

School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(5/19/21)

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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

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).

For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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

For discussion and interchange:

>How are schools helping students return to normal?

Some can't get back to being with others fast enough. Others (adults as well as children and youth) are a bit cautious. All have experienced the pandemic.

Let's use this community of practice School Practitioner to share what schools in your locale are planning and doing with respect to returning to the new normal.

As a start, here are some ideas from a recent article.

From: *Coming Out of COVID-19: Preparing to Return to In-Person School and Activities*
<https://www.maginationpressfamily.org/stress-anxiety-in-kids/coming-out-of-covid-19-preparing-to-return-to-in-person-school-and-activities/>

"Getting back to normal" is something most of us have been looking forward to. It sounds great in the abstract, but actually returning to in-person activities after experiencing a year of COVID-19 social distancing could be stressful. ...

As vaccines roll out across the world, children are preparing for the return to in-person activities, including school, extra-curriculars, large family gatherings, and play dates, among many others. For many kids, this will be a welcome change as a return in-person activities means fun playing with friends, easier learning, and well-known routines and traditions. Yet the return to in-person activities-particularly mandatory school- also brings a host of worries and uncertainties for children and parents alike. In particular, many introverted or anxious kids have come to feel more comfortable staying home during the pandemic and have had few opportunities to practice getting out of their comfort zone. It is crucial to help all kids prepare for the return to in-person activities but is particularly important for kids whose shy or anxious temperament may make this a particularly big shift. Luckily, parents and caretakers can do much to help prepare kids for the upcoming changes.

Re-establish routines

Children thrive with predictable routines and feel empowered when they know what to expect. Several weeks before your child's activity starts again in person, get them ready....

It's also helpful to review your community's safety policies with your child well in advance and practice the steps they may be less familiar with. For example, you can make a game at home of estimating how many feet of distance are between you and your child. It is also helpful to practice wearing masks for longer and longer periods so they are used to it before returning to activities where they will need to be masked full time.

Talk about it

Well intended parents often avoid bringing up topics that they worry will make their child anxious. However, an open conversation gives kids a chance to air their concerns and get answers to their questions, rather than letting their imaginations run wild (and often come up with worst case scenarios!). It also gives parents an opportunity to better understand their child's concerns – as well as to often learn that their child is less anxious than the parent thought! ...

Make a plan to face fears

Once you know what your child is feeling anxious about, you can make a plan to help them prepare. The most effective way to approach a feared situation is to break it into smaller steps. For example, if your child is worried about going back into the school building, you can start with driving by the school. They can then work up to sitting in the parking lot, walking up to the front door, standing in the lobby for a few minutes, walking by their classroom, and so on....

No matter what your child is worried about, it is helpful to take advantage of opportunities to practice doing things in person ahead of formal activities re-starting. For example, you might schedule simple social gatherings with kids they will see at school and go to school events such as re-orientations and welcome back days....

Encourage helpful 'self talk'

... Teach your child to talk to themselves in ways that make them feel brave and empowered. It can be helpful to ask what they would say to a scared friend to help them feel better....

Be a courage coach

Watching your anxious child return to in-person activities can be even more nerve-wracking for parents than for the child themselves! Yet, no matter how you feel about the changes, project calm confidence in front of your child. Kids pick up on their parents' emotions. You can do much to soothe their nerves by showing and expressing your confidence in their ability to handle the situation....

The last year has been a marathon for parents. Though the return to in-person activities brings a host of new uncertainties, it also represents an exciting transition towards normalcy for children. By taking these small steps, you can do much to support your child in navigating these upcoming changes.”

Here's another recent article:

How Schools Can Help Kids Heal After the Pandemic's Uncertainty

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-05-10/schools-can-help-kids-heal-after-the-covid-pandemic>

Given that this is another of the many transitions involving students, their families, and staff, also take a look at

>*Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transitions/transitions.pdf>

And for more on transitions see the Center's online clearinghouse Quick Find on *Transitions* --
Http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm

We assume this topic being discussed in your locale,

please let us know what's happening so we can share the info widely. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

For discussion and interchange:

>Homeless students: Using stimulus funds to address the challenge

From: *States are getting millions to help homeless students. Federal officials say schools' first job is to find them.*

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2021/4/26/22404530/states-help-homeless-students-focus-on-finding-kids>

As states begin to receive hundreds of millions of dollars to help homeless students, federal education officials are urging them to spend big on one key activity: identifying students in need of help.

The latest federal stimulus package sets aside \$800 million to support students experiencing homelessness in the wake of the pandemic. On Friday, federal officials offered the first details about how it will reach them, saying they will release \$200 million this spring so that states and school districts can get to work before the end of the school year. They're also giving schools the go-ahead to spend it on things they may not have been able to before, like short-term housing.

In a letter to state education officials, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona encouraged states and school districts to use some of their money to pay community-based organizations that have experience working with historically underserved students — including students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ+ students, students who are pregnant or parents, and students who live in rural or tribal communities — and are therefore in a good position to spot students who are experiencing homelessness and connect them to help....

Cardona also told school districts they can spend their money on a broader range of services than they typically are able to under federal law. Crucially, he explicitly said schools can buy cell phones and prepaid debit cards, and pay for short-term temporary housing, such as a few nights in a motel — something many school staff were hoping for. He also opened up the door for schools to spend money in other creative ways during the pandemic, emphasizing that federal law allows schools to provide homeless students with 'extraordinary or emergency assistance.' COVID-19, he noted, has had an 'extraordinary impact'...

For more on the challenge of addressing the needs of homeless students, see:

Students and Families Not Returning to School? Organize and Mobilize Outreach From Those Who Have

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/4-26-21.pdf>

Supporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness during the COVID-19 Outbreak: Questions to Consider

<https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/supporting-children-and-youth-experiencing-homelessness-during-the-covid-19-outbreak-questions-to-consider>

COVID-19 and Homelessness: Strategies for Schools, Early Learning Programs, and Higher Education Institutions

<https://schoolhouseconnection.org/covid19-and-homelessness/>

System Planning: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-System-Planning-A-Framework-for-Homelessness-Prevention.pdf>

For more on outreach and support for homeless students, see the Center's online clearinghouse Quick Find on *Homeless Children and Youth*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homeless.htm>

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Why Summer Learning Programs Are Pushing More Fun Than Academics

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2021-05-12-why-summer-learning-programs-are-pushing-more-fun-than-academics>

3 ways schools can improve outcomes for all students --ED secretary says schools should not use \$130 billion in American Rescue Plan funds on 'random acts'

<https://districtadministration.com/cardona-3-ways-schools-improve-outcomes-all-students-post-covid/>

How Schools Can Help Kids Heal After the Pandemic's Uncertainty

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-05-10/schools-can-help-kids-heal-after-the-covid-pandemic>

The Learning Policy Institute's Resources for Reopening Schools website

<https://reopening.learningpolicyinstitute.org/>

Housing Systems Must Better Support Families with Young Children Experiencing Homelessness

<https://www.childtrends.org/blog/housing-systems-must-better-support-families-with-young-children-experiencing-homelessness>

Helping Young Adults from Foster Care Succeed in College

<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/proj-1-FUTURES-helping-young-adults-from-foster-care.pdf>

Prevention Core Competencies

https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Prevention-Core-Competencies/PEP20-03-08-001?utm_source=SA_MHSA&utm_campaign=f70d57fc82-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_05_06_07_50&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_eelc4b138c-f70d57fc82-167791969

YRBS Data Summary & Trends

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/yrbs_data_summary_and_trends.htm

May is Mental Health Awareness Month <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/mental-health/index.htm>

Against Empathy Bias: The Moral Value of Equitable Empathy

<https://psychologicalscience.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=9082cc31df19dd4e8c5bfb8e3&id=e0360b1567&e=c210f8201a>

Rethinking the Diagnosis of Mental Disorders: Data-Driven Psychological Dimensions, Not Categories, as a Framework for Mental-Health Research, Treatment, and Training

<https://psychologicalscience.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=9082cc31df19dd4e8c5bfb8e3&id=6a0545c8f5&e=c210f8201a>

A Few Upcoming Webinars

5/19 Post-Pandemic Possibilities

5/25 Paving the Way to College for Students Experiencing Homelessness

5/26 Engaged: Using Summer to Connect with Students and Families

5/26 Rebound: Rebuilding Agency, Accelerating Learning Recovery, Rethinking Schools

5/26 Leveraging Science to Inform Policies that Strengthen Learning and Health in a Post-COVID-19 World

5/27 School as Client: Mental Health Services for Diverse Population in the School Culture

6/7 Family Inclusion Webinar: The Family Experience

6/16 Diversity and Difference

6/16 What will we keep, transform and let go in the next school year?

Webinar recording: Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth

<https://preventioninstitute.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4bf5a36bd9f72789255d49a&id=17f472fea9&e=b6757fd9d7>

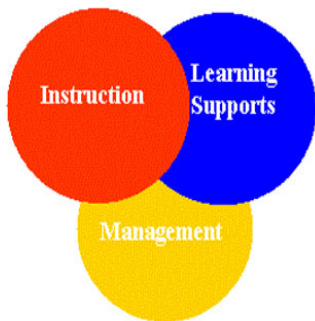
For more webinars, go to the our Center's links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

**So things are getting
back to normal at school.**



That's the trouble!



For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development, advancing social justice, and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.

Invitation to Listserv Participants:

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action. Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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

For new sign-ups – email 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/>)**