

Post-Holiday Student Mental Health

The Importance of Checking In with Students After Holiday Breaks

Holiday breaks can disrupt routines, amplify feelings of isolation, and even trigger anxiety or depression, making the transition back to the classroom challenging. By taking time to check in and assess students' well-being, educators can create a supportive environment that promotes emotional wellness and trust.

Signs of Distress

Signs of Depression

- Persistent sadness
- No longer interested in things they used to enjoy
- Changes in habits, including eating, sleeping, or daily interactions
- Withdrawal

Signs of Anxiety

- Difficulty concentrating due to worrying
- Unusually irritable or upset
- Fatigue
- Restlessness

Try This!

When you are observing students for mental health issues, look at the following:

- Behavioral indicators in classroom or campus settings
- Changes in attendance or engagement
- Shifts in mood or behavior
- Physical appearance and energy levels

Conversation Starters

- How are you feeling about being back after the break?
- What's been the hardest part of returning to school?
- Is there anything you need to feel more supported?

When having conversations with students about their mental health, keep in mind the following tips:

- Ensure privacy during conversations.
- Avoid judgmental language.
- Respect cultural and personal differences.

Beyond conversations and observations, educators can also be intentional with checking in on students through their procedures. The following links provide templates for you to begin putting these methods in place in your classroom: [Elementary Link](#) and [Secondary Link](#).

Reference

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Anxiety and depression in children. <https://www.cdc.gov/children-mental-health/about/about-anxiety-and-depression-in-children.html>

