

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE REALEASE

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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: More Than a Physical Toll: How COVID is Taking a Major Toll on Children's Mental and Emotional Well Being**

A recently published article in the American Academy of Pediatrics discusses the pandemic's negative effects on children. The last 18 months has seen changes in everyone's day-to-day lives. Mask mandates vacillate and efforts to get more young people vaccinated are starting to be promoted, and the Delta Variant has made its way around the world.

With the multitude of efforts suggested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to combat the new strain of the virus, most school districts have adapted to the guidelines from last year and are now able to have children go back to in-school learning while still staying healthy. However, the concern now switches from the physical toll to the mental/ emotional toll COVID-19 has taken on children.

Researchers maintain children may need more support amid COVID-19 as they have "vital supports" for good development but the addition of a worldwide pandemic interrupts those supports. Children's home, school, and their social environments all play a major role in a child's mental development. Altering a child's daily routine and interactions with others can create anxiety, depression, and stress. Some signs of distress in children and adolescents are:

- Changes in child's mood, such as irritability, feelings of hopelessness or rage, and frequent conflicts with friends and family.
- Change in behavior, such as stepping back from personal relationships
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep or starting to sleep all the time.
- Changes in appetite, weight or eating patterns, such as never being hungry or eating all the time.
- Issues with memory, thinking, or concentration resulting in less interest in schoolwork and drop in academic effort and performance

Additionally, many children are bereaved, having lost a loved one due to COVID-19 necessitating counseling to help manage a child's loss. Speaking with a mental health professional can also be beneficial in navigating ways to help children cope with the trauma of COVID-19 while adapting into the new school year. Researchers advise maintaining open communication with children about their feelings on this world topic, as well as creating a positive/ supportive home and school environment. It is

important for children to feel comfortable expressing themselves as this will facilitate support more readily.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an American professional association of pediatricians whose mission is to attain optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young. For more information please visit [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org).

To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the COVID-19 Epidemic and its correlation to increased mental illness, alcohol and substance use in youth and adults please visit [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).