

Light The Way Forward:

A Behavioral and Mental Health Resource Guide

2026-2027 School Year





Children's Mercy is addressing the youth mental health crisis through Illuminate – a bold, five-year initiative designed to expand access to evidence-based care, with a specific focus on equity for the most vulnerable populations in our community.

A key element of Illuminate is bringing mental health care to the frontline – starting in schools. By integrating services into educational settings, Children's Mercy aims to intervene early and help prevent mental health concerns from escalating into emergencies. The initiative empowers school staff and families by equipping them with the services and resources to recognize and respond to various mental health issues children may face.

Through collaboration with schools and families, Children's Mercy is lighting the path toward a stronger, more supportive health system for every child.





2026 Illuminate Chart of Resources

Services/Programs	Audience		
	Students	Parents/ Caregivers Middle	School Officials
ADHD Programs			
Understanding and Managing ADHD (3.5-5 years old)		✓	✓
Understanding and Managing ADHD (6-12 years old)		✓	✓
Practical Behavioral and Mental Health Resources			
Children's Mercy Autism Caregiver Education		✓	✓
Coping skills	✓	✓	
Teen Mental Health Tip Sheet	✓	✓	✓
Teens and school screens			✓



Parenting Resources

CARE workshops		✓	✓
Eating Disorders Video Series		✓	
Helping Kids Navigate After a Tragedy		✓	✓
Prepped and Ready		✓	✓

Substance Use Disorders

Fentanyl: One Pill Can Kill	✓	✓	✓
Naloxone Tip Sheet	✓	✓	✓

Classifications of Programs and Initiatives

All services and programs are defined by the definitions below. This information will help you determine which program or initiative fits your needs.

- **ADHD programs:** to help parents understand and manage their children's condition in the "real world." Parents will get an overview of ADHD and how it can affect children. Through group sessions, parents will learn to manage children's everyday challenges regarding ADHD.
- **Practical behavioral and mental health resources:** applications for maintaining and managing behavioral health for parents and students.
- **Parenting resources:** contain informative videos and documents. These resources are designed to educate parents on various mental health issues and offer valuable tips for effectively managing these conditions.
- **Substance use disorders:** informational literature for staff, families, and students to increase their knowledge and skills in a variety of subjects.



Understanding and Managing Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A group program for parents of children
ages 3.5–5 years old

How may this program help your child and your family?

The program aims to help children with ADHD succeed by training their parents. Parents learn skills they can use in the “real world” to help their child be more successful at home, at school and in public.

Being the parent of a child with ADHD can be hard and confusing.

Parents will learn about:

- ADHD and its impact on their child’s day-to-day behavior.
- Specific ways to deal with the most common problems of children with ADHD.
- How to improve parent-child interactions and stress.
- How to be an advocate for your child (for example, how to get help in school).

Who is this program for?

This program may be right for you if you are the parent of a 3.5 to 5-year-old child who:

- Has a diagnosis of ADHD or
- Has ADHD symptoms such as inattention, hyperactivity, or impulsivity.
- Takes ADHD medicine or not.

What will happen with the program?

- Eight group sessions.
- Each session is 90-minutes (1.5 hours).
- Each session is held on the same day and time each week.
- Up to 10 families may be in a group (more than 1 parent may come to the sessions).
- Groups meet virtually (via internet).

Will my child come to the sessions?

No, sessions are for parents only.

What topics are covered in the parent group?

1. Understanding ADHD and its impact on a child's day-to-day life.
2. Keys to help your child manage ADHD.
3. How to use positive attention to help with desired behaviors.
4. Increase your child's ability to follow instructions and rules.
5. Help your child deal with their emotions.
6. Working with your child's teacher.
7. How to use punishment to manage ADHD behaviors.

8. How to help your child behave in public.

9. Keep positive changes going.

Will my insurance pay for this program?

Most health plans that cover multi-family group therapy services will pay for the program. Families are responsible for any deductible or co-payment. When contacting your insurance company, give them our CPT billing code (90849).

For more information and to enroll in the program, scan the QR code or visit our site.



Overview	This program aims to help children aged 3.5 to 5 years with ADHD by training their parents in skills to support their child's success at home, school, and in public.
Classification of Program	• ADHD programs.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.



Understanding and Managing Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A group program for parents of children
ages 6-12 years old

How may this program help your child and your family?

The program aims to help children with ADHD to succeed by training their parents.

Parents learn skills they can use in the “real world” to help their child be more successful at home, at school and in public.

Being the parent of a child with ADHD can be hard and confusing.

Parents will learn about:

- ADHD and its impact on their child’s day-to-day behavior.
- Specific ways to deal with the most common problems of children with ADHD.
- How to improve parent-child interactions and stress.
- How to be an advocate for your child (for example, how to get help in school).

Who is this program for?

This program may be right for you if you are the parent of a 6 to 12-year-old child who:

- Has a diagnosis of ADHD or
- Takes ADHD medicine or not.

What will happen with the program?

- Eight group sessions.
- Each session is 90-minutes (1.5 hours).
- Each session is held on the same day and time each week.
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Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.



Children's Mercy Autism Caregiver Education

The Division of Developmental and Behavioral Health at Children's Mercy offers training for caregivers of youth diagnosed with autism and/or other developmental disabilities, but all are welcome. There are two ways to access our autism-related trainings:

1. Attend our live monthly virtual offering

Registration is REQUIRED and training is FREE.

Visit childrensmercy.org/autism for availability

2. Watch clinic recorded trainings

Go to childrensmercy.org/autism and select the panel on the right "Recorded Trainings"

Topics include:

- Sleep 101 for Persons with Autism.
- Next Steps after Autism Diagnosis.
- Setting Up for IEP Success.
- Imitate to Communicate.
- Transition to Employment: Setting a Foundation for Success.
- Supporting Social Engagement in Early Childhood.
- ASD and Co-Morbid GI Conditions.
- Addressing Puberty and Sexuality in Persons with DD and ASD.
- Promoting Social Skills and Independence.
- Toilet Training Part 1 and Part 2.
- Eating and Enjoying It.
- Applied Behavior Analysis.
- Managing Problem Behavior.
- Managing Your Child's Home and School Programs and MORE!



Overview	Children's Mercy Autism Caregiver Education offers caregiver training on autism and developmental disabilities, covering topics such as sleep, IEP success, social skills and behavior management.
Classification of Program	• ADHD & Autism Programs.
Target Audience	• Parents.

If you have questions, please contact:

Mary Anne Hammond

Education Coordinator for Autism

(913) 696-5711 or autism@cmh.edu

Coping Skills Video



Scan the QR
code with your
phone or visit:
[cmkc.link/
coping-skills](https://cmkc.link/coping-skills)

Overview	This is an educational video for caregivers on helping a child cope with stress in the event he/she is hospitalized. These videos provide information on the fear children might have of going to the hospital and tips for supporting children with their stress.
Classification of Program	• Practical behavioral and mental health resources.
Target Audience	• Parents.

Teen Mental Health Tip Sheet



Relationships

Nurturing healthy relationships can have a huge impact on life satisfaction. Here are things you can do:

- Choose face-to-face connections over online ones.
- Surround yourself with those with whom you trust.
- Promote positivity in others.
- Avoid those who make you feel bad about yourself.
- Avoid those who pressure you to be someone you are not.
- Do not try to change others.
- Set clear boundaries for yourself.
- Be willing to forgive.



Technology Use

Technology touches every part of our lives – but some types of screen use can take a toll on teens' mental health. Follow these tips to stay in control of your technology rather than letting it control you:

- Take purposeful breaks from technology.
- Review privacy settings.
- Limit notifications.
- Lock or unfollow toxic accounts and pages.
- Limit screen time (especially at bedtime).
- Foster positivity in online spaces by being a good online citizen.

Teen Mental Health Tip Sheet (cont.)



Diet

Eating a well-balanced diet supports both your body and mind. Regular meals help keep blood sugar steady and maintain the energy your brain and body needs to function. A healthy gut is closely tied to brain function and mental health, so be sure to include plenty of fruits, vegetables and beans in your diet. Probiotics may help too. Also, sharing meals with others can lift your mood and strengthen your connection with others.



Sleep

Three out of four teens say they do not get enough sleep. This can negatively impact mood and anxiety symptoms. Here are simple strategies to improve sleep:

- Prioritize sleep.
- Have a consistent sleep schedule.
- Make the area you sleep in quiet, comfortable and free of distractions.
- Follow a relaxing pre-bed routine.
- Limit naps during the day.
- Limit caffeine drinks in the afternoon.
- Limit bright lights and electronic screens to help your body's natural melatonin production.
- Unplug from electronics.

Teen Mental Health Tip Sheet (cont.)



Substance Use and Abuse

Our brains continue to develop at rapid rates well into our 20s. Substance abuse can negatively impact the development, have long-lasting effects and contribute to:

- Depression.
- Irritability.
- Anxiety.
- Poor focus.
- Sleep disruption.
- And many other negative impacts.

Substance use may include alcohol, tobacco or vaping products, marijuana, synthetic drugs and inappropriate use of prescription pills.

Substance use may occur due to:

- Peer pressure.
- Self-medicating to relieve stress or pain.
- An unhealthy coping strategy.
- Experimenting.

It is often unsafe, illegal and can make depression or anxiety symptoms in the long-term.

Teen Mental Health Tip Sheet (cont.)



Exercise

Exercise can improve self-esteem, body image and sleep. Regular aerobic exercise like jogging, swimming, cycling, walking or sports can release chemicals in the body that help improve mood, decreased stress and improved energy. Strength training can benefit both mental and physical health.



Hydration

Drinking water throughout the day improves physical and mental health by reducing fatigue, improving alertness and helping with depression and anxiety. Carrying a water bottle around with you through the day can serve as a reminder to stay hydrated when you are busy or not thinking about it.

Watch for signs of dehydration:

- Thirst.
- Dry mouth.
- Dark urine.
- Rapid heart rate.
- Constipation.
- Sleepiness.
- Fatigue.
- Headaches.
- Nausea.



Sunlight

Exposure to sunlight, especially in the morning, has been shown to improve mood, anxiety,

Teen Mental Health Tip Sheet (cont.)

alertness and general health. Always remember to protect yourself from harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation with sunscreen. Never look directly at the sun as it may cause damage to your eyes.



Self-Care

Develop regular and sustainable selfcare practices that address five basic pillars:

- Physical: diet, exercise, sleep.
- Social: family, friends, colleagues and those you interact with on a regular basis.
- Emotional: regularly checking in on your emotions so that you may feel, process and release emotions in a safe and nonjudgmental manner.
- Intellectual: reading, learning, self-development and personal growth.
- Spiritual: yoga, meditation, religious worship.

Overview	This comprehensive guide covers topics like relationships, technology use, diet, sleep, substance use, sunlight, and self-care.
Classification of Program	• Practical behavioral and mental health resources.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.

Teens and School Screens

Let's Talk About Healthy Technology Use

Technology plays a powerful role in shaping learning and behavior. In education, it offers valuable tools for teaching, but it also comes with risks – especially for students who may be more vulnerable to impulsive or risky online behaviors. Research at Children's Mercy has focused on better understanding technology use in the educational setting, with the goal of optimizing its benefits while minimizing potential harms. Healthy technology use requires a community approach. By sharing experiences, we can learn from one another. I give presentations within the community to share insights and gain new perspectives. These sessions include recent research on technology, behavior and learning, along with real-world classroom case studies, all designed to spark meaningful dialogue.

Who is the presentation for?

School staff interested in exploring multiple aspects of student technology use.

How do I access additional course information or request the presentation?

Scan the QR code to visit the YourCause Grants portal:

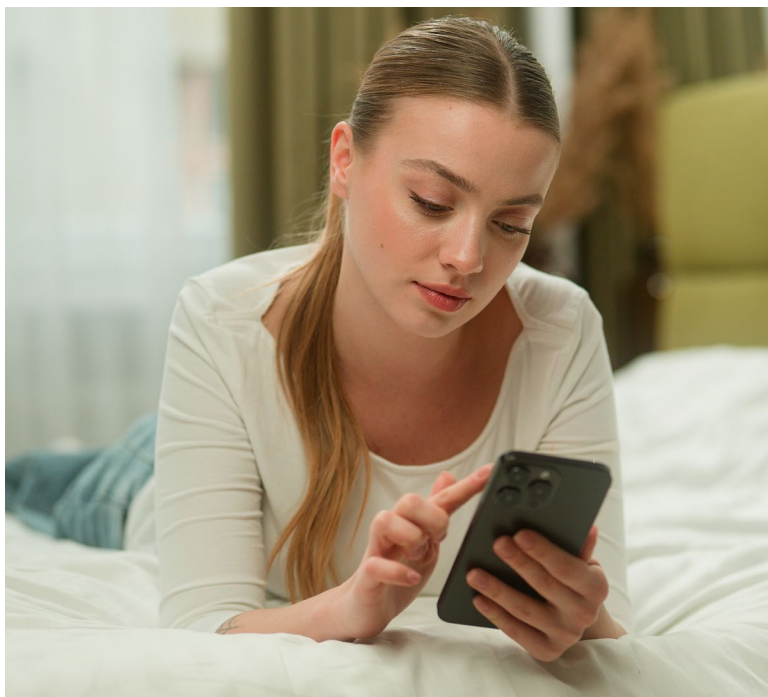


What is the length of the presentation?

The presentation is approximately 1 hour, but may be tailored as needed.

What is the cost for the presentation?

This presentation is offered to schools free of cost.



Overview	This presentation discusses the role of technology in education and the risks associated with its use. It aims to promote healthy technology use and encourage dialogue within the community.
Classification of Program	• Practical behavioral and mental health resources.
Target Audience	• School officials.

CARE Workshops

For parents and caregivers

Please join us for one of our upcoming virtual CARE workshops.

Workshops are held every month. Please scan the QR code for workshop dates:



CARE workshops are provided for free by Children's Mercy. Registration is required. To register, please either call **(816) 855-1720** or email careworkshops@cmh.edu. You will need access to the internet and a phone/tablet/computer to participate in the workshops. We will send additional information about the workshops after registration.



What is a CARE workshop?

Child-Adult Relationship Enhancement (CARE) workshops were developed for parents and caregivers of children ages 2-12 impacted by stressful or traumatic events, behavioral challenges or parents seeking to strengthen their relationship with their child. CARE aims to strengthen the adult-child connection and promote positive behavior in children. CARE workshops are held in two fun and interactive sessions.

CARE is divided into 2 parts

Relationship enhancement – teaches caregivers skills to increase positive behaviors with praise, paraphrase and point out behavior while developing positive communication with their child.

Strategies for compliance – teaches caregivers about effective discipline and child management skills like how to give good commands, when and how to use selective ignoring and other discipline techniques to redirect problematic behavior.

Overview	CARE workshops are free for caregivers of youth diagnosed with autism and/or other developmental disabilities. The workshops can be attended live or watched as recorded training, and registration is required. RSVP is required and space is limited.
Classification of Program	• Parenting resources.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.

Eating Disorders Video Series

The Children's Mercy Eating Disorders Center created a series of educational videos for caregivers on eating disorders. Experts cover topics like first warning signs, physical changes, what to do if you suspect your child has an eating disorder, creating a recovery friendly home and more.

Questions? See FAQs below, and learn more at cmkc.link/EatingDisordersVideos.

How many videos are available?

9 resource videos are currently available.

Who are the videos for?

Parents, caregivers, or anyone who suspects a child in their life may be suffering from an eating disorder and is looking for tips to support them.

How do I access the videos?

The videos are available to view at cmkc.link/EatingDisordersVideos, or you can scan the QR code below:



Overview	The Children's Mercy Eating Disorders Center has created a series of 9 educational videos for caregivers on eating disorders. These videos provide information on warning signs, physical changes, and tips for supporting children with eating disorders.
Classification of Program	• Parenting resources.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.





Helping Kids Navigate After a Tragedy

You know your child best. Most children and teens find it helpful if you:

- Listen to them.
- Answer questions briefly and honestly.
- Let them know they are safe and you are there for them.

You can say things like...

- Have any of your friends talked about what happened? What did you hear?
- What questions do you have about what you've heard or seen?
- Do you want to write or draw about how you feel?

Remember to take care of yourself, too.

It's OK to step away and process your own reactions, by yourself or with a trusted friend or counselor. By creating space for yourself, you will be better able to help your kids express their feelings without mixing them up with your own.

What do I do next?

- Limit exposure to disturbing media. Pictures and videos of the event can be scary. Consider monitoring electronics use closely after these events to prevent accidental exposure.
- Promote your child's resilience. The more a child can feel safe and tell their story, the less anxious they may be when reminded of the trauma.
- Read, watch and listen to stories together. Stories can help kids process traumatic or scary events in an accessible way.
- Reassure – but not too much. Too much reassurance can send the message that they should be worried when they are not.



You can find additional support by scanning the QR code or visiting cmkc.link/parade.

If you or your child have thoughts of hurting yourself or someone else, call, text or chat the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or visit the Emergency Room.



Overview	This document offers guidance to help children after a tragedy, including tips on listening, answering questions, and promoting their resilience.
Classification of Program	• Parenting resources.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.

Prepped and Ready

Experts Edition

Are you ready for the teen years? Be ready with our new FREE parenting video series, specifically for caregivers raising teens.

Learn Tips For:

- Addressing vaping.
- Preventing eating disorders.
- Handling tough questions.
- Suicide prevention.
- Understanding how teens think.

Plus! Get a free safety toolkit mailed to you!*



The video series available by scanning the QR code or visiting cmkc.link/PreppedAndReady

*One caregiver per household raising children under 18 years old is eligible to participate in this research study with a safety toolkit for the first 1,000 participants.





Overview	This resource is designed to help parents prepare for the challenges of parenting teenagers. The goal of “Prepped and Ready” is to provide guidance on steps parents can take to address potential crises with their teenagers.
Classification of Program	• Parenting resources.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials.

Fentanyl: One Pill Can Kill

Fentanyl that is made illegally dominates the street drug supply. It causes a record number of drug deaths in America.

More than **200** people die every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

Fake pills are made to look like many different types of prescription pills, such as:

- Oxycodone (Oxycontin® or Percocet®).
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin®).
- Alprazolam (Xanax®).
- Other stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall®).



Real Percocet



Fake Percocet

Reverse Opioid Overdose with Naloxone

Do you know someone at risk
of overdose?

Scan the QR code to learn more
about naloxone.



3 Major signs of an overdose



Very slow,
irregular,
or no
breathing



Blue, purple,
or gray
lips and
fingernails



Unresponsiveness
to pain
(breastbone rub)

What can I do?

Talk to your kids about the dangers of fentanyl. Remind them to never take a medication that has not been prescribed for them by their physician and picked up from a trusted pharmacy.

Overview	This resource discusses the risks of opioid overdose, the signs of an overdose, and the risks of taking pills that are not prescribed by a physician.
Classification of Program	• Substance Use Disorders.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials. • Students.

Naloxone (Narcan®)

Naloxone is an emergency medication to used to reverse an opioid overdose. Anyone can save a life during an opioid overdose with naloxone. Giving someone naloxone won't hurt them, so don't hesitate to use it in an emergency. When used properly, it can instantly revive people of any age who are experiencing an overdose until medical help arrives.

**How to Use Naloxone
Nasal Spray**
(YouTube Video)



What are some signs of an opioid overdose?

Call 911 immediately if a person shows ANY of the following symptoms:

- Their face is extremely pale and/or feels clammy to the touch.
- Their body goes limp.
- Their fingernails or lips have a purple or blue color.
- They start vomiting or making gurgling noises.
- They cannot be awakened or are unable to speak.
- Their breathing or heartbeat slows or stops.

Opioids are prescription drugs, like hydrocodone (Vicodin®), oxycodone (OxyContin®), oxycodone/acetaminophen (Percocet®), fentanyl, and morphine. They are also illegal drugs such as heroin.

How to Avoid Opioid Overdose:

- Take medicine only if it has been prescribed to you by your doctor.
- Do not take more medicine than instructed.
- Call a doctor if your pain gets worse.
- Never mix pain medicines with alcohol, sleeping pills or any illegal substance.
- Learn the signs of drug overdose.
- Learn how to use naloxone safely.
- Teach your family and friends how to respond to an overdose.

To Learn More

Naloxone
drug facts



Video on how
to dispose
of unused
medicines safely



Overview	This resource discusses the use of naloxone to reverse opioid overdoses, the signs of an overdose, and how to avoid opioid overdose. It also provides information on naloxone nasal spray and the importance of learning how to use it safely.
Classification of Program	• Substance Use Disorders.
Target Audience	• Parents. • School officials. • Students.



In a Crisis?

Thinking about suicide or know someone who is?

Struggling with anxiety, depression, an eating disorder or personal identity?

GET HELP 24/7

CALL, TEXT or CHAT 988

TEXT

Text HOME to 741741

TALK

(800) 273-TALK (8255) in English

(888) 628-9454 En Español

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

TTY users: Dial 711, (800) 273-8255

CHAT

suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat

LGBTQIA+ The Trevor Project

Text: START to 678678

Call: (866) 488-7386

Chat: thetrevorproject.org/get-help/

Youth Resources

Are you or someone you know struggling with thoughts of suicide or self-harm?



Scan the QR code

and save the information from this card onto your phone or forward to a friend in need.





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