aspire psychological

Helping Anxious Students Thrive:
Summer Preparation Tips for School Counselors

What Counselors Should Know and How to Help Before the School Year Begins

Signs of School-Related Anxiety

Avoidance Behaviors?
Skipping summer reading, avoiding back-to-school events, or resisting school-related tasks.

Frequent Worries?
Persistent concerns about school routines, teachers, classmates, or performance.

Physical Complaints?
Increased headaches, stomachaches, or fatigue as the first day approaches.

Emotional Reactivity?
Irritability, panic, or meltdowns when discussing the upcoming school year.

6 Proactive Steps Schools Can Take Before Day One

1. Offer Summer Meet-and-Greets
Host informal visits or virtual calls so anxious students can meet key staff before the first day.

2. Collaborate with Parents
Invite parents of anxious students to share concerns and strategies that have worked in the past.

3. Create a Re-entry Plan
Develop a simple, individualized return-to-school plan for students who have struggled with attendance or regulation.

4. Identify Safe Adults
Clearly assign a go-to adult in the building that the student knows and trusts.

5. Prepare Teachers
Offer quick training or bulletins about how anxiety can present in the classroom (for example, avoidance, irritability, perfectionism).

6. Normalize Anxiety
Share school-wide messages that normalize nerves and remind students they're not alone.

Tips Counselors Can Share with Parents This Summer

Counselors can empower parents to support their child's return to school by encouraging small, confidence-building steps over the summer. Suggest gradual exposure, like visiting the school or driving the route together. Recommend practicing routines early, such as shifting bedtimes, and rehearsing coping tools through role-play. Most importantly, remind parents to focus on building confidence, not just comfort: "You can do hard things, even when they feel scary."

Learn how our team **partners with schools**

Need a Trusted Referral? We're Here to Help.

If a child's anxiety is interfering with daily life, or if parents feel stuck, call our team. No waitlist, and a free 10-minute call to see if we're a fit.



DR. ARYEH BERLIN
NJ LICENSE #35SI00626800
NY LICENSE #025390
Director

201.639.4669 | office@weallaspire.com | 345 NJ-17, Suite 33, Upper Saddle River, NJ

www.weallaspire.com

This guide is for educational purposes only and does not constitute professional advice or create a therapist-client relationship. For concerns about your child, please consult a qualified mental health professional.