



Welcome Back Holly Hills!

As many of you know by now, my name is Jenna Meads, and I am the new School Counselor here at Holly Hills. It is truly an honor to be part of this school and community.

I know the past year and a half has been challenging, to say the least. So I want you all to congratulate yourselves on pushing through this demanding experience and pivoting whenever needed. As mental health professionals, we have seen a tremendous spike in anxiety, in both adults and children.

Stress can cause the following:

- Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration
- Changes in appetite, energy, desires, and interests
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions

Consider the following coping strategies, you and your child can practice all these techniques together:

- Monitor your own reaction to the ever-developing influx of information and updates from media sources, especially when your child is present.
- Do utilize grounding techniques. This can be in the form of deep breathing. Remind yourself that you and your family are safe and 'be in the moment'. Relaxation techniques can also be helpful in managing stress.
- Remind yourself and your child of positives of the current situation that may include more time together, more involvement in your children's academics, a closer bond with family members, and keeping in touch with friends and neighbors through social media or video chat.
- Be MINDFUL of screen time-I know it is hard with the ever-changing information that you want to stay up to date on. However, try and limit news watching, especially around children. The news might be triggering anxiety in both you and children without even knowing it. Try and designate one area of the house for news watching.
- TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF! These are challenging times for all of us, but I cannot stress enough how important it is for you, as parents and guardians, to take care of yourselves as well. We cannot help others if we are not helping ourselves first.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns. I am here to help you and your families.

My best,
Jenna Meads, M.Ed, LAC Candidate
School Counselor
[\(609\) 267-8565](tel:6092678565) ext 2004