

brightline[™]



Back to “normal...” or not: how to help your family through COVID transitions

May 2021



We're so glad to be here!



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We're in an urgent pediatric
behavioral health crisis

The crisis was already growing...

1 in 5

children have a diagnosed behavioral health need.¹

80%

are not getting sufficient care, if any at all.¹

1 in 5

of parents say their children's mental health is more important than their own.²

3 in 4

parents say COVID has negatively impacted teens being able to interact with their friends.¹

80%

of youth are at risk for emotional, attentional, or behavioral difficulties.¹

1 in 5

children living under lockdown are dealing with loneliness, nervousness, and irritability.²

The pandemic has affected mental health in families across the country



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How To Talk — And Listen — To A Teen With Mental Health Struggles

March 25, 2021 · 12:03 AM ET

ANYA KAMENETZ

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

USA TODAY
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Children's mental health: What to know a year into the pandemic

17 PHOTOS
9:09 a.m. EDT Mar 25, 2021

The New York Times

THE CHECKUP

How to Spot Depression in Young Children

We tend to think of childhood as a time of innocence and joy, but children from ages 6 to 12 can have



Loneliness, Anxiety and Loss: the Covid Pandemic's Terrible Toll on Kids

A year of school shutdowns and family trauma leads to social isolation, stress and mental-health issues

By *Andrea Peterson* / Photographs by *Maria Alejandra Cardona* for *The Wall Street Journal*

verywellhealth

News HEALTH NEWS

1 in 2 At-Risk Children Are Not Getting the Mental Health Help They Need

By Sarah Simon ✓ Fact checked by Nick Blackmer

March 26, 2021

politics

LIVE
World leaders attend a virtual summit on climate change hosted by President Biden

Advocates call on Biden administration to prioritize youth mental health as experts warn of consequences

By Rachel Janfaza, CNN
Updated 12:01 PM ET, Sun March 28, 2021

President Joe Biden answers questions during the first news conference of his presidency in the East Room of the White House on March 25, 2021 in Washington, DC.

The background is a solid teal color. There are two abstract light teal shapes: a triangular shape in the top-left corner and a large, rounded, semi-circular shape on the right side of the page.

Anxiety & stress

Kids aren't the only ones having a difficult time — parents & caregivers feel it, too

- + You may not know or realize that your child is experiencing emotional stress in the context of your own stress
- + It's easy to assume kids aren't picking up on your stress or stress in the community
- + Hint: they feel it like a barometer



Younger children are more vulnerable right now

- + Uncertainty
- + Loss of normalcy
- + Limited peer interaction
- + Family member's physical health
- + Lack of structure
- + Tantrums



This all hits differently for teens...

- + Social pressures and anxiety
- + Changes in schedule
- + Shifts in peer interaction as key for development
- + Anticipation around body image



Core symptoms of anxiety

Fears and phobias

Separation anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, specific phobias

Worries

Generalized anxiety disorder, “what if” questions, friendships, weather, homework

Somatic concerns

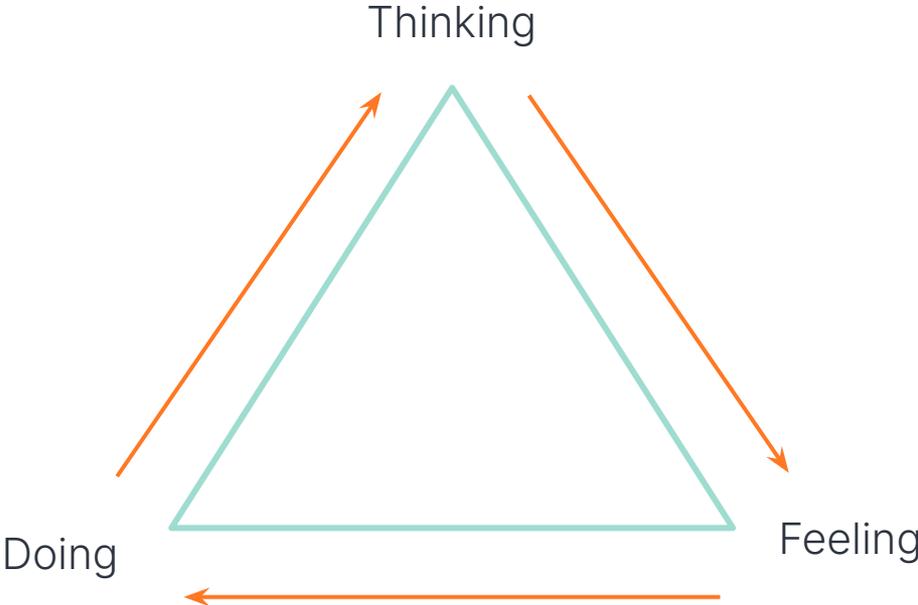
Every child is different, but there are more common physical symptoms

Avoidant behaviors

All pediatric anxiety disorders can lead to avoidant behaviors

So how do we deal with all of this uncertainty?

- + Relaxation techniques
- + Supportive statements and actions
- + Adjusting how you might naturally respond — the top 5 ways that parents respond to their child's anxiety:
 - + Reassuring their child
 - + Sleeping in their child's bed
 - + Driving their child to school
 - + Speaking for their child
 - + Avoiding social activities all together



Practice, practice, practice

How do you approach the transition back to “normal times”?

6 ways you can help your child cope:

- + Set a clear schedule
- + Provide reassurance
- + Make yourself accessible
- + Carry forward what's been helpful
- + Acknowledge the reality and complexity
- + Identify strengths and how to use them

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Disruptive behavior

Many parents are dealing with increased tantrums and outbursts

- + It's only human to get frustrated
- + 83.7% of preschoolers have tantrums. And that's during "normal" times!
- + What we're hearing from parents during COVID:
 - + Short fuse
 - + Intensity of tantrums and anger outbursts are greater
 - + Recovery takes longer
 - + Less responsive to social supports



Why is your child acting out?

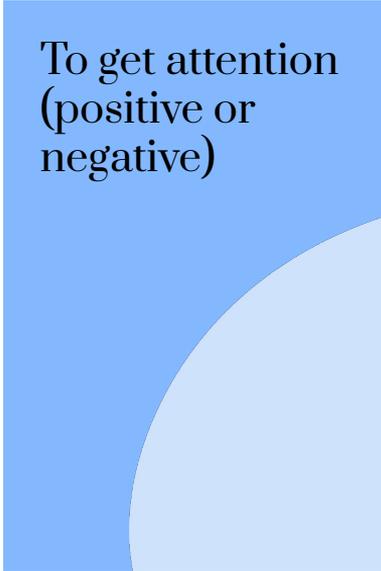
There are 4 main reasons why children have tantrums:



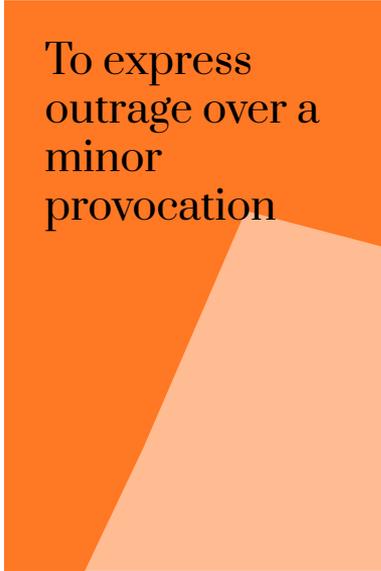
To get something or keep doing something



To avoid something in particular



To get attention (positive or negative)



To express outrage over a minor provocation



3 essential ingredients of praise

- + Say it like you mean it
- + Be specific
- + Incorporate nonverbal component



From negative → positive

4 strategies to help with disruptive behavior:

- + Positive and “opposite” behaviors
- + Agree on stopping points
- + Offering choices
- + Clear and specific instructions



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Executive function

How will going back to “normal” impact executive functioning?

Some challenges with transitioning back to in-person school:

- + Managing the daily schedule
- + Keeping kids motivated and engaged
- + Planning and prioritizing
- + Stress on parents and kids
- + Allowing for time to adjust



4 ways you can make progress:

- + Keep things simple and use consistent language
- + Stick to a routine, and let your kids be a part of creating it
- + Acknowledge their feelings and allow for difficult moments or days
- + Get outside! Even a few minutes of fresh air and movement can help

Some ways to take care of your own health that will also help your child

- + Take moments away from work and school to give your eyes and mind a rest
- + Have regular, nutritious meals with a variety of foods when possible
- + Get moving — physically distanced neighborhood walks, running wild around the yard, and dance parties are encouraged!
- + Make sure to get enough sleep — a set bedtime each night can be helpful
- + Talk about your feelings

The background is a solid teal color. There are two abstract light teal shapes: a triangular shape in the top-left corner and a large, rounded, semi-circular shape on the right side of the page.

The good news

You can get through this as a family

“Family resilience”: It’s about how your family handles tough stuff, and your ability to bounce back. Here’s some of what that can look like:

- + Communicating and problem-solving as a family
- + Keeping up social connections
- + Maintaining a positive outlook
- + Meaning-making and emotional expression

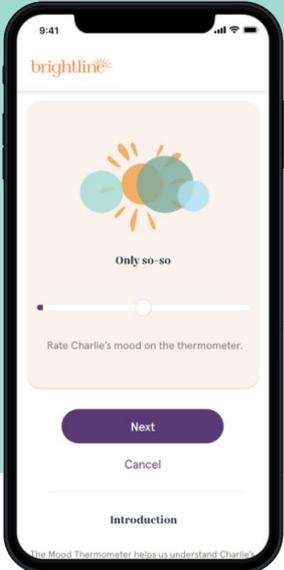
And remember, you got this!



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About Brightline

Uncommon Support For Common Family Challenges



The first comprehensive behavioral health solution specifically designed to support children, teens, and their families, across a range of common challenges.

Q&A

Thank you! Visit [hellobrightline.com](https://www.hellobrightline.com) for more information