

Dear Middle School Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you well and that you and your children are having a positive transition to our online learning experience at Columbus Academy.

Be assured that I will continue to be available for you and your children. I will provide counseling and support to middle school students. I have created a Google Classroom page for students to access mental and emotional health resources and information (**class code: nv2vcf7**). You and your children can also schedule an appointment to meet with me virtually via this [link](#). When you click the link, select and click a 30-minute time slot convenient for you, type your name in the “what” space and save the appointment. Your appointment is confidential, and your identity is hidden from the public once you schedule the appointment. I am available Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Because of the privacy issues involved, I plan on using the platform Doxyme, which is a telemedicine platform. All data is encrypted, the sessions are anonymous, and none of your children's information is stored. They adhere to HIPAA data privacy requirements. It is very easy to use. You do not have to download anything or make an account. For more information, go to doxyme.com.

I will be counseling from a private space in my home. Your children are assured of confidentiality with me with the following exceptions: 1) they are putting themselves in danger, 2) they are putting others in danger, and 3) they allow me to share information. In those cases I will be calling you directly and immediately. My goal is to work in partnership with families, and if there are other concerns that I think should be shared with you, I will talk with your children about the best way to share any other information. **Please let me know if you have any concerns or questions. Unless I hear back from you, I will assume I have permission to counsel your children online.**

I want you to feel confident that whether at Columbus Academy physically or virtually, I have your children's best interests in mind. If I am concerned that they may need more intensive and ongoing support, I will work with you to help facilitate a referral to a private therapist who is currently practicing online. You may also contact:

Nationwide Children's Big Lots Behavioral Health Services
614-355-8080 for an appointment
614-722-1800 24/7 for an emergency (Franklin County)

If you prefer to speak with me over the phone, please forward me a convenient time to call you.

Here are additional resources with information to help you support your children during this time:

- [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#)
- [Keeping Up Kids' Mental Health During Coronavirus](#)
- [Talking with Children about Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [Help Your Family De-Stress During Coronavirus Uncertainty](#)
- [Self-Care in the Time of Coronavirus](#)

Feel free to reach out and connect with me for support at any time. We are in this together.

Wellness and safety to you and your family,

[Shekyra DeCree](#)

Middle School Counselor