

Mental Health Excused Absences

Q&A for Families

How can I differentiate between school avoidance and mental health reasons when my child doesn't want to go to school?

Look out for signs such as persistent or excessive sadness, anxiety, or changes in behavior or mood that coincide with school days. If you notice these signs, have open and honest communication with your child and seek professional guidance for a comprehensive evaluation.

What steps can I take if my child is experiencing anxiety or depression that leads to school absences?

Create a safe space for open dialogue and actively listen to your child's concerns. Collaborate with the school to develop an individualized plan that addresses both their attendance and mental health needs. This may involve seeking guidance from the school counselor or mental health professionals to ensure your child receives appropriate support.

How can I communicate with the school about my child's mental health concerns and absences?

Establish a proactive and transparent relationship with teachers and administrators by communicating your concerns and providing relevant information about your child's mental health challenges. Familiarize yourself with your rights and available resources, such as the school's guidance counselor or student support services, to ensure effective communication and collaboration.

Are there accommodations or support services available for students with mental health needs?

Schools may offer accommodation and support services for students with mental health challenges. You can explore options such as a 504 plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) for academic accommodations. Consult with the school counselor or

mental health professionals to identify additional support resources tailored to your child's specific needs.

How can I help my child reintegrate into school after a period of absence due to mental health needs?

Approach reintegration gradually and supportively. Work with the school to create a plan that takes into account your child's comfort level and well-being. Encourage positive coping strategies, such as engaging in self-care activities, seeking professional therapy or counseling, and maintaining open communication with both your child and school staff.

What role can I play in fostering my child's mental well-being at home?

Promote open communication, active listening, and create a supportive environment at home. Encourage healthy lifestyle habits, including adequate sleep, balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, and quality family time.

Where can I find additional support and resources for both myself and my child?

Connect with local mental health organizations, support groups, or helplines in your community. Research reputable online resources that provide information and guidance for both parents and children. Don't hesitate to seek professional guidance from mental health professionals who can offer personalized support and resources based on your child's specific needs.

Every child's situation is unique. It's important to consult with mental health professionals and educators who can provide personalized guidance and support based on your child's specific needs and circumstances.