

Supporting the Social and Emotional Needs of Students

Due to the increased concern among our students about the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID -19), St Lucie Public Schools has developed this guide to assist staff in recognizing the signs and symptoms of anxiety or worry and the steps in referring students to the appropriate mental health professional(s) on their schools’ campus.

What You Should Know

Anxiety is one of the most common experiences of children and adults, the primary characteristic of anxiety is worry that future events will have a negative outcome. With concern among students about the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus you may notice an increased number of students visiting the health clinic. It is important to recognize the symptoms of anxiety and take appropriate action to support the social and emotional needs of the students.

Signs of Anxiety

Thinking/Learning	Behavioral	Physical
Worry Attention problems Memory Problems Problem-solving Difficulties Concentration Problems	Restlessness Fidgeting Task avoidance Rapid speech Irritability Withdrawal Perfectionism Lack of participation Failing to complete tasks	Stomach discomfort Rapid heart rate Flushing of the skin Perspiration Headaches Muscle tension Sleeping problems Nausea

Note: Reprinted from National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) *Huberty, T.J. (2008) Best practices in school-based interventions for anxiety and depression.*

Things That You May Hear From Students

- I am scared I am going to get sick.
- I am afraid that someone in my family is going to get sick.
- People are saying that America will be hit with the virus and I am especially worried for my grandparents.
- I am worried about the outbreak of the Coronavirus.
- I don't want to come to school for fear of being exposed to the Coronavirus.
- We are going on a family trip and I am worried about going.
- Is the school going to close?

What are Some Ways That You May Support Students?

- Remain Calm and Reassuring
- Let students know that the adults at school are working to keep them safe and healthy
- **If any student appears to continue to show heightened levels of anxiety contact the certified school counselor on your campus**

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

Florida Department of Health

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/>

National Association of School Psychologists

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources>

Managing Reactions to the Coronavirus

<https://mailchi.mp/0074fabffa0c/talking-to-students-about-the-coronavirus?e=d74f5b9bef>