



# SEE BEHAVIOR AS INFORMATION

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# FIND SUPPORT FOR YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS

At Imagine, we let children and teens have all of their feelings. Wearing masks and social distancing can make children and teens feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. It may also be difficult for your child to articulate their feelings, so their distress can show up in their behavior. It is important to be on the lookout for changes in their behavior and to know when to intervene.



You may notice some of the following behaviors:

- **Infants and toddlers:** excessive crying or irritation in younger children, increased need for parental attention
- **Pre-school age:** returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting), excessive worry or sadness
- **School age:** difficulty focusing, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, irritability, headaches or unexplained body pain, lack of interest in activities
- **Teens:** avoidance of activities they previously found enjoyable, poor school performance, "acting out" behaviors, use of tobacco, alcohol, or other substances.



Here are some ways that can help:

- **Eat, sleep, and move:** Ensure that your child is maintaining routines such as quality sleep, regular eating, and getting exercise.
- **Quality time:** try to join your child in play and leisure activities whenever possible.
- **Catch your child being good.** By calling attention to your child when your child is being a good listener or coping appropriately, you increase the chance that your child will repeat those behaviors in the future.

You or your child may experience increased stress during this pandemic. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. If you are in need of additional support, seek out the help of a trusted professional or request additional resources.



- Visit [imaginenj.org](http://imaginenj.org) for more information or speak with one of our clinicians at (908) 264-3100
- Locate support groups for grieving children at: <https://childrengrieve.org/find-support>
- For more information about how to support grieving students go to The Coalition for Grieving Students website: <https://grievingstudents.org/>
- For adults in need of mental health support: SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889
- For children/teens in NJ who need additional support: 2nd floor youth hotline: 888-222-2228 anytime or text them at 888-222-2228.
- Sample back to school talking points <https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/resources/covid-19-pandemic-resources/>



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