



KANE COUNTY
MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL

making a difference ...together



Message of the Month

August, 2013

Kane County Mental Health Council

- The Association for Individual Development
630-966-4000
- Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center
630-859-6562
- Delnor Community Hospital
630-208-3000
- Ecker Center for Mental Health Services
847-695-0484
- Family Counseling Service of Aurora
630-844-2662
- Family Service Association of Greater Elgin Area
847-695-3680
- Gateway Foundation/Aurora
630-966-7400
- Greater Elgin Family Care Center 847-608-1344
- Kane County Health Department 630-208-3801
- Larkin Center 847-695-5656
- League of Women Voters
630-365-2138
- INC Board 630-892-5456
- National Alliance on Mental Illness, DeKalb, Kane-South, Kendall Counties, Inc.
630-896-6264
- National Alliance on Mental Illness-Kane County
847-931-4715
- Provena Mercy Medical Center
630-801-2657
- Provena St. Joseph Hospital
847-931-5521
- Senior Services Association
847-741-0404
- Suicide Prevention Services 630-482-9696
- TriCity Family Services
630-232-1070
- VNA Health Care
630-978-9835

Returning to School? Take Time to Plan

Returning to school is a ritual that takes place throughout the world. Whether the individual is a preschooler, child, teen or an adult returning to school, there is unavoidable stress that occurs with change in routine, added pressures of expectations and the feelings of anxiety that arise from facing the unknown.

Each individual copes with stress differently but there are common recommended strategies that can help ease anxieties into manageable feelings during the transition.

Attunement to temperament is important to determine how an individual child or adult will cope with the stress of returning to or starting school. The manner in which the adult manages the changes that take place can effect the child or teen. For an example, for an anxious child that has difficulty in adapting, an adult will want to strive to model an open, positive and supportive attitude toward the upcoming changes. For a very active child or youth, thought must be given regarding the opportunity for that child to release energy during the school day.

Preparation is the key for any child or adult making a transition back to school. Have a conversation with your child or teenager a few weeks before the first day of school. Parents cannot presume that they know what may worry their child the most. Listen for the concerns that are expressed by the child or youth. Accept their concerns and avoid dismissing the expressed worries that are real for the child or youth. Walk through with the child or teen a plan of action to respond to the challenges that the individual is most concerned about. Visiting the school before the first day, meeting teachers and support school personnel, walking through the layout of the school or campus will calm many anxious moments. Review school policies, procedures and support systems available to the child and teen when a problem occurs.

Start early practicing the morning routine. Temperament again plays a part in how the adult and child view the ideal way to start each day and end each evening. Start early discussing decisions regarding clothing, food, homework, friends, screen time and extra curricular activities. Starting the day in chaos or conflict can affect the individuals' ability to focus on information during the school day.

Transition back into the school year affects everyone in the household. The websites listed below provide comprehensive information and strategies to prepare all the family members for the new school year.

Mary McCarty, Two Rivers Head Start Agency

Info Corner: www.kidshealth.org "Back to School"; www.teenshealth.org "What Stresses You About School"; www.apa.org "Dealing With Back To School Blues"