

## Counselor Connection

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\*Students are free to reach out to me via email during this time\*

### How to Reassure and Support Children During the COVID-19 Crisis

While adults will react differently to stressful situations, children in general, tend to experience more intense emotions. Some level of fear and anxiety in this type of crisis is an expected and appropriate reaction, but keep an eye out for these common changes in young people that may signal a negative response to the current events (according to the CDC):

- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and "acting out" behaviors (such as increased fighting with siblings or parents)
- Difficulty paying attention and concentrating
- Avoiding activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Children will look to adults to see how we respond to the pandemic. If we deal with this situation calmly and confidently, children are much more likely to do the same. It is important that we take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, eat well, stay connected to friends and family, and stay positive. Other things we can do to support children include (according to the CDC):

- Take time to talk with them about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and share facts in a way that children can understand.
- Reassure them that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how we deal with our own stress so that they can learn how to cope from us.
- Limit their exposure to media coverage. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- Help children to maintain a sense of structure, especially with the closing of school.

Source: Ohio Department of Education



### March is National Nutrition Month

The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. This is important because good nutrition and exercise increases brain activity, which leads to better grades. Also, teaching kids positive eating behaviors during childhood can set them up with healthy eating habits for life.

Check out <https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month>

### Career Day-May 13<sup>th</sup>

Students in grades 6-12 will participate in Career Day, in which they will get the opportunity to experience three different career options of their choice right here at Rittman MS/HS. Make sure to ask them all about it!

