

Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

April, 2020 (Vol. 24 #7) – 33 Years & Counting

Special Edition

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**Concerned about addressing barriers to student learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students? about equity of opportunity? about whole child development? about school climate? All that and more is our focus.*



We encourage you to forward this to others. If this has been forwarded and you want to receive it directly, contact: Ltaylor@ucla.edu



For more on resources from our national Center, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

>About Coping with the Emergency and Beyond

While the first emphasis in crisis intervention is responding to the immediate emergency and mitigating the impact, the work soon calls for anticipating what will ensue. This includes follow-up care as needed and revamping systems to meet changing circumstances.

During the Coronavirus pandemic, the first concern has been to “flatten the curve” and enhance medical capacity. With the closing down of commerce, there was concern for maintaining access to food and medications. With schools shut down and stay at home policy, family life is more complicated. Along with enhancing safety from the virus, maintaining mental health and providing for education are widespread concerns. And anticipating the day when schools reopen, planning soon needs to begin for an increasing number of learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Throughout all this, personal coping and resiliency is a major concern.

Below are excerpts from resources on coping and fostering resilience.

Several years ago the Center compiled *Responding to Crisis at a School* as a resource aid (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/crisis/crisis.pdf>). In it, we include excerpts from a series of fact sheets from the American Psychological Association. Here we adapt the material to fit the current situation.

About Facilitating and Fostering Social Ties and Resources

People seek out others for solace and support during difficult times. Identifying and utilizing these resources are important for resiliency. Social support is critical to managing stress. Caring and supportive relationships can provide emotional support that may buffer the impact of acutely stressful situations or crises and allow for expression of difficult emotions. Supportive social networks also can provide assistance and information relevant to managing traumatic stressors. ...

What Works

- >Provide children and adolescents with opportunities to share and discuss their feelings and concerns.
- >Despite physical distancing, maintain social connections. Youngsters' friendships and social activities are important for normalizing children's and adolescents' lives and promoting good adjustment.
- >Reduce or minimize children's and adolescents' exposure to upsetting images.
- >Encourage children and teens to stay healthy and fit by eating well, getting regular exercise, participating in recreational and learning activities, and sleeping well. Maintaining good health and being physically and mentally active in appropriate ways is important for coping with stress.
- >Encourage children and adolescents to use positive strategies for coping with stressors that ensue. Parents and caring adults may also model positive coping for children.

What Doesn't Work

- >Avoiding discussions of distressing events. Parents and other caring adults may think that children are not bothered by events or that discussions of events will be upsetting to them; however, this may lead to missed opportunities for sharing and support.
- >Pressuring children to talk. Create a positive, receptive atmosphere for discussions, and let children bring issues up as they choose. Occasional direct questions about how a child is doing will communicate to the child that the parent or adult is interested.

Supportive adults can model and help children learn positive coping strategies to use in the face of adversity. In general, active coping strategies (i.e., doing something positive to help – such as writing to others about events, keeping a journal, connecting by phone or online with friends or family, volunteering to help others, making positive self-statements, doing creative projects, exercising, eating well, taking control over daily events).

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No matter what happens, there are incredible, urgent life lessons here. We are teaching our kids both directly and through our own example how to take responsibility—not just for ourselves and our immediate family, but for our local and global community, as well.
Christine Carter

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>Quick Links to Online Resources

- >Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19>
- >Resources to support teachers during the coronavirus outbreak
<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/support-teachers-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>
- >Real time resilience strategies for coping with Coronavirus
https://nziwr.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/NZIWR_Real-time_Resilience_Coping_with_Coronavirus.pdf
- >Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks
<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Coping-with-Stress-During-Infectious-Disease-Outbreaks/sma14-4885>

If you missed the resources and news in the Special Editions of the Community of Practice prepared in relation to the crisis, below is what you'll find at
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

3/31/20

- >>Request from NY for resources on grief that schools can use
- >>Concern about at risk students and how schools can keep in touch
- >>Updates on Arizona and Illinois schools during pandemic
- >>Links to a few other relevant resources

3/30/20

- >>How schools and their student/learning support staff are and can take action NOW
- >>What children and youth can do to help others during the crisis
- >>What are superintendents telling their community?
- >>Links to a few other relevant resources

3/29/20

- >>Moving Ahead: Ready to be Proactive
- >>Physical distancing, not social distancing
- >>“Revisiting our school/district crisis plan: we didn’t plan for this crisis”
- >>Seattle schools provide essential services during the crisis
- >>Links to a few other relevant resources

3/28/20

- >>Early Warning: Now is the time to Plan for the Increase in Student Problems When Schools Reopen
- >>Resources related to setting up a hotline/helpline related to the crisis
- >>District to go to online learning/grading to complete the school year
- >>Community Tool Kit of Resources Related to the Crisis
- >>Messages Sent Out by a School Nurse and a Superintendents
- >>Links to a few other relevant resources

3/27/20

- >>Establishing online teams at school, district, and state levels to plan and provide enhanced student/learning supports now and when students return
- >>What student support national organizations are advising
- >>What State Departments of Education are Doing
- >>Links to a few other relevant resources

3/26/20

- >>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 resources

3/24/20

- >>Time to establish a pool for free tutoring
- >>Engaging teens in learning during the crisis
- >>What state departments of education are doing/advising
- >>Links to a few other relevant resource

3/23/20

- >>U.S. Department of Education update
- >>Social and Emotional Support for students
- >>What state departments of education are doing/suggesting
- >>Links to a few other relevant resources

3/22/20

Activities for Kids While Schools are Closed

3/21/20

Sharing Information about Resources and Actions

- >National School Boards Association guidance on the crisis
- >In times of crisis:
 - >>Taking care of ourselves and our families and friends
 - >>Continuing to support students and their families
 - >>Strengthening our communities

What state departments of education are doing/suggesting

Links to a few other relevant resources

3/19/20

- >About Student/Learning Supports and the Coronavirus
- >A Superintendent’s letter to families
- >American Psychological Association Advice for Mental Health
- >What state departments of education are advising
- >Links to a few other relevant resources
- >More At-home Activities

3/17/20

- >How are on-the-job school staff continuing to provide support to students and families?
- >What do state departments of education suggest?

3/15/20

- >Update on plans for students when schools are closed

3/13/20

- >CDC resources for schools related to the coronavirus
 - >>Mitigation: Schools/childcare
 - >>Mental health concerns

3/4/20

- >Guidance for Schools About the Coronavirus

>For more resources, see our website
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

>For info on the status of upcoming conferences, initiatives, workshops
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm>

>For info on webinars
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

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Creating a cycle of altruism is helpful when we are faced with a challenge that affects us all, helping to foster trust in each other and care for each other's plight.

Jill Suttie

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>Starting to Plan for Schools Reopening and Transforming Student and Learning Supports

Establishing Online Teams at School, District, and State Levels to Plan and Provide Enhanced Student/learning Supports Now and When Students Return

This is a much needed time for those responsible for student/learning supports to be connected as a team focusing on providing for students, families, and staff -- both now and in anticipation of when schools reopen. Most teams can be connected online; emails and conference phone calls are other means. Clearly, we all are learning new ways to continue to support students/families/staff during the crisis. At the same time, schools must start planning for the increased number of learning, behavior, and emotional problems that are likely to manifest as student transition-back to school. The situation will require new thinking about how staff works together.

As each student support organization and education agency provides guidance to its members, we suggest that pulling together a Learning Supports Leadership Team is essential to effectively planning (a) how to provide learning supports during the crisis and (b) how to plan for transitions back to post crisis conditions. We also think this is a time to plan ways to unify student/learning supports and start to evolve them into a comprehensive and equitable system.

For schools to meet the challenges ahead, they will have to end the marginalization, fragmentation, and counterproductive competition related to providing essential student/learning supports.

Here are a couple of relevant resources:

>What is a Learning Supports Leadership Team?
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/resource_coord_team.pdf

>What Is a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports?
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whatis.pdf>

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Please do not let a single thing hold you back from the instincts of doing the right thing. Take this time to energize your staff members and empower them as you should be empowered to make a difference now.... Please do not get stuck in the weedy details. Get students out of buildings and empower teachers to do enrichment and education. We have to build the infrastructure to serve each student and this is no time to be caught in bureaucracy. Doing your best is the best defense...

Mathew Blomstedt, Commissioner of Education

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>Calls for grant proposals
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm>

> job and training opportunities when available
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm>

>A Few Newsworthy Stories

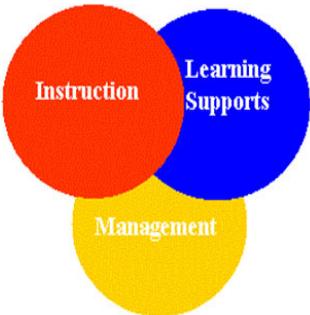
Excerpted from various news sources:

>>Central Florida schools are stepping up with an unlikely weapon to help local medical professionals protect themselves against the coronavirus. School leaders learned that area-hospitals are in dire need of lab-style goggles. Since students aren't in the classroom, schools are donating their goggle supplies to medical centers. The principal of Oviedo High School said. her school was contacted by Nemours Children's Hospital because their staff is in need of protective eyewear. The next day, she donated 100 goggles used for science classes.

After Daniel posted on Twitter encouraging other schools to do the same, Trinity Preparatory school in Winter Park also stepped in to help. For Dr. Thomas Lacy, Division Chief of Nemours Children's Health System, their donations are keeping staff and patients safe.

>>The YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles announced Saturday that it is partnering with Nutritious Life to launch a grab-and-go meal program for students during the pandemic-related school closures. According to its statement, the YMCA-LA branches will distribute free meals two times per week, providing meals for multiple days, for all youth per household age 18 and under. The grab-and-go program is scheduled to run from March 30 to May 1. The L.A. branches will conduct drive-thru and/or walk-up distribution of pre-packaged, shelf-stable meals on a first-come, first-served basis.

>>Schools have closed and Michiganders are staying indoors during the COVID-19 crisis. Business are shut and some are out of work, which means that some families will not have enough food or resources for the coming weeks. There are about 750,000 children in Michigan who receive free and reduced lunch at school, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Tuesday. To ensure children are still getting nutritious meals, school districts throughout the state are setting up food distribution sites. Private businesses and neighbors are chipping in with food, internet service and cash, too. For resource links, see



**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

Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

DEAR READER:

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.

For those who are employed by state and local education agencies and schools, we know you are busy. It would be great to share what actions you are taking to address immediate concerns and how you are anticipating the problems that will arise when schools reopen.



THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

Who Are We? Recently renamed the Center for MH in Schools and Student/Learning Supports, our national Center was established in 1995 under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center and its many resources, go to the website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> or email Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu

Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu