



CFP

CARTER FAMILY PRACTICE

MODERN MEDICINE,
CLASSIC CARE

CFP CareHub Field Notes

Back to School Series



BACK TO SCHOOL

FIELD NOTE

#3

Supporting Emotional Well-Being

at School



School can bring excitement, friendships, new experiences—and sometimes stress. Changes in mood, behavior, sleep, or physical complaints may be signs that a child is having a harder time adjusting than they know how to explain.



1



What Stress Can Look Like

Watch for changes that last more than a few days:

- Headaches or stomachaches
- Irritability or mood swings
- Trouble sleeping
- Changes in appetite
- Withdrawing from activities
- Avoiding school or feeling nervous

2



Keep the Conversation Open

Instead of pressing for answers, try gentle questions that invite conversation:

- What was the hardest part of your day?
- Did anything make you uncomfortable today?
- Who did you spend time with?
- Is there anything you wish had gone differently?

Listening without judgment builds trust.

3



Confidence Takes Time

Children adjust at different speeds. New teachers, classmates, workloads, and routines can take time to feel comfortable.



Celebrate small wins and remind your child that it's okay to take things one day at a time.

4



Know When to Reach Out

Consider reaching out to your healthcare provider or school support team if:

- Changes last several weeks or are getting worse
- Your child seems very sad, anxious, or overwhelmed
- Symptoms interfere with school, home, or friendships
- You're worried and not sure what to do



Not Every Stomachache Is "Just a Stomachache"

Stress and anxiety can show up physically in children. Recurring headaches, stomachaches, nausea, fatigue, or sleep problems can sometimes be connected to what's happening emotionally.

Karen's Corner

Children don't always have the words to say, "I'm overwhelmed," "I'm worried," or "I don't feel like I fit in." Sometimes we see it first through changes in behavior or physical symptoms. Staying curious, listening without judgment, and giving them a safe place to talk can make a meaningful difference.



You don't have to have all the answers.

Being present, listening, and showing you care matters most.



QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

Karen's Corner

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Email Karen with questions about this Field Note or suggestions for future topics.



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