

# New Family Orientation: Supporting Your Student's Mental Health & Transition to School

## Mental Health Support is Readily Available

- Students have access to on-campus counseling services during the school day, plus 24/7 support for emergencies.
- Options include:
  - Scheduled counseling sessions
  - Walk-in support (same day)
  - Teletherapy (flexible, after-hours option) [via UWill](#)
- The goal is to ensure that there is always a “door open” when a student needs help.

## Counseling Focuses On

- Short-term, goal-oriented support focused on coping skills, emotional regulation, and daily functioning
- Students build practical skills for managing stress and challenges
- When needed, the school helps connect families to outside or long-term care

## Confidentiality & Family Partnership

- Counseling is confidential to encourage early help-seeking
- Families are contacted when:
  - There is a safety concern
  - Symptoms are significant or persistent
  - A higher level of care is needed

## Common Student Challenges

These are common, treatable, and often temporary:

- Transition and homesickness
- Academic stress and perfectionism
- Anxiety or mood changes
- Social pressures and identity development

## Signs to Watch For

Look for patterns over time, such as:

- Changes in sleep or eating
- Withdrawal from friends or activities
- Increased stress, irritability, or sadness
- Avoidance (missing responsibilities)
- Physical complaints (headaches, stomachaches)

## How Students Access Help

Students may seek support:

- On their own
- With encouragement from adults or peers
- During urgent situations (priority response)

### **How Families Can Support**

Helpful language:

- “I’m glad you reached out.”
- “That sounds hard—tell me more.”
- “What would help right now?”

Try to avoid:

- “Just toughen up.”
- “Why didn’t you tell me sooner?”
- Turning conversations into investigations

### **Stay Connected**

- Stay consistently available, even if they don’t always respond
- Use open-ended questions
- Consider a regular check-in routine

### **Preparing for Independence**

Encourage your student to practice:

- Time management and using a schedule
- Daily routines (morning, bedtime)
- Laundry, organizations, and self-care
- Packing for activities independently
- Managing responsibilities (packing, appointments)

### **Balance Matters**

Students need:

- Sleep (most important)
- Academic time
- Social connection
- Downtime and rest

Supporting your student is about staying connected, encouraging help-seeking, and trusting that growth happens over time.