TEN SIGNS YOUR CHILD’S STRESS LEVEL IS TOO HIGH

1. **Changes in appetite.** Students who are stressed may often have changes in their appetite. They may overeat or eat too little. Watch for signs your child’s appetite has changed.

2. **Withdrawal from activities and friends.** If your child is not interacting with friends over the phone, FaceTime or through other technology you should ask why. Some children may feel isolated and socially excluded. Help your child reach out to friends and set up virtual games and chats. Of course, you should be aware if your child is showing unusual signs of withdrawal from normal family interaction as well.

3. **Irritability and impatience.** If your child behaves in ways that are not in line with the person you have always known, this may be a sign of elevated stress. Is your child exhibiting anger, impatience or acting with passive aggression? These could be signs your child is stressed out.

4. **Bedwetting.** This sign only applies if bedwetting is a new issue. This could be a sign of stress. Children who sleep late or eat unhealthy snacks may be more prone to exhibiting this problem when stressed.

5. **Sleep problems.** Although it is very difficult to maintain a stable schedule, it is important. Children who are off schedule and stressed could suffer from sleep problems. They may oversleep, may have issues sleeping or may even have nightmares.

6. **Attempts to get out of schoolwork.** If your child is usually interested and engaged in schoolwork and starts to show signs of being reluctant to do their work, this maybe a sign they are stressed. Rather than directing those to work, ask them why they are not eager to do it themselves.

7. **Unusual and unexplained crying spells.** Is your child bursting into tears? Is your child very emotional about issues that would usually not impact your child in that way? This could be a sign of stress.

8. **Stomach aches and digestive problems** and other new physical symptoms that can not easily be connected to illness or allergies can be a sign of stress.

9. **Excessive worry and negative thoughts** can be a sign of stress. Some worry during this time is to be expected but children naturally laugh and play even during stressful times. If your child is only worrying and not playing they may be stressed.

10. **A drop in grades** can be a sign of stress and can further compound stress. Some children are very concerned about grades and their parent’s reaction to grades. Please remember that if a student is stressed, criticizing grades will not help. Students need support.

**What can you do if your child is stressed and needs help?**

The first step in helping a student who’s dealing with stress is to recognize the symptoms. Once you have, here are a few ways to help your child:

1. Discuss your concern with your child’s teacher.
2. Communicate with your child. Listen to their concerns and provide support.
3. Reach out to school guidance counselor or social worker if you are concerned that your child needs additional supports. **Please alter this bullet to fit the communication plan for the school.**
4. Work to help your child form social connections through technology.
5. Take walks with your child if you can maintain physical distance or put on some fast dance music and dance together. Movement can help reduce stress.
6. Take time to rest and relax as a family. Play a board game, watch a funny show, do a puzzle or color together.
7. Ask for help. Contact your own source for psychological or medical guidance. Call a support hotline like, 1-888-NYC-WELL or get support by text by **texting TALK to 741741.**