



AUGUST 2024

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Summit on
Behavioral Health



*Tips for Parents: How to Handle
Back to School Anxiety in Kids*



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Back to school time signals new beginnings, new classes, teachers, friends, and a change in the daily routine. For some kids starting the school year can be difficult - even distressing. Here are some tips for helping your child get back in the school routine.

For New Kindergarteners or Young Children

1. Check to see if the school has an open house or another time when you and your child can visit the school or the teacher before the school year begins. That way you can see the classroom and meet the teacher. Getting a sneak peek can help children who are fearful when they don't know what to expect. While you are there help the child ask questions about the planned daily routine.
2. Remember that having some control in situations about things in which we are fearful can greatly reduce anxiety, so allow your child to make some little choices, such as what to wear and the color of their backpack.
3. When you drop your child off for school, don't linger for too long, even if they become tearful. Hanging around can send your child a message that they cannot handle the situation alone or that you don't think they are safe. This lingering behavior is a primary contributor to anxiety in young children. Rest assured teachers of young children are well equipped to handle those first day jitters.
4. Use a transitional object if necessary. Children can be comforted by a reminder that you are with them emotionally if not physically. A picture of mom or dad to remind you that we are thinking about them every hour today.

For Older Kids; Middle and High School Kids

1. Reflect your child's feelings and remind him or her that the other kids starting middle or high are in the same situation, and likely have the same feelings even if they don't show it. It is natural to be a little nervous in new situations.
2. Send the message, "I know you can handle this" both with your words and your actions. After reflecting on feelings, be firm about school attendance and independence. Don't walk into school with them the first day even if they say they want you to. Doing so can make an awkward first impression on pre-teen and teenage peers.
3. Encourage children to come up with their own self affirmations - reminders they can say to themselves when they become anxious. Some children use phrases like, "I know I can do this". Some kids use a scripture verse.

For Kids of All Ages

1. Parents should make an effort to make connections with families who have kids of the same age as their child - maybe a family at church or a family in your neighborhood or daycare. If your child can meet some of the kids attending the same school, seeing familiar faces the first day will ease their anxiety.
2. If kids say they don't feel well, make sure it is really serious to stay home. If sick they should be resting in bed not playing video games or watching TV.

New experiences and relationships are part of what makes life enjoyable and meaningful. As we communicate the joy of new beginnings to our children, let us impart the message, "Be not afraid." If your child is struggling with back to school anxiety, contact Therapy Solutions to have them talk to one of our mental health counselors and Take Your Life Back!

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

"Therapy solutions is a wonderful place to help better your mental health. The staff are always friendly and helpful. The therapist I saw (Brenda) was extremely helpful in getting me the tools I needed and always encouraged and helped me in the right direction. I highly recommend anyone looking at these reviews to go here!"

—Casey S.

A+ HEALTH: BACK-TO-SCHOOL HEALTH TIPS FOR A STELLAR START

Ensure your child's health and well-being with our essential back-to-school tips from Therapy Solutions.

- 1. Physical Health Matters:** Encourage regular physical activity to boost energy levels and promote overall health. Whether it's joining a sports team, riding bikes, or simply playing outside, staying active supports physical development and mental well-being.
- 2. Foster Good Nutrition:** A balanced diet is crucial for growing minds and bodies. Pack nutritious lunches and snacks that include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Avoid sugary drinks and opt for water or milk instead to keep kids hydrated and focused.
- 3. Sleep Soundly:** Establish a bedtime routine that ensures adequate sleep—typically 8-10 hours for school-aged children. Sufficient rest enhances mood, cognitive function, and immune health, setting the stage for productive learning.
- 4. Mental Wellness:** Address any anxieties or concerns about returning to school openly and supportively. Our mental health services provide strategies for managing stress and building resilience, ensuring a positive emotional experience throughout the school year.
- 5. Safety First:** Equip children with proper backpack ergonomics—lightweight, worn over both shoulders—to prevent strain or injury. Additionally, pedestrian and bus safety rules should be reinforced to promote safe commuting to and from school.
- 6. Embrace the Excitement:** A new school year offers many exciting opportunities for new activities and interactions but can also bring anxiety and feelings of overwhelm for students. Focus on positive reinforcement and support to help your student navigate these mixed emotions. Engage in activities that combine learning and fun, such as exploring local parks for nature walks, visiting museums for educational outings, or using back-to-school shopping as an opportunity to teach budgeting and decision-making skills.

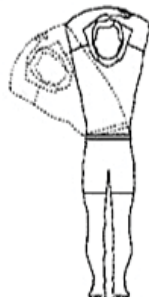
At Therapy Solutions, our dedicated team in Pediatric Therapy, Mental Health, Physical and Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Athletic Training is committed to supporting your child's health and development throughout the school year and beyond. Together, let's make this academic year healthy, happy, and successful!

For more information on our services and how we can assist your family, visit www.therapy-solutions.net today!

ERGONOMICS STRETCH: SIDE TRUNK

"In my opinion, this stretch is an excellent awareness stretch to your back. This muscle group works with all segments of the spine to supply safe "side" and "extended" movement of the back."

- Jared Erie OTR/L



- Cross arms overhead.
- Bend trunk to the right.
- Keep both feet on floor.
- Hold for at least 10 seconds.
- Repeat for other side.

**SCHEDULE YOUR
APPOINTMENT
TODAY!
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CLINIC NEWS:

SUMMIT ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The 2024 Summit on Behavioral Health in Energy Country was held on June 19-20th at the Astoria Hotel & Event Center. This summit is designed to help companies, agencies, communities, and counties identify steps that can be taken to positively impact behavioral health at the local, state, and national levels.

Two of our mental health counselors, Brenda Erie and Bobbie Johnson, attended the Summit to learn from experts on a variety of topics surrounding behavioral health. Therapy Solutions also had an exhibitor booth to showcase our wide range of services and to make meaningful connections in the behavioral health community.



WRITE YOUR OWN SUCCESS STORY!

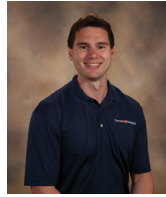
INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Open your smart phone to the camera app
2. Center the QR code above in the frame (this will take you directly to our Google Review Page)
3. Tell us how we did



STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

SHAWN STOLTZ, DPT



We would like to welcome Shawn Stoltz to our Therapy Solutions Team!

Shawn is a physical therapist (PT) and started with us in June. He graduated from the University of North Dakota in 2024 with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy. Shawn's areas of expertise include orthopedics and sports medicine. As a member of the

Therapy Solutions team, Shawn will be based out of our Dickinson location, treating the general population and athletes.

Shawn currently lives in Dickinson, where he is originally from. In his spare time, he enjoys working out, hiking, and golfing. Shawn is also a football fan and shared, "I thoroughly enjoy watching the Packers beat the Vikings every year!"

MARCAIL'S RECIPE:

MARCAIL'S OVERNIGHT OATS



- 1 cup almond milk (or any plant milk)
- 2 tbs chia seeds
- 1/2 cup blueberries (fresh or frozen)
- 1/3 cup old fashioned oats

Directions:

Combine milk, oats, and chia seeds in a mason jar. Stir ingredients together. Let sit for 1-2 minutes, then stir again (this keeps ingredients from clumping together overnight). Add blueberries on top. Place jar in fridge and enjoy the next day!

Tip: You can also add 1/2 scoop of protein powder for extra protein