

# FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS:

As a parent or caregiver, you want the best for your children or other dependents. You may be concerned or have questions about certain behaviors they exhibit and how to ensure they get help.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

It is important to be aware of warning signs that your child may be struggling. You can play a critical role in knowing when your child may need help.

Consult with a school counselor, school nurse, mental health provider, or another health care professional if your child shows one or more of the following behaviors:

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- Seriously trying to harm or kill himself or herself, or making plans to do so
- Experiencing sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing
- Getting in many fights or wanting to hurt others
- Showing severe out-of-control behavior that can hurt oneself or others
- Not eating, throwing up, or using laxatives to make himself or herself lose weight
- Having intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- Experiencing extreme difficulty controlling behavior, putting himself or herself in physical danger or causing problems in school
- Using drugs or alcohol repeatedly
- Having severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Showing drastic changes in behavior or personality



## WHAT TO LOOK FOR CONTINUED...

Because children often can't understand difficult situations on their own, you should pay particular attention if they experience:

- Loss of a loved one
- Divorce or separation of their parents
- Any major transition - new home, new school, etc.
- Traumatic life experiences, like living through a natural disaster
- Teasing or bullying
- Difficulties in school or with classmates



# HOW TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Do you need help starting a conversation with your child about mental health? Try leading with these questions. Make sure you actively listen to your child's response.

- Can you tell me more about what is happening? How you are feeling?
- Have you had feelings like this in the past?
- Sometimes you need to talk to an adult about your feelings. I'm here to listen. How can I help you feel better?
- Do you feel like you want to talk to someone else about your problem?
- I'm worried about your safety. Can you tell me if you have thoughts about harming yourself or others?



## RESOURCES:

Seek immediate assistance if you think your child is in danger of harming themselves or others.

CALL: 9-1-1

National Suicide Prevention Line  
at 1.800.273.TALK (8255).

TEXT:

MT to 741-741

## LOCAL RESOURCES:

Call your child's school to discuss your concerns and inquire about mental health services available.

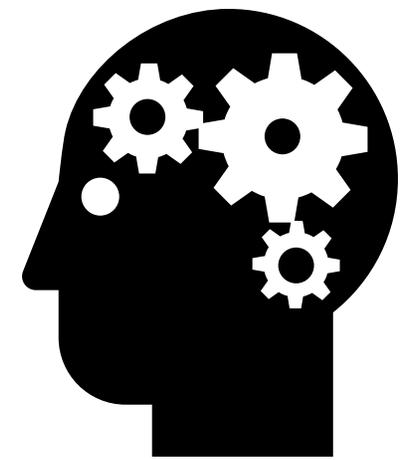
Or call your primary care provider:

Madison Valley Medical Center:  
682-6862

Ruby Valley Medical Center:  
842-5453

## SOURCES:

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/parents-caregivers/index.html>



# MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Brought to you by the Children and Families Task Force of Madison County in partnership with the Madison County Mental Health Local Advisory Council