

The Vernon Township Community Mental Health Board wants to help parents and children adjust to the new school year.

Now that Vernon Township children are back in school, initial excitement about the new school year can also bring feelings of fear or anxiety along with it. The Vernon Township Community Mental Health Board (VTCMHB) encourages parents and caregivers to recognize these feelings—that are often centered around social challenges and even concerns about bullying—are both common and manageable, with the right support.

Below are some helpful strategies to make this transition smoother for both children and parents:

- o **Acknowledge Feelings:** Let your child share their emotions openly. Reassure them that nervousness is normal and that they are not alone.
- o **Establish a Routine:** Consistent morning, homework, and bedtime schedules provide a sense of stability that helps to reduce stress.
- o **Practice Social Skills:** Role-playing different scenarios can boost confidence. Encourage children to start conversations and reach out to classmates.
- o **Discuss Bullying:** Have honest conversations about what bullying looks like. Remind kids they can always talk to you and encourage kindness toward others.
- o **Promote Positive Self-Talk:** Encourage positive affirmations and remind your child that they have the strength and the resilience to overcome challenges.
- o **Stay Involved:** Communicate regularly with teachers and counselors to stay connected to your child's daily experiences.
- o **Limit Social Media :** Too much screen time can increase anxiety and exposure to negative interactions. Keep usage balanced.
- o **Encourage Activities:** Clubs, sports, or other extracurriculars can help children build friendships and confidence.
- o **Be Patient:** Adjustments take time. Support your child as they settle into the new school year.

The VTCMHB is committed to helping Township families build resilience and confidence during this transition period. By creating a safe, structured, and encouraging environment, parents can help their children face challenges with strength and positivity.

The mission of the VTCMHB is to provide resources and support to the Vernon Township community through funding, programs, and services that reduce stigma, or

break down any barriers to seeking help for mental health challenges, substance abuse and/or development disabilities.

OMNI: Mental Health Support for Vernon Township Kids, Adults and Families

OMNI is one of the Vernon Township Community Mental Health Board (VTCMHB) grant recipients. Nonprofit organizations that provide services for mental health, substance abuse or development disabilities may be eligible for future grants.

For more than 50 years, OMNI has been a trusted resource for Vernon Township residents—providing compassionate, affordable mental health and substance use services to kids, adults, and families right here in your community.

What began as a teen hotline in 1972 has grown into a full-service behavioral health organization committed to helping people thrive—whether they're facing a crisis or simply need extra support.

Services provided by OMNI include:

- o Individual, family, and group counseling
- o Play therapy for children 5+
- o Substance use treatment and recovery
- o Crisis intervention and family support
- o Prevention education

OMNI serves clients ages 5 through 105, addressing common challenges such as anxiety, depression, trauma, school difficulties, and family conflict. Their bilingual staff members currently offer services in English and Spanish. Starting September 1, 2025, counseling and therapeutic services will also be available in Russian and Ukrainian.

Township residents can access services in-person at the OMNI offices in Libertyville, Wheeling or Buffalo Grove—or virtually from their homes. To ensure residents have access to important resources that improve their overall health, OMNI assists with applications for Medicaid or health insurance, SNAP benefits, and other basic needs or supportive services.

OMNI believes healing starts with human connection. That's why their counselors, social workers, and case managers work closely with families to build resilience, restore hope, and support long-term success.

Deeply connected to the Vernon Township community, OMNI partners with schools, police departments, healthcare providers, and local organizations to make support accessible and impactful. From prevention programs to parenting workshops and youth

leadership opportunities, OMNI is proud to be a partner in supporting the community's well-being.

To prevent the cost of services being a barrier to getting help, OMNI accepts commercial insurance, Medicaid, and offers a sliding fee scale.

If you or someone you know living in Vernon Township needs support, OMNI can help—with timely access, compassionate care, and a deep commitment to the community.

To learn more or schedule an appointment to get started, please visit omni4all.org or call [847-353-1500](tel:847-353-1500)