



Back to School: Considerations for Supporting Families

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Current Trends:
**What concerns are
you hearing from
families?**



1 Minute Timer

48

Watch on YouTube

Youth in Transition: Back-to-School

- **Uncertainty**
- **Varying policy decisions**
- **Overall Covid disparities impact families**
 - **Intersectional impact**
 - **race x class x gender**
 - **Loss, stress, illness**
- **Some thriving**

Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing

- **Anxiety**
 - **Separation (all ages); Social; Pandemic-related**
- **Depression**
- **Substance Use**
- **Suicidality**
- **Child Abuse & Neglect**
 - **ED ↓ Hospitalization ↑**
- **Thriving**

CRAAs & 51As

- **Types**
 - **Runaway**
 - **Fails to obey law/rules/school regulations**
 - **Truancy**
 - **Subjected to sexual exploitation**
- **Current Court Clinics**
 - **Less filing, by parents**

Back-to-School

- **Potential increase in filing**

Systemic Considerations:

Youth in Educational Settings

- **Disparities in engagement**
- **Behavioral interpretation**
 - **Bias**
- **Lack of education**
 - **Behavioral manifestations of socio-emotional concerns**
 - **Youth deemed disruptive, aggressive**
 - **Push Out phenomenon**

Potential Outcomes

- Refer to, help get, or order a child to use services
- Can lead to a change in custody
 - Placement of youth with another adult, DCF, child-care agency, or organization

**What recommendations are
you making?**

Reminders for Caretakers & Adults

- Take a deep breath
- Lots of patience
 - Strategies used in earlier developmental stages
- Flexible blueprints
 - Be willing to pivot
 - Provide structure, when possible
- "No two days are alike."

School-based Strategies

- Proactively engage school with concerns
- 504s & IEPs
 - What things can be put in place?
 - Help with transition planning
 - Meet youth at the door
- Identify specific student support staff
 - Counselors, social work
- Counter avoid deficit model thinking

School-based Strategies

- Identify relevant policies
 - Note school policies
 - Note familial concerns
- Medical Conditions
 - Autoimmune disorders or other med Dx



**Release the notion that
we need to hold our
children to a different
standard than ourselves.**

Youth Strategies

- Model excitement
- Ask questions & problem solve
 - What makes you nervous?
 - What are things that can be added for additional support?
 - Coping or specific resource



Holding Space:

Feelings, validation & facilitating expression

- **Notice**

- You look _____. Was there something that happened today?

- **Model**

- I felt nervous today. I noticed my body _____. Do you ever feel like that? What do you notice?



Pre-Teaching:

Helping to prepare youth with what to expect

- Increases comfort & confidence
 - Length of the school day
 - Names of relevant staff
 - Policies regarding personal belongings (i.e., Covid)
- Allows caretakers to note any concerns
 - Youth know! Create space
 - Regression at all ages



"In one week you will begin school. Let's write a list of all of the questions you have."

Coping

- **Offering strategies**

- Coping vs. containment
- When I am _____, I sometimes like to _____.

- **Model**

- Let's try something together.
 - Integrate sensory stimulation for younger children

- **Verbalize options**

- Do you feel ready to talk? Do you need some space? I am here when...



Concrete Resources

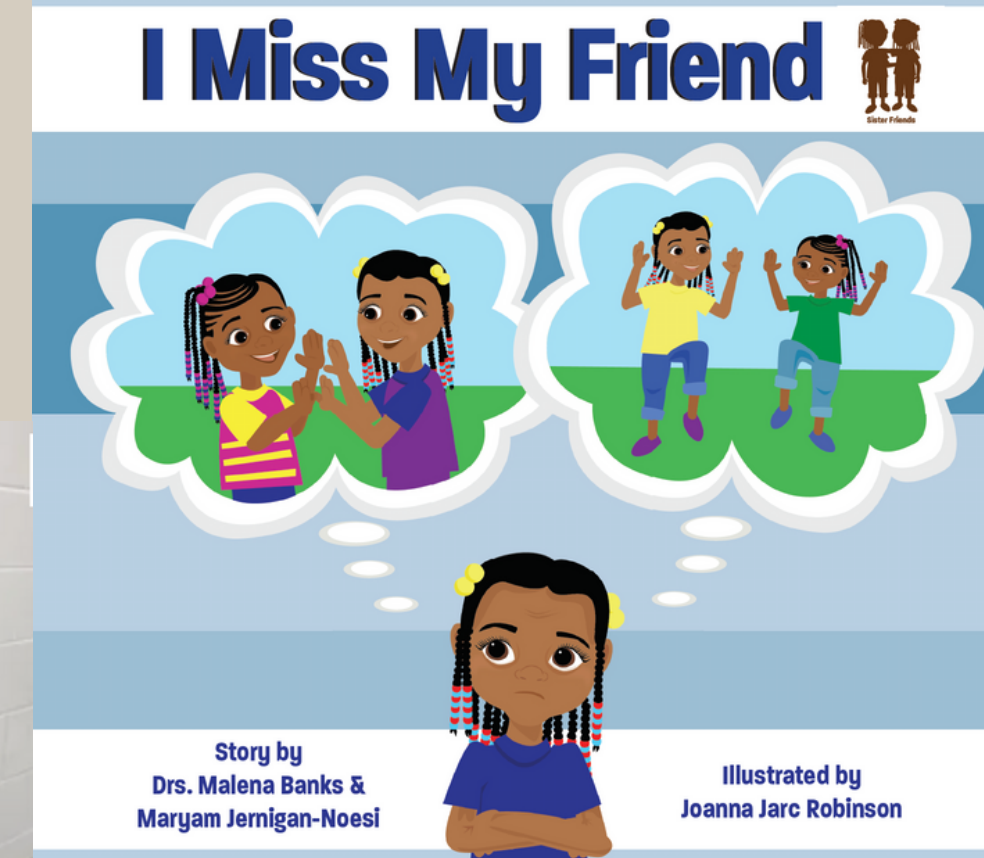
- **Visual Aids**
 - Timers
 - Calendars
- **Flexible Structures**
 - Validate uncertainty
 - Recognize the benefits of a blueprint
- **Planned Check-ins**
 - "I want to check in to see how things are going. Let's figure out a way or time that works best for you."
 - Code words



Concrete Resources

Regulation

- Zen Dens
- Deep Breathing
- Books
- Online resources
 - Community groups
 - IG pages
 - Pinterest





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