

KNOW THE SIGNS

Notice changes in the student's usual demeanor beyond the expected stress of the pandemic.

PHYSICAL:

- Bruises, cuts, burns
- Unexplained injuries
- Change in hygiene or weight/appetite
- Attire
- Money, expensive items, or clothing without financial means or reason

EMOTIONAL:

- Withdrawn or less communicative
- Fearful, anxious

BEHAVIORAL:

- Running away
- Increased opposition/aggression
- Atypical or new sexual knowledge

ENVIRONMENT:

- Signs of violence, weapons, drugs, or alcohol
- Family dysfunction
- Access to a responsible adult & their level of involvement

TALK ABOUT IT

Communication with students, families, and caregivers looks very different during this time of remote learning. We know not all children are safe at home. As a reminder, YOU are mandated by law to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Here are some questions and talking points that may help you check in on the well-being of your students, their families and their caregivers. Try universal conversation starters with youth: "I'm checking in with all the kids I'm talking with about how they are dealing with the quarantine."

ROUTINE CHECK-IN

- How are you feeling today?
- How was your night?
- How can I help you today?
- Who is home to help you with learning today?
- How are you doing with our new way of learning?
- What has/hasn't been working well?
- What fun things do you have planned today?
- What else would you like to share with me today?

OBSERVATIONS & RESPONSES

- I know you like to _____, have you been able to keep up with it?
- I've noticed that you've been struggling to focus/participate during class/video time, how can I help you with that?
- I'm hearing some other noises in the background, what else is happening at your house today?
- I saw someone walk by your screen, who is home with you today?



WELLNESS

- What did you have for breakfast/ lunch/ dinner?
- How are you sleeping? Are you getting enough sleep?
- What have you been doing inside/outside during the day?
- What is the best part about your day?
- What do you like about being home from school?
- What do you miss about not going to school?
- What have you been doing for exercise?
- How is your family? Is there anything that you or your family need during this time?
- I know you and _____ are friends, have you been able to keep in touch with each other?
- Have you been able to talk to other family members or friends? How are they doing?

KNOW WHAT TO DO

If a child discloses abuse or you suspect abuse may have occurred:

Provide Resources

- Your organization's contact information
- Text Crisis Line: Text "HOME" to 741741
- Boston Emergency Services Team (BEST): Call 1-800-981-HELP (4357) for a mental health crisis
- DCF Child Protection Hotline: 1-800-792-5200

Be Ready to Safety Plan and Report, if needed

Safety planning and reporting are necessary AND challenging if the abuse is within the home under our current circumstances.

Safety First. Create a brief safety plan until DCF can respond.

- Are they physically safe or is 911 needed? If calling 911, stay online with the child until emergency responders arrive.
- If less urgent, is there a safe adult to tell in the home? An adult to call or who you can call for them?
- Reassure – you care about them. It's your job to get them help and you're glad they told you!

Report: Call the 24/7 DCF Child Protection Hotline (1-800-792-5200)

**If you suspect abuse or neglect, call the
DCF Child-at-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200.
For immediate concerns, dial 911.**

For more information, visit www.suffolkcac.org