

Adolescent and Families Services

Quarterly Newsletter

September 2023



The Fall Is Upon Us

By Darin Ford, LGMFT, Program Manager

The Anne Arundel County Department of Health Adolescent and Family Services (AFS) enjoys offering you and your families mental health services year-round. Our team of licensed social workers, marriage and family therapists, counselors, nurse practitioners, psychiatrists, and dynamic office staff strives to create an environment where you and your child feel welcome and supported during your therapeutic experience. We welcome you to share your feedback on how we are doing as a clinic. Each of our locations has a feedback box near the appointment window. You can also ask for the Client and Caregiver Survey. We thank you in advance for taking the time to share your suggestions. At AFS, we believe that we are better together!

Fall Into Child-Parent Connection

By Octavia Guilbault, LCPC, Clinical Supervisor

Parents:

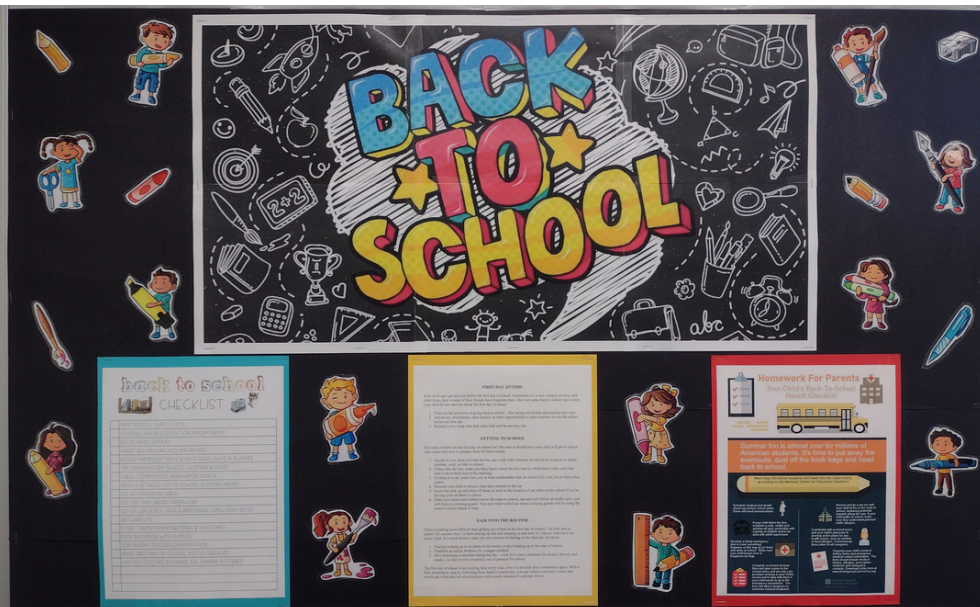
Below are some questions to ask and ways to connect.

Questions:

- What was the peak and pit of your day?
- What was the hardest rule to follow today?
- What was the funniest moment of your day so far?
- What made you smile today?
- If you could switch seats with anyone in the classroom, who would it be and why?

Tell me an example of kindness you saw or showed today.

Try asking questions on the car ride home or later in the evening once your child settles in at home.



Fall Fun!!

By Melissa Diem, Office Supervisor

Our front office staff has attached a back-to-school word search in this quarter's newsletter for your enjoyment. Please take the time to check out the public boards in the lobby areas the next time you are in the office. You never know what you might learn about culture, history or other fun activities for your family!



tinyurl.com/bts-word-search

The Department's mission is to preserve, promote and protect the health and well-being of all people by advancing health equity in Anne Arundel County.



Back-to-School Connections

By Jennifer Wiejaczka, LCSW-C,
Program Administrator

Going back to school can be a time of emotional ups and downs. Kids are often excited to see their friends and look forward to the fresh start of a new school year. However, both kids and caregivers can become quickly exhausted by the demanding routine of getting up early day after day and managing homework on a regular basis. Kids can return home from school irritable and exhausted. They can have difficulty transitioning back into the home environment after a long school day. Little questions, such as, "How was your day?", can escalate into an intentional argument. Caregivers are often left wondering how to respond after their child returns home. What should be done first when kids get home? When do we start homework? How do I engage with my child after school to help them settle into the home environment with minimal disruptions?

The article, "How to Cope with After-School Meltdowns," can offer caregivers some guidance. Spending time with your child playing quietly together is one way to help kids ease out of overwhelming feelings and enter into a calmer state of mind.

Read more: pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-cope-with-after-school-meltdowns



Conscious Versus Traditional Parenting

By Dr. Manjiri Pansare, MD, Medical Director

Conscious Parenting: It focuses on parental mindfulness, awareness, and emotional regulation. Parents monitor their own thoughts, feelings and behaviors to make thoughtful and motivationally-centered decisions when interacting with their children. Conscious parenting is not about being perfect, it is about being aware. Aware of what your kids need from you to reach more of their full potential.

Traditional Parenting: When parents expect their children to respect and obey authority, as well as comply with their cultural beliefs and values. This style of parenting can lead to children feeling resentful or disrespected, which can lead to behavioral problems and tension in the family.

Watch this video to understand better the differences between the two styles of parenting: youtu.be/IY8auVvOBdM



Medical Assistance Eligibility Reminder

Eligibility for MA is checked monthly. A letter is sent to the families who will no longer be eligible within 30-60 days. Please get in touch with MA to update their paperwork when needed. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call 1-800-710-1447.



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