

Washington State Family to Family Health Information Center



Newsletter #19 – September 2022

Back-to-School: Don't Forget to Pack Mental Health Strategies

After two and a half years of virtual and hybrid learning, this school year will be the first completely in-person school year for many children around Washington state. This change in routine can trigger many emotions in children and youth, and sometimes create or exacerbate mental health issues. Children who thrive on regularity may find this a difficult time, as new forms of learning and socialization will occur. One way to help your child or children cope with any the anxiety, confusion, and sometimes fear around starting school again can be by setting up check-in times on a regular basis. Talk ahead of time about how they are feeling about school, what they are excited about, and what their concerns are. Making these conversations part of the household routine can make it is easier for your child or children to open up when they are feeling overwhelmed. Start the school year

with already practiced coping strategies, [including breathing exercises](#), [healthy self-soothing plans](#), and [crisis management plans can help a child take steps quicker](#). If your child is impacted by a Developmental Disability or Autism, setting up these plans for the classroom with teachers and staff can help with anxiety. If your child has complex medical needs, talk with them about masking and having sanitizer, and talk with the school about ways to protect your child. Having a plan and sharing it with your child helps them have confidence that you understand them and will listen when they have concerns. Talk to your child daily about how they are feeling about school, [focusing on the positives](#), but also talking about what could be going better.

School counselors and psychiatrists are useful resources, and you do not have to wait until there is a crisis to enlist their services. Beyond school services, [mental health services are available](#) to all children and youth on Medicaid/Apple Health, and individuals on private health care plans. For more information about free mental health care for Washington children under the age of 18, call 1-833-303-5437 during normal work hours.

Type 1 Diabetes

Recent studies, including a [comprehensive one by the Journal of the American Medical Association \(JAMA\)](#), show that Type 1 Diabetes is one the rise in children and youth across the nation. Many children who are diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes often have problems adjusting to their new nutritional guidelines and the taking of insulin. Along with the help of pediatricians and endocrinologists, there are many resources for families of children who have Type 1 Diabetes. Some of the downable resources are: a [Blood Glucose Tracker](#), [Ketone Management](#), and a [Diabetes Care and Action Plan for Individuals](#). Washington state is lucky enough to have several support groups and organizations that help children and families coping with a Type 1 Diabetes diagnosis, including: [Type 1 United](#), [STIX Diabetes Programs](#), [ADA Imagine Camp](#), and [UW Medicine Diabetes Institute](#). For more information and resources, visit the new [Washington F2F Type 1 Diabetes](#) page.

September 2022 Calendar

*All events are free and on-line unless denoted with **

[Special Education: 10 Tips for Advocating for Your Child](#) – Sept. 6

[Preventing Suicide in Children and Adolescents](#) – Sept. 6

[Dads Helping Dads](#) – Sept. 8

[Disabled BIPOC: Disrupting Danger in Crisis Response](#) – Sept. 13

[WA State Sibling Connection](#) – Sept. 15

[Infant and Toddler Family Workshop](#) – Sept. 15 & 22

[WSCC Parent Training Weekend](#)* – Sept. 16-18

[Annual NAMI Washington State Conference](#)* – Sept. 17

[Legal Transitions to Adulthood Class](#) – Sept. 19

[Supporting America's LGBTQ+ Youth](#) – Sept. 21

[Thriving on Two Spectrums](#) – Sept. 25

[Familias Resilientes](#) – Sept. 27

[Re-Imagining Behavioral Health](#) – Sept. 29-30