Managing Anxiety Related to COVID-19 for Employees

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults. People tend to overreact to unknown threats as easily as they underreact to familiar threats. For instance, although car crashes are common, driving or riding in a car probably doesn’t feel scary since you most likely do it on a regular basis.

Responses to Stress and Anxiety
You’re more likely to develop serious anxiety surrounding what you’re less familiar with. This is one of the reasons why pandemics of the past, like Ebola virus and Zika virus, created a spike in anxiety for most individuals. Reactions during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- Fear and worry about your own health status and that of your loved ones who may have been exposed to COVID-19
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Ways to Manage Stress
The way you cope with stress and anxiety can go a long way toward ensuring that you’re taking helpful action in managing your mental health. Here are ways to help you ease anxiety surrounding coronavirus:

- Reading the news from reliable sources (and take breaks from the news)
- Recognizing the things you can control, like having good hygiene
- Taking measures only if recommended by the CDC
- Practicing self-care
- Seeking professional help from a licensed mental health professional if necessary
- People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment plans during an emergency and monitor for any new symptoms.

Contact your Employee Assistance Program for additional support and information at 754-322-9900.

Helpful Links:
- samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness
- cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html
- verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909

For more information and updates, visit browardschools.com/coronavirus.

Please note information is always changing and we will provide the latest updates as soon as possible.

The School Board of Broward County, Florida
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