



# Youth Mental Health IN STRESSFUL TIMES

**Our Youth** have been troopers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The uncertainty and stress affect us all. Supporting ongoing social development and connectedness can ease the anxiety for our youth and for ourselves. Traumatic events and disrupted routines can impact children's mental health. Fortunately, parents and caregivers can help ease the emotional impact of this crisis.

## It's OK

Many parents and guardians feel like their lives are turned upside down right now. It is important to remember that our youth are feeling the same way. Help them remember that it is OK to feel scared, bored, sad, lonely, and/or disconnected. These are completely normal emotions, but how families manage these feelings can make all the difference. Here are some things parents and guardians can do:

- **Encourage kids to talk about their emotions.**  
**This is your opportunity to be open, keep them informed, and set the tone.**
- **Focus on what can be done to make them feel safe.**
- **Create new routines that provide a sense of stability.**
- **Help your kids feel empowered by fostering a connection to learning.**
- **Encourage virtual social interaction.**  
**We all do better when we are connected with others.**

Remember – you don't have to be superhuman. This is a new normal. Emotional support goes a long way toward helping youth feel safe, secure, and loved. If you suspect a significant issue, reach out to a mental health provider. Many are offering help virtually.





# RESOURCES

## School Based Services for Youth

School-based behavioral health programs provide comprehensive clinical services to children who are experiencing mental health-related issues. Help is offered in the school setting. Providers collaborate with school personnel and with the child's family. They can help to reduce the negative impacts of mental health symptoms both at school and at home.

Services include assessment, treatment planning, individual therapy, caregiver support, case management, community support, and advocacy. If the family is interested in medication as a treatment option, Chestnut can link youth to prescribers. We work with children ages 5-18. Treatment is recovery-oriented, trauma-informed, child-focused, family-driven, and evidence-based.



Chestnut's School Based Services serve 80 schools in 16 school districts in St. Clair and Madison Counties; seven districts (seven schools) in McLean County; one district (32 schools) in Peoria County; one school in Logan County; and 15 schools in four districts in Jefferson County, Missouri.

When schools closed because of the pandemic, our therapists quickly transitioned to offering help by phone, Zoom, and FaceTime. We have stayed connected with many families during the pandemic and are looking forward to getting back in schools so we can engage all families. If you are a parent or guardian in one of the counties listed above and have concerns regarding your child or teen, ask your school if school-based services are available. We want to help!

**Call 618-877-4420 in Southern Illinois. Call 800-446-0972 in Missouri. Call 309-827-6026 in Central Illinois.**

## For Youth in Crisis

Screening Assessment and Support Services (SASS), helps families whose children are experiencing a mental health crisis.

**Calling the CARES line at 1-800-345-9049** will get a SASS staff member on the scene of the crisis within 90 minutes to help your child/adolescent with stabilization or hospitalization.

## Call4Calm

To speak with a mental health professional, text **"TALK" or "HABLAR" to 552020**. Call4Calm is **FREE**. Callers will remain anonymous. Once an individual sends a text to the hotline, he or she will get a call from a Human Service Center counselor within 24 hours. Individuals can also text 552020 with words such as "unemployment," "food," or "shelter" for information on supports and services.

## Resources and Lifelines:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: text HOME to 741741
- Trevor Lifeline: call 1-866-488-7386, or text START to 67678
- Chestnut Health Systems Crisis Line: call 618-877-0316



[chestnut.org/prevention](https://chestnut.org/prevention)