- 7th grade
(908) 753-5300 x 5007

hscully@warrentboe.org

Mrs. Midge Johnson

Middle School – 8th grade
(908) 753-5300 x 5005

mjohnson@warrentboe.org

Mrs. Carol Brown

Warren Middle School
908-753-5300 x 5101

cbrown@warrentboe.org