

**School Practitioner Community of Practice**  
(A network for sharing & exchange)  
Special Edition (3/26/20)

**>Sharing Requests and Information about Resources and Actions**

**>>Mental Health and the crisis**

**>>What are kids' questions about coronavirus?**

**>>About situations where parents/caregivers are working remotely**

**>>Virginia State Department of Education's Changing Graduation Requirements**

**>Links to a few other relevant shared resources**

**Note:** Go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> for links to other Center resources.

**This resource is from the**  
**Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA**

**Given education budgets, we have been asked to increase our outreach to make our free resources more available (e.g., for planning, professional development, etc.).**

*So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).*

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**For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

**For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see**  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

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**Special Edition:**

**Sharing Requests and Information about Resources and Actions**

**>Mental Health of Children and Youth During the Current Crisis**

In addition to avoiding the Coronavirus, this is a time to take steps to

- (1) maintain and even enhance mental health
- (2) prevent or at least minimize mental health problems that arise
- (3) pursue help for those manifesting major disorders.

***Promote Mental Health & Work Against MH Problems***

With youngsters out of school, the task falls to those taking care of young people to learn more about

- (a) minimizing adverse childhood experiences,
- (b) promoting social-emotional development, and
- (c) work on resolving problems as soon as they arise.

Here are four resources:

**>Nadine Burke Harris's TED talk on adverse childhood experiences**  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine\\_burke\\_harris\\_how\\_childhood\\_trauma\\_affects\\_health\\_across\\_a\\_lifetime?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime?language=en)

- >Fostering Healthy Social & Emotional Development in Young Children  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/talk-read-sing/feelings-teachers.pdf>
- >Problem Solving <https://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/problem-solving-children>
- >Manage Stress and Anxiety  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fcoping.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fcoping.html)

### **Finding Help for Troubled Youngsters through Remote Technologies**

For youngsters who have been receiving special help, hopefully the service provider has ensured some form of online help is happening. Where this hasn't occurred, the provider should be contacted to at least provide a referral.

In all instances where someone is not receiving help, you can contact

>the Disaster Distress Helpline 1-800-985-5990

For domestic violence, contact

>the National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224

About Telemental Health, see

>Telepsychology <https://www.apa.org/members/your-growth/practice-management/telepsychology>

**Listserv participants:** *Do you have additional resources to share related to this concern?*

*Please send them so we can share them with others.* [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

### **>What are kids' questions about coronavirus?**

From: *How to answer 7 big questions kids have about the coronavirus pandemic..*

<https://www.vox.com/2020/3/20/21186739/coronavirus-kids-parents-covid-19-pandemic-parenting>

Excerpt: For millions of adults across the US and the world, life has changed dramatically in the last few weeks. Most have been asked to practice social distancing, while some are sheltering in place. Some are sick or in quarantine, or tending to ill loved ones. And for many, something as simple as having dinner with a friend already feels like a distant memory.

But for children, life has changed perhaps even more drastically. Millions are home from school or daycare, with no clear idea of when they'll be back. Many can't go to playgrounds, see friends, or visit grandparents anymore. And unlike adults, who at least can read and understand the (often terrifying) news, many younger children may struggle to grasp what's going on....

#### **>Will I get sick? Will my parents get sick? What happens if we do?**

These are probably the scariest questions on a lot of kids' minds right now. And Robin Gurwitch, a psychologist and professor at Duke University School of Medicine, says it's important not to minimize kids' fears or tell them there's no possibility they or their family will get sick, because unfortunately that's not true. What you can say, Gurwitch advises, is that you are doing everything you know of to make sure everyone in the family stays as healthy as possible and that, "if we get sick, then we're going to do everything we know how to do to make sure we get better again."...

#### **>Why do I have to wash my hands so much?**

One of the most important things people can do to protect themselves and others during this pandemic is washing hands frequently..... For kids who are old enough to understand, "it's okay to tell children that we wash our hands because sometimes germs get on our hands, and if germs get on our hands and we don't get rid of them, they can make us sick," Gurwitch told Vox. You can also say that it's even more important than usual to wash our hands because coronavirus is spreading rapidly, and washing our hands is one of the best ways we know to help keep ourselves safe....

#### **>When can I go back to school?**

While some kids might be initially excited to get out of going to school, taking away school attendance means taking away something that's a constant in their lives, Gurwitch said, and that can be distressing. For school-aged kids asking when they can return to class, Gurwitch advises assuring them that you are always staying up to date on when they may be able to start school again....

### **>Why can't I visit my friends or my grandparents?**

Kids of all ages are understandably sad that they can't see a lot of friends or family members in person right now. The hard reality, according to many experts, is that we could be looking at social distancing recommendations for months to a year or more, as Vox's Brian Resnick reports. To help kids cope with that, it's certainly important to show how they can keep in contact with grandparents and others through FaceTime or even letters, if they don't have access or don't use mobile devices. If grandparents or other older relatives live nearby, kids may be able to "visit" them by dropping off groceries or other necessities and waving hello through a window...

### **>If my parents are home, why do they have to work instead of playing with me?**

Many workers in this country don't have the option to work from home right now, and a staggering number have been laid off or had their hours cut. But for those who are able to work remotely right now, many are being asked to do so. And if you have young kids, that often means trying to get something done while your child asks increasingly plaintively why you're on the phone or computer instead of playing blocks. In that situation, Gurwitsch says, you can explain, "I'm home with you to make sure that our family stays healthy and well," but that you still have to work. Then, you can let your child know when you might be available to take a break and play with them, perhaps even setting a timer so they can see how long they have until they can get your full attention....

### **>I'm not sick, so why do I have to take precautions?**

This one may apply especially to teenagers and older kids, who may feel a certain adolescent invincibility even in the face of a virus that has many people scared. That could be compounded by reports that the illness is less severe in children and young people, though there is now research showing some children become severely ill.

### **>How can I help?**

For kids who are old enough to understand, this is a time to talk about collective responsibility for our families and all of society, "This is an opportunity for a family to develop a civic identity, and parents can teach kids that part of that identity is taking care of people who are vulnerable." That can take a lot of forms, whether it's delivering groceries to a grandparent, donating to support service workers who may be out of work at this time (if a family has the financial means to do so), or calling out the racism and xenophobia that unfortunately continues to run rampant during this pandemic.

This is a time when parents can teach kids that "each one of us is responsible for all of us," both within a family and around the world."

## **>About situations where parents/caregivers are working remotely**

A colleague notes that some folks do not have the ability to work with their kids during their work hours. "I know in our district we use MobyMax, which if a student has access to technology and the internet is self-paced and has all subjects so students can work independently, depending on their age and ability. I know in my family I have set up a white board with everyone's schedules, which we update daily. Please see the attached. I wonder if something this simplistic would help ease people's sense of being overwhelmed."

## **>Update from the Virginia State Department of Education**

### **Changing requirements for seniors to graduate**

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health\\_medical/office/covid-19.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/covid-19.shtml)

Graduation Requirements, Awarding of Credits, and Continuity of Learning (March 23, 2020)

To ensure the safety of citizens of Virginia during the COVID-19 outbreak, the Governor of Virginia closed all schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. While the health and well-being of students and staff remain the top priority, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) also recognizes the incredible strain that extended closures have placed on local school divisions in meeting their obligations to students and the state.

VDOE has been fielding questions and concerns regarding the impact of extended closures. Some of the common and most critical issues for school divisions are the instructional and logistical barriers to meeting graduation requirements, awarding of credits, and continuity of learning.

The goal of this document is to provide school divisions information and solutions around graduation requirements, promotion, new instruction, and ease of process. The intent is not to overburden or restrict our school divisions but to provide hope, engagement, and a measure of normalcy during this period of unprecedented uncertainty. School divisions are not being asked to replicate

the existing school day or year, but provide opportunities for students to make academic progress and continue to learn and grow....

The Superintendent will provide as much flexibility as is prudent and allowable by the Code of Virginia for those students graduating with the 2019-2020 cohort. Flexibility provisions will need to consider students facing the following barriers to graduation..." (See document for specifics)

*News coverage of the announcement:*

[https://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/virginia-offers-flexibility-so-high-school-seniors-can-still-graduate/article\\_7c90ccd5-c52e-5b44-b279-8798942f2f84.html](https://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/virginia-offers-flexibility-so-high-school-seniors-can-still-graduate/article_7c90ccd5-c52e-5b44-b279-8798942f2f84.html)

"Virginia offers flexibility so high school seniors can still graduate  
Guidance from the Virginia Department of Education released after Gov. Ralph Northam ordered state schools to be closed for the rest of the school year provides leniency so members of the senior class can still graduate.

The guidelines, sent to superintendents across the state Monday night, allow school districts to waive eight graduation requirements in an effort to not further burden seniors, who will miss out on staples such as prom and a commencement ceremony after the decision Monday to shutter school buildings for the remainder of the academic year. Seniors who were on track to earn a diploma later this spring, the state Education Department said, will be able to graduate.

"The governor and I agree that every student who was on a trajectory toward earning a diploma should be able to graduate on time and move on to the next stage of his or her life," said Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane in a Tuesday statement. "I hope the flexibility that I am announcing today will help students and teachers as they cope with the deep disappointment of having their time together unexpectedly cut short and of not being able to enjoy the recognitions and celebrations that should be a part of every student's graduation experience."...

Lane said the "vast majority" of the state's high school seniors - roughly 94,000, according to state data - have already met most graduation requirements.... "I am confident that everyone recognizes that students should not be prevented from graduating because of unforeseen circumstances beyond their control," Lane said...

The Virginia Board of Education, the state's K-12 governing board, discussed the possibility of extreme flexibility for seniors during a conference call meeting Friday, with board members saying unprecedented times call for unprecedented action.

"We recognize that because this is such an extraordinary situation, the principle of flexibility, that we want students to be able to graduate, to be able to move on to next year, with the anticipation that this will pass eventually and we were well past the midmark of the school year, the presumption should be in favor of helping everyone move on successfully to their next step," said board member Anne Holton.

Said Board President Dan Gecker: "We are all in this together."....

**Listserv Participants:** What is your state department doing to support the graduating seniors?  
Let us know. [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

## >Links to a few other relevant shared resources

From our colleagues at Scholastic:

### Free Resources from Scholastic

> *Learn at Home* ([scholastic.com/learnathome](https://www.scholastic.com/learnathome)) is an essential website that gives children, families and educators valuable, cross-curricular, literacy, and current events resources. Scholastic will continue to update and augment this resource as the crisis unfolds.

> Scholastic has created *Teaching Our World* ([scholastic.com/coronavirus](https://www.scholastic.com/coronavirus)) to help educators and families provide age appropriate information about the coronavirus to inform students and ease their fears.

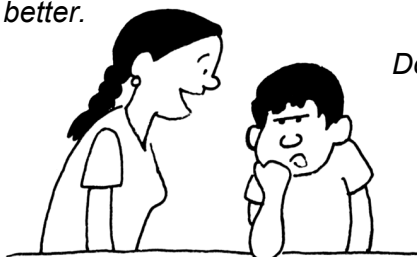
> Additionally, *Scholastic Home Base* ([scholastic.com/homebase](https://www.scholastic.com/homebase)) is an online environment where children can meet their favorite book characters, write stories, and hang out with other readers in a safe, moderated space. Many favorite authors will host live events in Home Base; parents, teachers, and students are encouraged to log in and participate."

- > *School Leaders' Online Toolkit* free from Corwin:  
<https://corwin.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2ab0a4c270f799f978478f203&id=c40450a3ad&e=a84ec0d3f4>
- > *Online Teaching Toolkit* free from Corwin  
<https://corwin.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2ab0a4c270f799f978478f203&id=4a2007612f&e=a84ec0d3f4>
- > Resources for Schools and Teachers During School Closings <http://dropoutprevention.org/>
- > Georgia DOE/DFCS Partner to Encourage Families to Use Student Tablets to Access SNAP, Medicaid, or TANF Benefits  
<https://dfcs.georgia.gov/press-releases/2020-03-24/georgia-doe-dfcs-partner-encourage-families-use-student-tablets-access>
- > *Covid-19 Resources for Clinical Psychologists* <https://www.div12.org/telepsychology-resources/>
- > *Telepsychiatry in the Era of COVID-19*  
[https://education.smiadviser.org/Users/ProductDetails.aspx?ActivityID=7257&utm\\_source=Email&utm\\_medium=WebinarEmail](https://education.smiadviser.org/Users/ProductDetails.aspx?ActivityID=7257&utm_source=Email&utm_medium=WebinarEmail)
- > *Supporting Families During COVID-19*  
[https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=LEARN%20MORE&utm\\_campaign=Weekly-03-03-20](https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=LEARN%20MORE&utm_campaign=Weekly-03-03-20)
- > *Training and Technical Assistance Related to COVID-19 Resources from MHTTC*  
<https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/global-mhttc/responding-covid-19>  
 Highlight products and resources for coping with the effects of a widespread public health crises
- > *Compassion Fatigue and the Behavioral Health Workforce Curriculum Infusion Package*  
<https://attcnetwork.org/centers/pacific-southwest-attc/news/compassion-fatigue-and-behavioral-health-workforce-curriculum>
- > Upcoming webinars
  - >> *Changing the Conversation about Mental Health to Support Students During a Pandemic*  
 April 9, 2020 – <https://wiche.zoom.us/j/920123456789>
  - >> *Changing the Conversation About Mental Health - How do we Come Back to the New Normal?* – April 13, 2020  
<https://wiche.zoom.us/j/920123456789>

### Resources for Home Study Topics Related to MH Topics

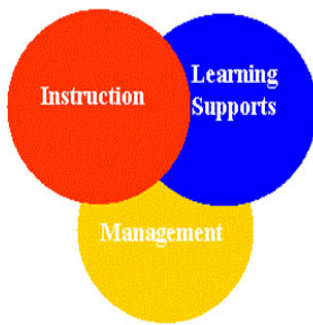
Over the school year, our Center resources are used by university students, middle and high school students and others who are doing projects related to mental health topics. So we thought we might mention that our online clearinghouse Quick Finds may be helpful as student pursue their learning from home. See the dropdown menu at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quicksearch.htm>

*Things will get better.*



*Doesn't feel like that to me!*

*Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;  
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to  
enabling equity of opportunity, promoting whole child development,  
and enhancing school climate.*



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**For information about the**

**National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports**  
go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>  
Also online are two related free books

*Improving School Improvement*

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)

*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)

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***THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND  
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!***

***For new sign-ups – email [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)***

***Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.***

***We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange  
on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm>  
and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)***