



September 2017 | eNews

School Safety Starts At Home




Building resiliency for all of life's challenges

September marks the end of summer and the transition back to school. This can be a challenging time for parents and pupils alike as the freedom of summer makes way for the structure of school. Kids who are anxious about starting or returning to school may have bouts of crying, tantrums, or lose sleep. As school gets underway, it is important to check in with your kids about how they are feeling and to talk through any issues. When it comes to dealing with anxiety, there are many resources to help support children transition into the school year and manage their fears around school and other life events. A recent [NPR article](#) about coping with back to school anxiety provides parents with tips to ease the stress of transitioning back to school, like starting routines early and problem solving around why the child is anxious.

Here are some general themes and suggestions:

- Validate your child: talk with them about their fears and avoid telling them things like "Don't worry." Let them know its okay to be scared and that you as the parent/caregiver will be there to support them. One Morrison clinician often shares her favorite Mr. Rogers quote with families coping with stress around current events: "When I was a boy, I would see scary things in the news. My mother would say, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people that are helping.'"
- Create structure and routine: Children thrive with structure and routine; it gives them a sense of stability, predictability, and consistency, which are foundational to emotional safety.
- Prepare for transitions: Talking with kids about upcoming changes and what to expect can help ease anxiety.
- A Morrison clinician we consulted has a favorite app that she suggests to parents called Insight Timer, which contains silent and guided meditations. Families in her care confirm that the app helps with sleep and to ease worries. Other apps she suggests are Breathr, Mindshift, and Stresslr.

Some teachers have established special places in their classrooms where children can go to diffuse tough emotions and to feel safe in their vulnerability. Having a private, quiet space to go when emotions run high helps children to feel better before returning to the task at hand. This practice is especially helpful for children who are having trouble adjusting from summer back to school or who struggle with separation anxiety. Teachers use a quiet place in their classrooms to counteract tantrums that may arise from conflicts between students or when kids have an especially hard time saying goodbye to their parents in the morning. You can read more about one teacher's approach [here](#).

 <h2>Drain</h2> <p>Extend arms out, pretending your arms are faucets. Tighten arm, shoulder, and face muscles. Exhale slowly making a "ssshhh" sound and release all your muscles, draining out the stress.</p>	 <h2>S.T.A.R.</h2> <p>Smile, Take a deep breath And Relax. Encourage belly breathing where the tummy goes out when the air goes in, and in when the air goes out. Also help children learn to exhale slower than they inhale.</p>
 <h2>Pretzel</h2> <p>Standing up, cross your ankles. Now cross your right wrist over left, turn your hands so your thumbs are facing the floor, put palms together and interlace fingers. Bend your elbows out and gently turn your hands down and toward your body until they rest on the center of your chest. Put your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Relax and breathe.</p>	 <h2>Balloon</h2> <p>Place your hands on top of your head and interlace your fingers. Breathe in through your nose as you raise your arms, inflating an imaginary balloon. Release the air in the balloon by pursing your lips, exhaling slowly, lowering your arms and making a "pbbppbpb" sound.</p>

Strategies for disengaging the stress response in children include breathing and calming exercises like the Drain, STAR, Pretzel, or Balloon techniques.

Holiday Giving Campaign
2017

Share the joy
and warm a child's
holiday this year!



morrison
Child & Family Services

Morrison Employee Appreciation Event

We celebrated our 10th Annual Employee Appreciation Event August 10th



On August 10, 2017, team members from Morrison's programs united to celebrate each other at the 10th Annual Employee Appreciation and 3rd Annual Sanctuary Kickoff Event. The theme for the event was Morrison's 70th Birthday. Established in 1947, Morrison's humble first clinic served just 200 children in its first year and 70 years later, we now provide essential services to over 7,000 clients annually.

Dressed in costumes inspired by their favorite decade from 1947 to the present, employees learned about the Sanctuary Model's successes as the third year of implementation begins, spent time with cherished teammates, and mingled with staff from each of Morrison's locations. This is the one time each year when many of the staff from Morrison's nine locations are in the same place, sharing a meal and the commonality of working toward a shared goal. We are especially grateful for the residential staff who missed the event to stay with the youth in our residential programs. Staff recognized each other with the CEO Award, the staff-nominated Stephen Blair Awards, the Equity Advisory Committee Awards, and the Longevity Awards.

A photo booth, youth art, and birthday-themed party favors rounded out the fun. The annual event is put on by Executive Leadership and funded by board donations.

Get to Know Morrison

Featured Staff: Katie Campbell

Last month, Morrison celebrated our dedicated staff at our 10th Annual Employee Appreciation Event. In the spirit of acknowledging the invaluable contributions of each of our over 400 employees, this month, and each month going forward, Morrison will randomly select a staff member to feature in this newsletter.

For September, we are pleased to introduce Katherine "Katie" Campbell, Program Supervisor for Morrison's Foster Family Care Network. Katie, who started her tenure at Morrison thanks to a recommendation from a friend, now supervises the certification, recruitment, and training of new and prospective foster parents. Over the years, Katie has noticed the trend of an increasing number of kids in need of foster homes and fewer homes that provide care. That is why she is so thankful for Morrison's dedicated foster families, who provide safe and loving homes to children and youth from Morrison's five foster care programs.



When people learn that she works at Morrison, they are often surprised to learn about the breadth of services Morrison provides.

Katie, who has been with Morrison for almost 5 years, says that one of the best parts about her job is the great team of people she works with every day who often have her crying with laughter. She did not hesitate to praise her colleagues and name them among her top reasons for continuing her work at Morrison. When asked what she would tell a new donor, volunteer, or staff member, Katie explained that she firmly believes in Morrison's mission and the organization's capacity to prevent the cycles of trauma and make our communities better.

Now that Katie has finished her Masters in Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling, she has more time to spend cooking, taking her beloved Pomeranian to the park, and playing Settlers of Catan. Thanks for your dedication to children and families in our community, Katie!

If you would like to make a donation to support Morrison's foster care programs, click the button below.

[Donate Now](#)

Ambassador Board

Emerging professionals engage and advance Morrison's mission

Morrison is recruiting for an Ambassador Board to increase public awareness about our 19 programs benefiting youth and families in Oregon. We are seeking members who have an interest in children and mental health, broad professional networks, and the time available to serve our mission. Ambassador board membership merges civic engagement with leadership development and can serve as a great introduction into the nonprofit sector.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Deanna Kavanaugh at Deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org to learn more.

Upcoming Events

Join us in our community

Meet with Morrison representatives at the Belmont Street Fair and/or at the Festival of Nations to learn more about our five foster care programs and how you can help. Oregon kids between the ages of 3 - 17 need your support, and we have a program that will fit your needs!



Join us for shopping, music, food, and fun on SE Belmont Street between SE 33rd and SE 39th Avenues in SE Portland.

FESTIVAL OF NATIONS



▲ Division
▲ Midway
▲ Alliance

Presented by

Helping to link businesses and services to community members, the Festival of Nations is a celebration of the Division - Midway area of SE Division Street, between 117th & 148th.

Sustainability Tip of the Month

Starting the school year sustainably

Every school year, teachers send home lists of school supplies that children will need for the coming year. When purchasing binders, pencils, tissues, and the like, consider their impact on the environment. Tips for making the new school year sustainable include [limiting what goes in the landfill](#), cutting down on [food waste](#), and including [environmental education](#) in the curriculum.



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Our Mission

At Morrison Child and Family Services, we partner with families and communities to provide effective and responsive services for children and youth coping with adversity and trauma.

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