

SUPPORTING OUR CHILDREN'S
ACADEMIC & SOCIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS
DURING THIS CHALLENGING TIME



Irvine Unified School District

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

May 28, 2020



HELLO!

- Amy Ochoa-Autism Coordinator
- Dr. Stephanie Pettey-Coordinator, Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS)
- Christina Reyes- Program Specialist



Training objectives...



- *To Review and Understand Strategies/Suggestions for Social Emotional Wellness During School Closure*
- *To Explore General Behavioral Strategies to Use at Home with Your Children*
- *To Provide a Comprehensive Resource Bank*



HOW DO WE ADAPT THIS NEW "NORMAL?"

Let's first recognize the "COVID-19 journey" was unexpected... and none of us were given a guidebook to navigate this!



How do we create a new normal?

<https://www.uth.edu/news/story.htm?id=e5c159f0-11af-4091-9f1d-342b5a64583a>



Key Components to Social Emotional Wellness For Children during Covid-19 Closure

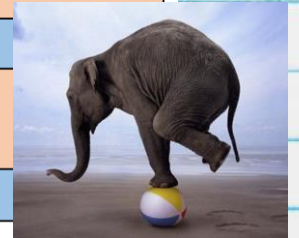
1. Routines!
2. Communication!
3. Staying Connected!
4. Understanding the Warning Signs!
5. Teaching Coping Skills at Home!
6. Community Resources!



Routines!: Gaining Balance Through a Routine



| | |
|-----|--|
| #1 | People who live by a routine are happier |
| #2 | When you live by a daily routine, you are more likely to reach your goals than live on impulses |
| #3 | Adults feel a sense of purpose, and children feel a sense of security |
| #4 | People who live by a routine have less stress |
| #5 | Routines build stronger family bonds |
| #6 | Families who follow routines are more likely to pass on values and traditions |
| #7 | Families who live by routine get through the hard times a little easier than those who don't |
| #8 | Families with routines have healthier habits |
| #9 | Children who grow up with a routine develop a sense of responsibility and time management skills |
| #10 | Last but not least, a routine promotes better behavior |



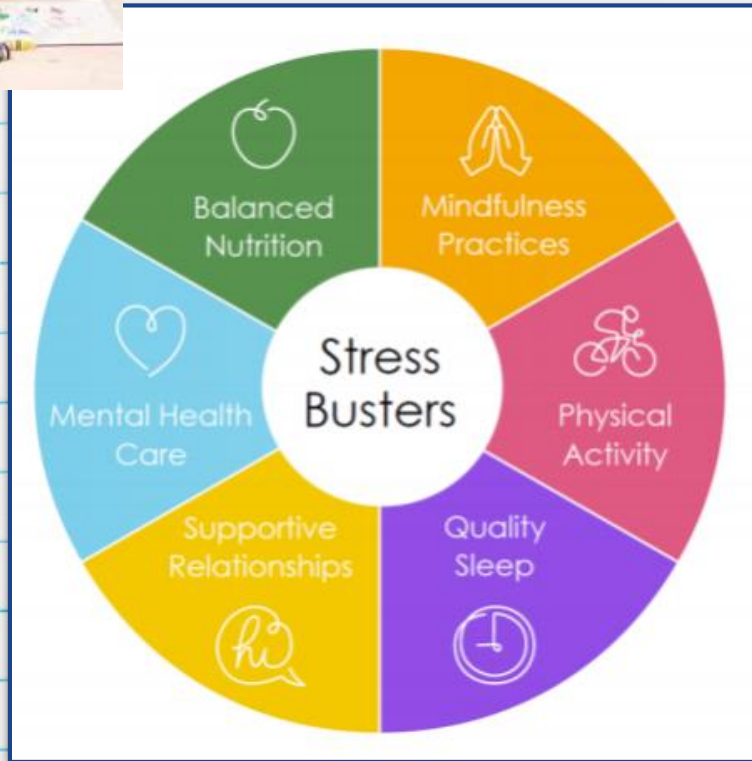
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/Working-and-Learning-from-Home-During-the-COVID-19-Outbreak.aspx>
<https://www.thisisthatparenting.com/create-a-daily-routine-for-your-family/>
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Routines!: Creating a Routine

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Develop a Routine that Utilizes the 6 Stress Busting Strategies!



1. Supportive Relationships
2. Exercise
3. Sleep
4. Nutrition
5. Mental Health and Behavioral Health Support
6. Mindfulness/Meditation/Prayer

[Link: CA Surgeon General Stress Busting Playbook](#)

[Link: Common Sense Media: Keeping Kids Motivated During Online Learning/Routines](#)

[Link: Sample Schedules for Younger Children](#)

[Link: Sample Schedule for Teens](#)





Communication!: Check-in Frequently and Listen

Encourage open communication and provide developmentally appropriate explanations:

| <i>EARLY ELEMENTARY & Children with impacted comprehension or Complex Communication Needs</i> | <i>UPPER ELEMENTARY / EARLY MIDDLE SCHOOL</i> | <i>UPPER MIDDLE SCHOOL / HIGH SCHOOL</i> |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Provide brief, simple information that balances COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that adults are there to help keep them healthy and to take care of them if they do get sick. Give simple examples of the steps people make every day to stop germs and stay healthy, such as washing hands. Use language such as "adults are working hard to keep you safe."</p> | <p>This age group/developmental range often is more vocal in asking questions about whether they indeed are safe and what will happen if COVID-19 spreads in their area. They may need assistance separating reality from rumor and fantasy. Discuss the efforts national, state, and community leaders are doing to prevent germs from spreading.</p> | <p>Issues can be discussed in more depth. Refer students with advanced comprehension and critical thinking skills to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts. Provide honest, accurate, and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Engage them in decision-making about family plans, scheduling, and helping with chores at home.</p> |

***Note: these age/developmental ranges are general guidelines. It is important to note that children with varying abilities may fall anywhere within this continuum of approaches. Further reading regarding this can be found within the article below from NASP.*

<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>





Communication!: Check-in Frequently and Listen

Let children know it's normal to feel upset or anxious and that you are there to help!

*How to Talk to Kids about Coronavirus: **Early Childhood:***

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

Expanding Your Child's Circle of Concern

(developing awareness, talking through concerns, tools for action):

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/expanding-your-childs-circle-of-concern>



*Tips/Strategies to Communicating with **Teens:***

https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/PFA/PFA_Parent_Tips_Adolescents.pdf

National Association of School Psychologists resource:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UhVGB-eb4PnMnqXisY0wcXlInyggDQ0/view?usp=sharing>

NPR: A Comic That Helps Explain Coronavirus to Children:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>





Stay Connected!

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Staying Connected is Essential for Children of All Ages! We have to get creative:

Host a Virtual Play Dates:

- Apps/Platforms to try: Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp, Caribu, Marco Polo
- [Link: 30 Virtual Field Trips](#) (do this with friends!)

Host a Movie Night with friends:

- [Link: Netflix Watch Party](#) -free Google Chrome Extension to watch with friends!
- [Link: Airtime](#) - for non-Netflix users

Host an Online Game Night:

- [Link: Pogo](#) (board games like Yahtzee, Monopoly, Crossword, Puzzles)
- [Link: Let's Play Uno](#),
- [Link: Pokemon Go](#) (modified for stay home order)



Stay Connected!

Staying Connected is Essential for Children of All Ages! We have to get creative:

Use our Words:

- Text/Video Chats/Emails
- Messenger Kids (powered by Facebook, monitored by parents!)



Tap into our Artistic Side:

- Write letters or draw pictures and mail pictures to family and friends (Create a Pen Pal!)
- **Link:** Draw Something app (take turns drawing pictures and having partner guess!)

Connect with your Neighborhood:

- Community Scavenger Hunt
- Decorate signs to put in your windows for neighbors to see
- **Link:** Showing Kindness Painting Activity Video
(a video created by one of our very own IUSD ERMHS Specialist!)



Understand the Warning Signs!



Anxiety

Young Children/Children with Developmental Delays :

- Tantrums, meltdowns, aggression, defiance
- Reassurance Seeking, clinginess
- Trouble Sleeping, sudden bedwetting

Older Children/Teens

- May present as irritable, isolated, withdrawn
- Physical Symptoms
- Trouble Sleeping

Depression

Young Children/Children with Developmental Delays :

- Unusual Sadness
- Harsh Self Assessment
- Sleep/Night Routine Challenges

Older Children/Teens

- Social isolation, increase in conflicts
- Reduced interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Shift in sleep patterns/eating habits
- Harsh self-assessment, agitation



Suicidal Thoughts/Ideation:

- Serious Mood Swings, Reckless behavior, Drug/alcohol use, Talking about hopelessness, Talk about being burdensome, Talking/writing/drawing about suicide



Understand the Warning Signs!

*Additional Resources for Understanding the Signs/Symptoms of
Mental Health or Social Emotional Challenges*

Link : [National Association of School Psychologists: Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from Covid-19](#)

Link : [Child Mind Institute: \(Mental Health TipSheet for Teens\):](#)

*Link : [National Association of School Psychologists: Anxiety Handout for Home and School](#)
Learn more about anxiety supports for home and school*



Coping Skills: Why Should we Teach Coping Skills?

First, let's look at what our children are thinking:



Source: Forsa on behalf of Save the Children

So what can we do to help our children?

Let's look at how we can help them develop some good coping skills!

<https://www.childrenscolorado.org/doctors-and-departments/departments/psych/mental-health-professional-resources/primary-care-articles/pediatric-coping-skills/>



Coping Skills

Resources for Teaching Coping Skills to Elementary Age or Children with Developmental Delays



Link: [How to Help Younger/Children with Developmental Delays De-Stress During Coronavirus: Deep Breathing/Belly Breath Practice with Daniel Tiger, Sesame Street and Esme & Roy FireHOSE assessment of basic needs](#)

Link: [How to Use Play to Navigate Challenging Times](#)

The power of play in supporting young children understand the changes in our world



Link: [Get Outside! Nature as a Stress Relief for Kids:](#)

Learn how the outdoors can support stress relief for children. Get creative!

Link: [First 5 Organization Activities/Coloring to Support Young Children During Community Stress](#)



Coping Skills

Resources for Teaching Coping Skills for Children of All Ages



Create a Worry Jar!
Click [here](#) to read more..

Books to Help Children
Deal with Big Feelings:

- [Link: Book List](#)



Keep a Journal!

Write About Feelings
Check the facts
Realistic vs. Unrealistic
Challenge Thoughts



Helping Children Cope, Starts with US, the adults:

- Model the use of these strategies
- [Link: Managing Anxiety and Stress](#) - a resource page from the CDC



Coping Skills

Resources for Teaching Coping Skills for Children of All Ages

Focus on Control & Thinking Flexibly

Link: [Thinking Flexibly Video & Activity](#)

(a video created by one of our very own IUSD ERMHS Specialists!)

Link: [Focus on Control Video & Activity](#)

(a video created by one of our very own IUSD ERMHS Specialists!)



Encourage Positive Thinking

Find the Good:

- Share what you appreciate about your child
- Acknowledge your child's accomplishments
- Take time to share what you are grateful for during this time
- **Link:** [How to Look for The Helpers and Be one during Coronavirus](#)
- **Link:** [Helping Children Develop a Positive Attitude](#)

Link: [Staying Positive Video](#)

(a video created by one of our very own IUSD ERMHS Specialists!)



Coping Skills



have a calm body

Resources for Teaching Coping Skills for Children of All Ages

Breathing & Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- [Link: Calming Anxiety Strategies for Younger kids](#)
- [Link: Breathing Exercises for Kids](#)
- [Link: Video Demonstrating Deep Breathing for Kids](#)

Teen Corner:

[Link: GritX.org](#)

- Self-Care ToolKit
- Self-Interview
- Interactive Skill Tutorial



Mindfulness/Yoga/ Meditation

[Link: Mental Health Apps to Use with Young Children through Teens](#)

[Link: Mindfulness Apps for Kids](#)

- Yoga
- Mindfulness
- Breathing

[Link: Calm.com](#)

[Link: Mindshift](#)

[Link: Headspace](#)





Community Mental Health Resources

- **Families and Communities Together (FACT)**
<https://www.factoc.org/>
- **Behavioral Health**
<http://www.ochealthinfo.com/bhs/about/nit/oclinks/>
- **Prevention and Intervention Services**
<http://www.ochealthinfo.com/bhs/about/pi>
- **The LGBTQ Center of Orange County**
<https://www.lgbtqcenteroc.org/>
- **Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)**
<https://pflag.org/about>
- **211 (specifically links under the Teens and Parent Support headings)**
<https://www.211oc.org/family.html>
- **Trauma-informed resource**
<http://www.oc4kids.com/involved/trauma>



Community Mental Health Resources Cont.

Crisis Text Line

Description: Free 24/7 support for people in crisis.

<https://www.crisistextline.org/>

Hotline: Text "HOME" to 741741

OC Suicide Prevention/Crisis Line

Description: Confidential 24-hour telephone counseling to individuals contemplating, threatening, or attempting suicide (877)727-4747

California Youth Crisis Line

Description: Free 24/7 support for young people 12 to 24 years old.

Hotline: 800-843-5200

Teen Crisis Hotline

(800) 448-3000

Suicide Prevention App

Description: Stay connected when having thoughts of suicide

<https://my3app.org/>

NAMI-OC Warm Line

Description: Free confidential telephone service providing emotional support and resources to Orange County residents.

Hotline: 714-991-6412

9 a.m. - 3 a.m. (Mon.- Fri.)

10 a.m. - 3 a.m. (Sat.- Sun.)

<https://www.cityofirvine.org/seek-assistance/families>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Description: Suicide prevention hotline and services.

English: 800-273-TALK

Español: 888-628-9454

TTY: 800-799-4889

Online chat: suicidepreventionlifeline.org



*General Behavior
Strategies*

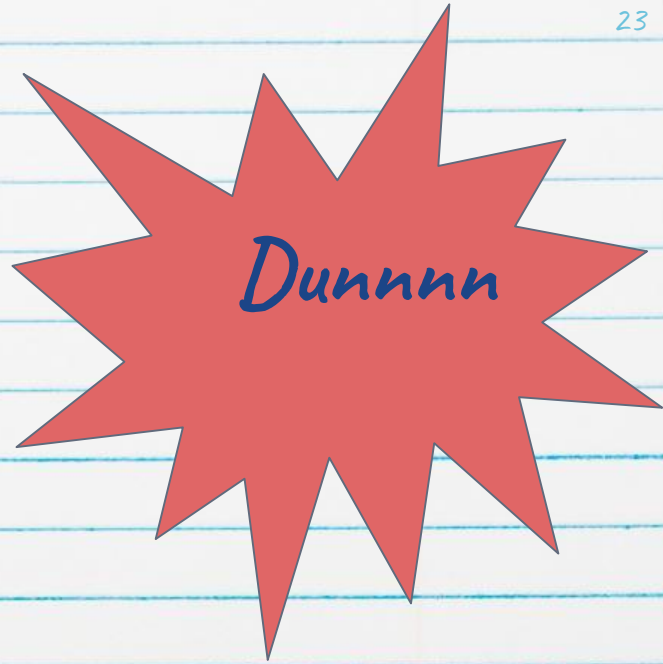
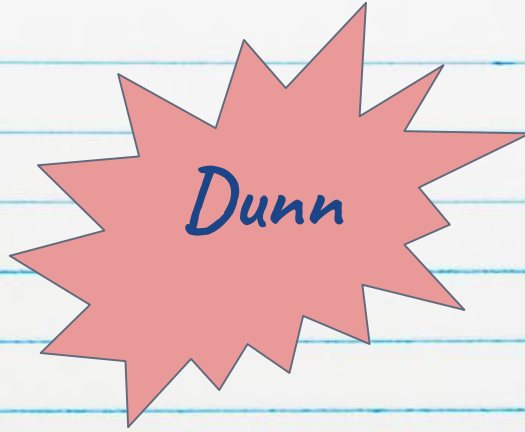


*“If you can't be flexible in life,
you become irritable with life”*

-Kathy Reichs, 2016



THINGS TO EXPECT...

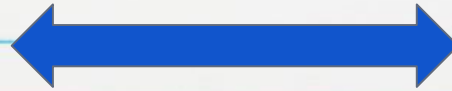


BEHAVIORAL ISSUES



THINGS WE KNOW...

- *This is an uncertain time for all of us*
- *Changes to schedules are challenging for all of us and you may see this demonstrated in your child via behavioral excesses and/or shutting down.*



Keeping calm and consistent is your best approach

Let's look after ourselves, and each other.



THINGS WE NEED TO REMEMBER...

- Behavior (in the vast majority of instances) is a form of communication. Look at what your child is trying to communicate to you
- Set clear boundaries, remain patient, and know that the behaviors you are seeing may be due to the many changes occurring. Try to have your child communicate their needs in an appropriate manner (versus by demonstrating behaviors).

Function Based Behavior Strategy Bank:



VISUAL SCHEDULES

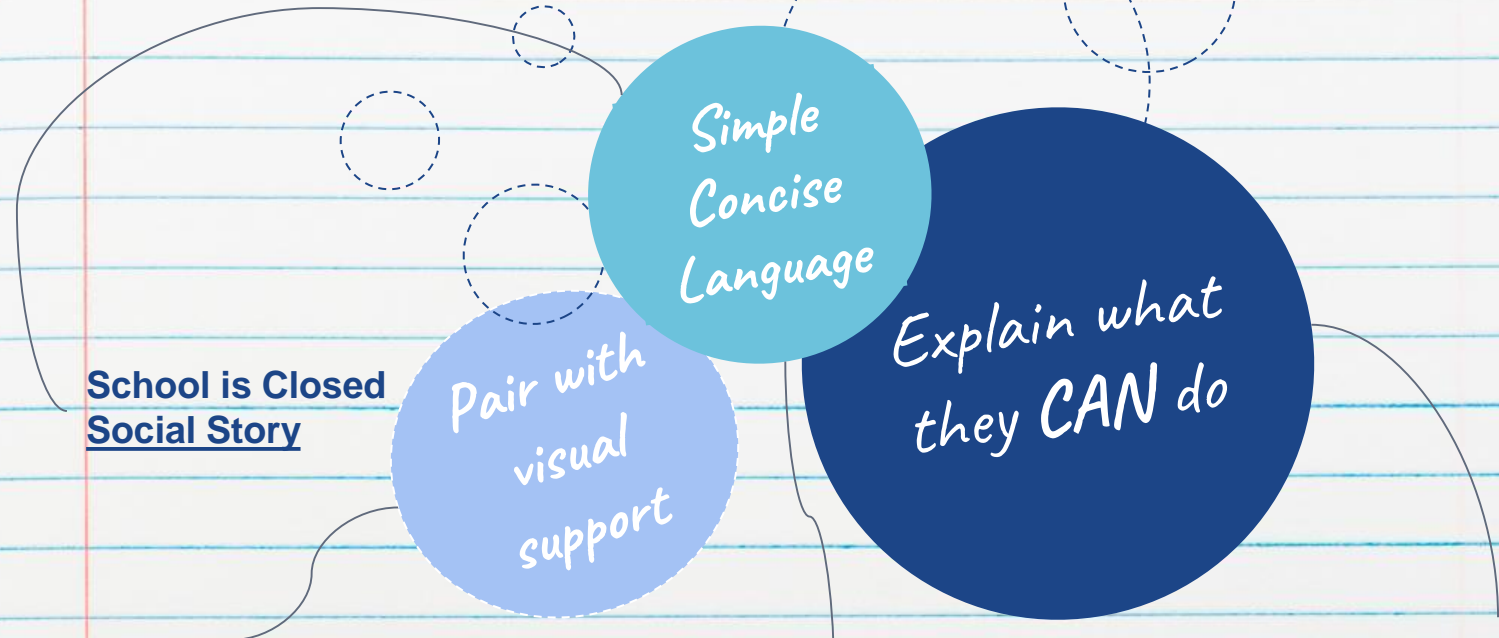
Goals of a Visual Schedule:

- *Create independence*
- *Teach time management*
- *Facilitate flexibility*
- *Provide structure*
- *Establish expectations*
- *Informs the child of the activities for the day*
- *Decrease downtime*

[Daily Home Schedule Activity Ideas.pdf](#)



SOCIAL STORIES



School is Closed Social Story

Coronavirus social story.docx

Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf

The-Corona-Virus-Free-Printable-Updated-2-The-Autism-Educator-1-1.pdf





SELF-CARE



BUILD TIME INTO THE DAY FOR QUIET TIME

ADD IN MOVEMENT BREAKS THROUGHOUT THE DAY

NEW NORMS ARE OKAY!

- Calm Breathing Bubble
- Shape breathing exercise
- Balloon breathing exercise



RESOURCE BANK...

Dealing with Covid-19: Large resource bank for Special Educators, Therapists, and Families:

[Dealing with Covid-19](#)

Links to social stories about wearing masks:

[Simple visual based social story about wearing a mask](#)

[Picture based social story about masks keeping us safe](#)

Links to video based social stories about wearing masks:

[Simple video with animation about wearing masks](#)

[Rules for wearing my mask video](#)



RESOURCE BANK (CONTINUED)...

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Free Self and Match (self-monitoring) resource:

[Free Parent Resource: Self & Match for Home](#)

Visual Schedules and Task Analysis:

[Visual schedules and task analysis seia symposium participants.pdf](#)

Links for general parent-education during Covid-19:

[Supporting Families During COVID-19](#)

[Webinar: Candid Conversations: Self-Care During COVID-19 \(Episode 1\)](#)



RESOURCE BANK (CONTINUED)...

Autism 24/7: A Family Guide to Learning at Home and in the Community

[Downloadable Books](#)

Washing Hands Contingency Map

[Washing hands contingency map.pdf](#)

Simple Token Board

[Token Board](#)





Any questions?

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