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## Managing Anxiety & the Return to School

A WEBINAR SERIES

  
 Dr. Kendra Read

  
 Dr. Jennifer Blossom

**Part 1: September 9, 2020**  
**Part 2: October 7, 2020**  
**Parts 3 & 4: TBA**  
**1:00 - 2:30 pm Pacific Time**

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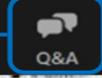
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# Managing Anxiety & the Return to School Webinar Series

## Part 2: Managing Anxiety During COVID



*Presented by:*

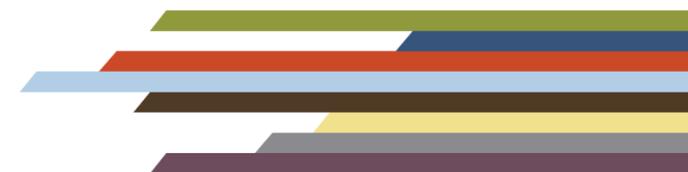
*Kendra Read, PhD, Seattle Children's and University of Washington*  
*Jennifer Blossom, PhD, University of Maine, Farmington*

**Join us for Part 3:**  
An Interactive Q&A  
December 9, 2020  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm  
Pacific Time

*Disclaimer: The views, opinions, and content expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).*

# Land Acknowledgement

The University of Washington SMART Center and Northwest MHTTC acknowledge that we learn, live, and work on the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people who walked here before us, and those who still walk here. We are grateful to respectfully live and work as guests on these lands with the Coast Salish and Native people who call this home.



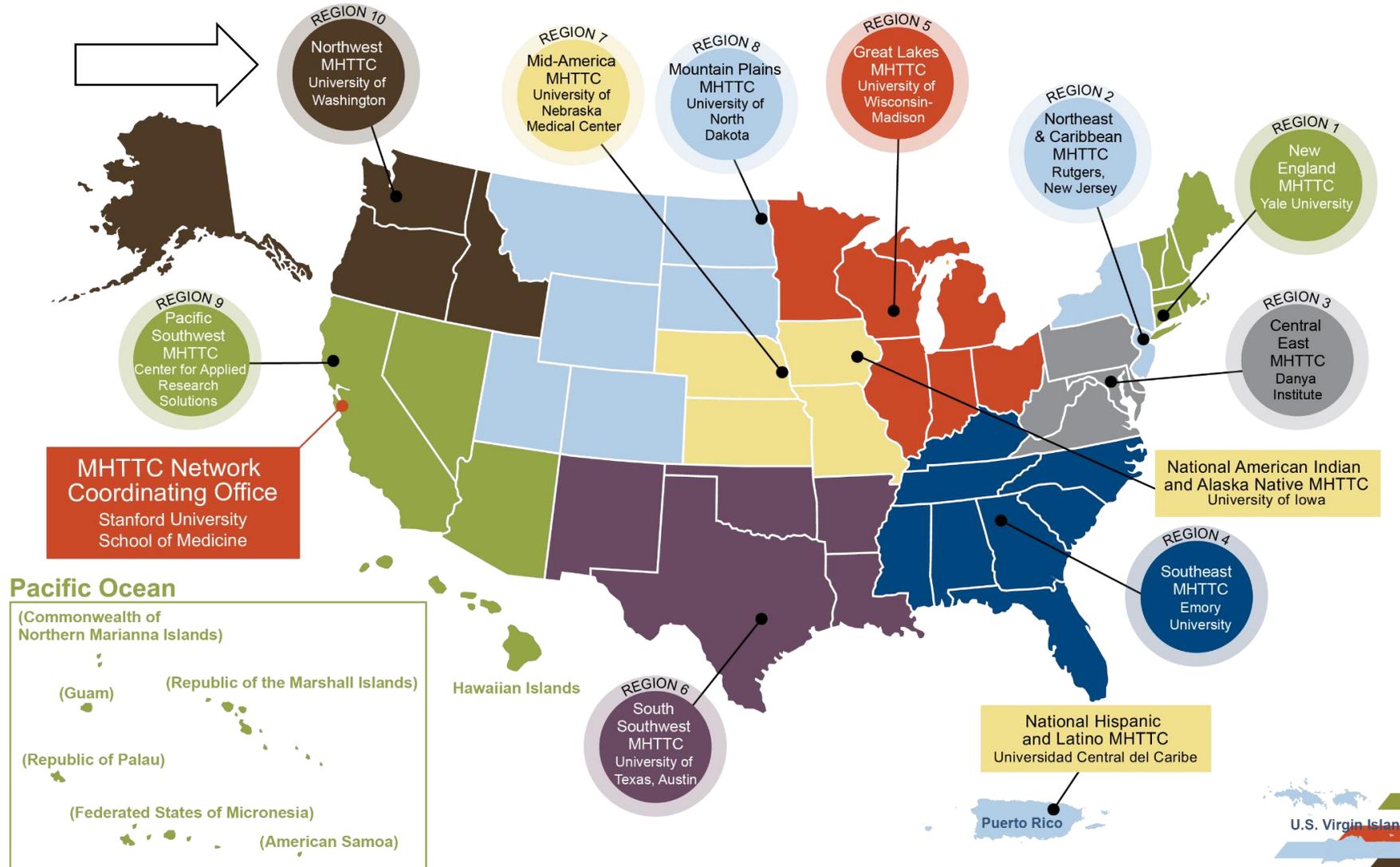
# Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) Network



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

MHTTC Network



Visit the MHTTC website at <https://mhttcnetwork.org/>

# Northwest MHTTC School Mental Health Team



Kelcey Schmitz, MSEd



Megan Lucy, BA



Nathaly Florez, BA



Eric Bruns, PhD

## Our goals:

Provide direct training and TA on the implementation of mental health services in schools

Build infrastructure and create learning communities

Support educational leaders to promote mental health for ALL

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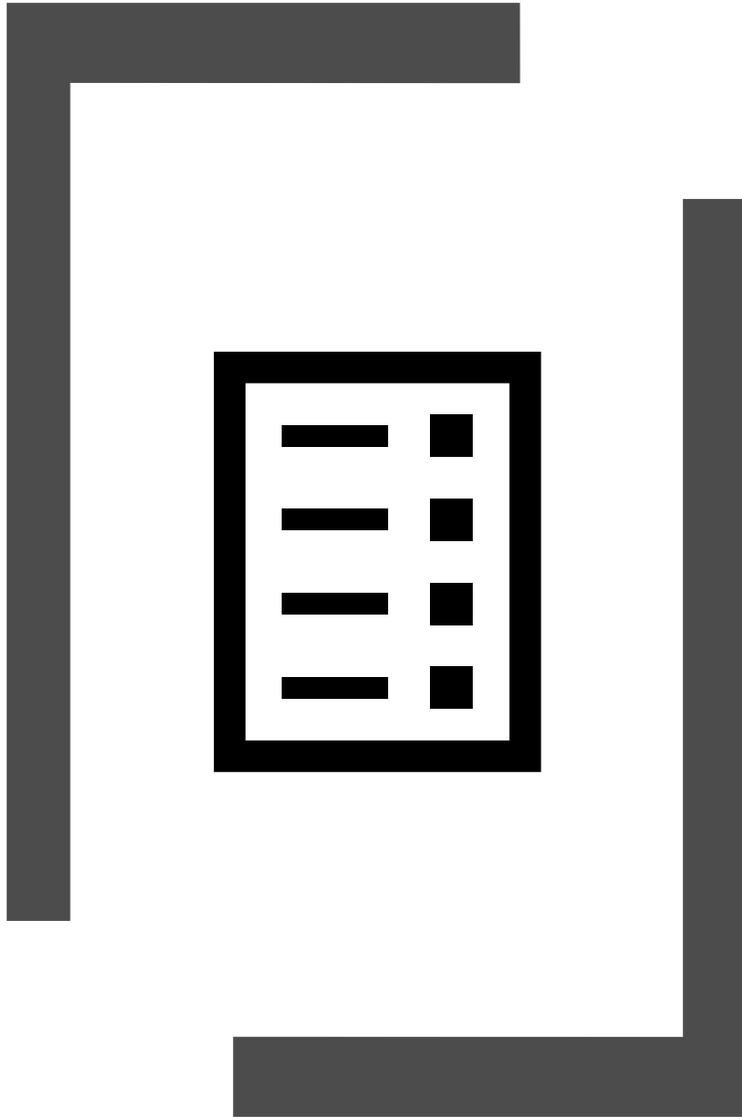
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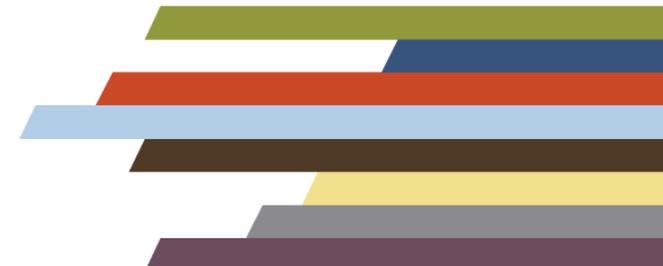
Raise Hand

Q&A



# Event Survey

- Required by our funder
- Used to inform, refine, & enhance future events/activities
- Helps communicate the need for this type of support
- Voluntary and anonymous
- **Very important!** *We will end a few minutes early and ask that you please take a few moments to complete.*



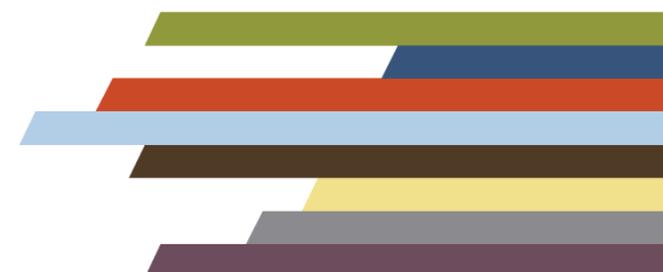
# Presenters

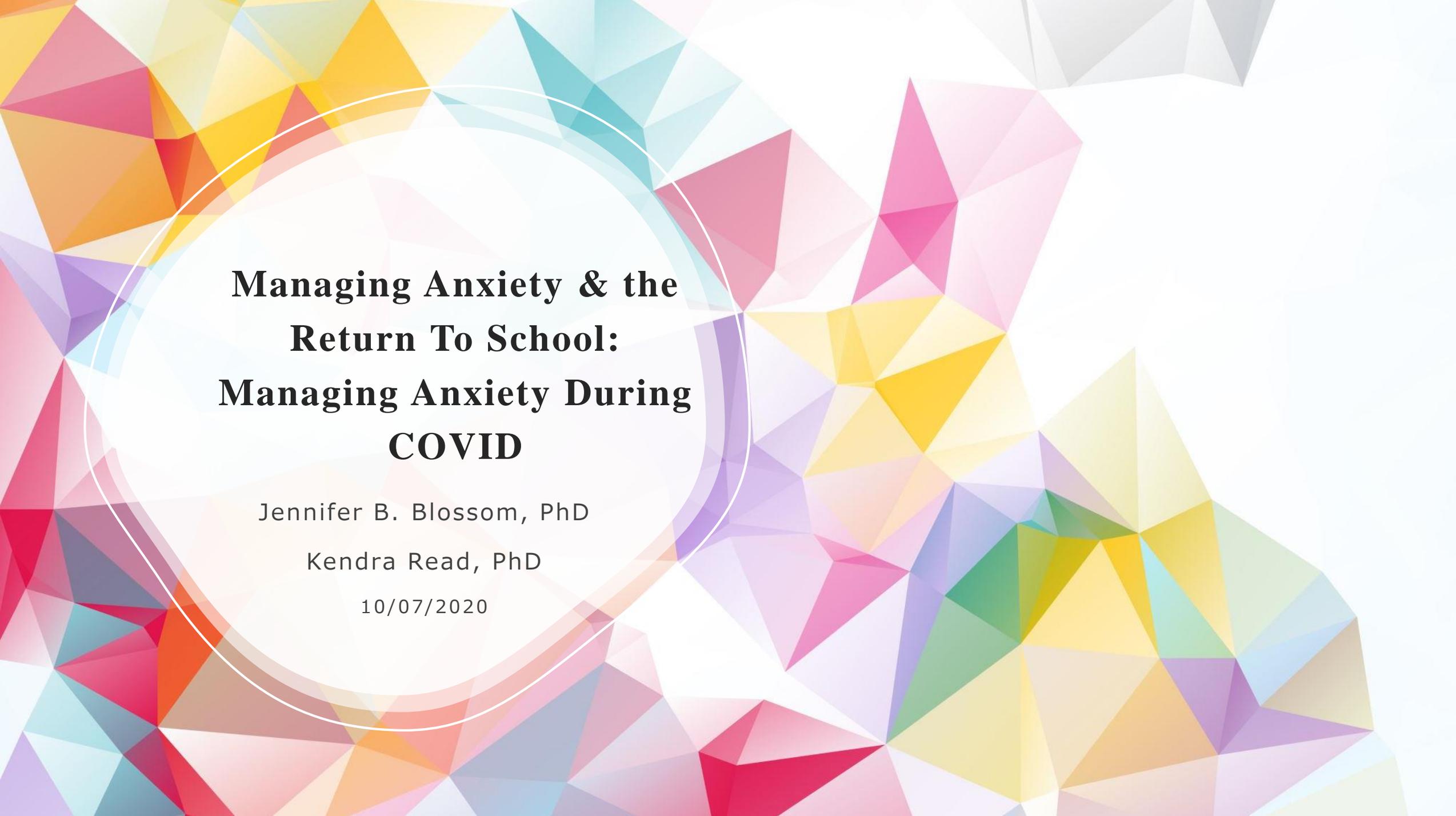


**Kendra Read, PhD** is a clinical psychologist, the Director of the Mood & Anxiety Program and Director of Anxiety Programs at Seattle Children's. She is also the Director of Psychotherapy Training through the University of Washington School of Medicine Child Psychiatry Fellowship. She received her PhD in clinical psychology from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA under the mentorship of Philip Kendall, Ph.D., completed her internship in pediatric psychology at Nemours/A. I. duPont Hospital for Children, and her postdoctoral fellowship at the Stanford University School of Medicine in the Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Department. Dr. Read specializes in the treatment of youth with anxiety disorders and OCD from a cognitive behavioral therapy perspective. Her research interests include understanding factors that contribute to treatment outcome, and the dissemination and implementation of CBT for anxiety disorders.



**Jennifer Blossom, PhD** is a Clinical Child Psychologist with expertise in assessment and intervention for youth with anxiety, depression, and suicidality. Currently, Dr. Blossom is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Psychology and Human Development at the University of Maine at Farmington (UMF), teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Before joining UMF, Dr. Blossom completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at Seattle Children's/University of Washington where she conducted research and provided clinical services within the Mood and Anxiety Program and Crisis Care Clinic. Dr. Blossom maintains an active research program related to service delivery, efficiency, and access for youth with internalizing problems, with particular emphasis on expanding behavioral interventions within integrated healthcare settings.





**Managing Anxiety & the  
Return To School:  
Managing Anxiety During  
COVID**

Jennifer B. Blossom, PhD

Kendra Read, PhD

10/07/2020

# Disclosures

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We do not have any conflicts of interest, nor will we be discussing any off-label product use

This presentation has no commercial support or sponsorship, nor is it co-sponsored



# Learning Objectives

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1. Distinguish typical vs. problematic anxiety within educational settings (both in-person and remote formats) during a global pandemic
2. Apply evidence-based strategies for anxiety to these situations as an educator
3. Learn to promote use of evidence-based strategies for anxiety for youth within an educational setting
4. Understand how implementation of effective anxiety coping strategies can promote resilience



# Key Points from Part 1

- APPROACH: Find manageable steps to help kids work towards FACING their fear vs. avoiding
- AVOID offering excessive reassurance, distractions, or accommodations that promote avoidance
- NOT HARMFUL BUT NOT HELPFUL: relaxation strategies, journaling, etc. Not tied to outcome, sends conflicting message about harm of somatic experience of anxiety



# COVID-19 & Youth Mental Health

Anxiety, especially anticipatory anxiety, is a common reaction in crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused substantial **uncertainty** and perceived loss of control



# COVID-19 & Mental Health Cascade

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Anticipation of long-term mental health impact, particularly anxiety, on youth due to COVID-19 related restrictions:

- Worry about contracting the illness
- Isolation due to quarantine restrictions
- Impact on social determinants of health (e.g., food insecurity)
- Impact on typical developmental trajectories



# COVID-19 & Equity

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COVID-19 has **disproportionately impacted communities of color**

- COVID-19-related mortality is up to **6x** higher for Indigenous peoples relative to White people
- In 2020 alone, the rate of death among communities of color has skyrocketed compared to the last 5 years: Black (31% increase), Latinx/Hispanic (44% increase), Asian (35% increase)

This disproportionately affects youth too

- Black and Latinx youth are **4x** and **6x** more likely, respectively, to test positive for COVID-19 than White youth\*\*
- Youth of color are significantly overrepresented among youth hospitalized due to COVID-19 complications: Black (30%), Latinx (46%), Asian (4%), White (14%)



\*\* This is likely significantly underestimated given documented inequity in access to testing

# COVID-19 & Equity

COVID-19 has disproportionality disrupted the safety & stability of communities of color relative to White communities

- 41%, 32%, and 17%, decline in Black-owned, Latinx-owned, and White-owned businesses respectively between February and April 2020
- Disproportionate rates of unemployment: Black (24%), Latinx/Hispanic (25%), Asian (25%), White (16%)
- In June 2020, Black and Latinx renters were 2x more likely to not be able to pay rent relative to White renters due to COVID-19-related job disruptions



# COVID-19 Inequity & Anxiety

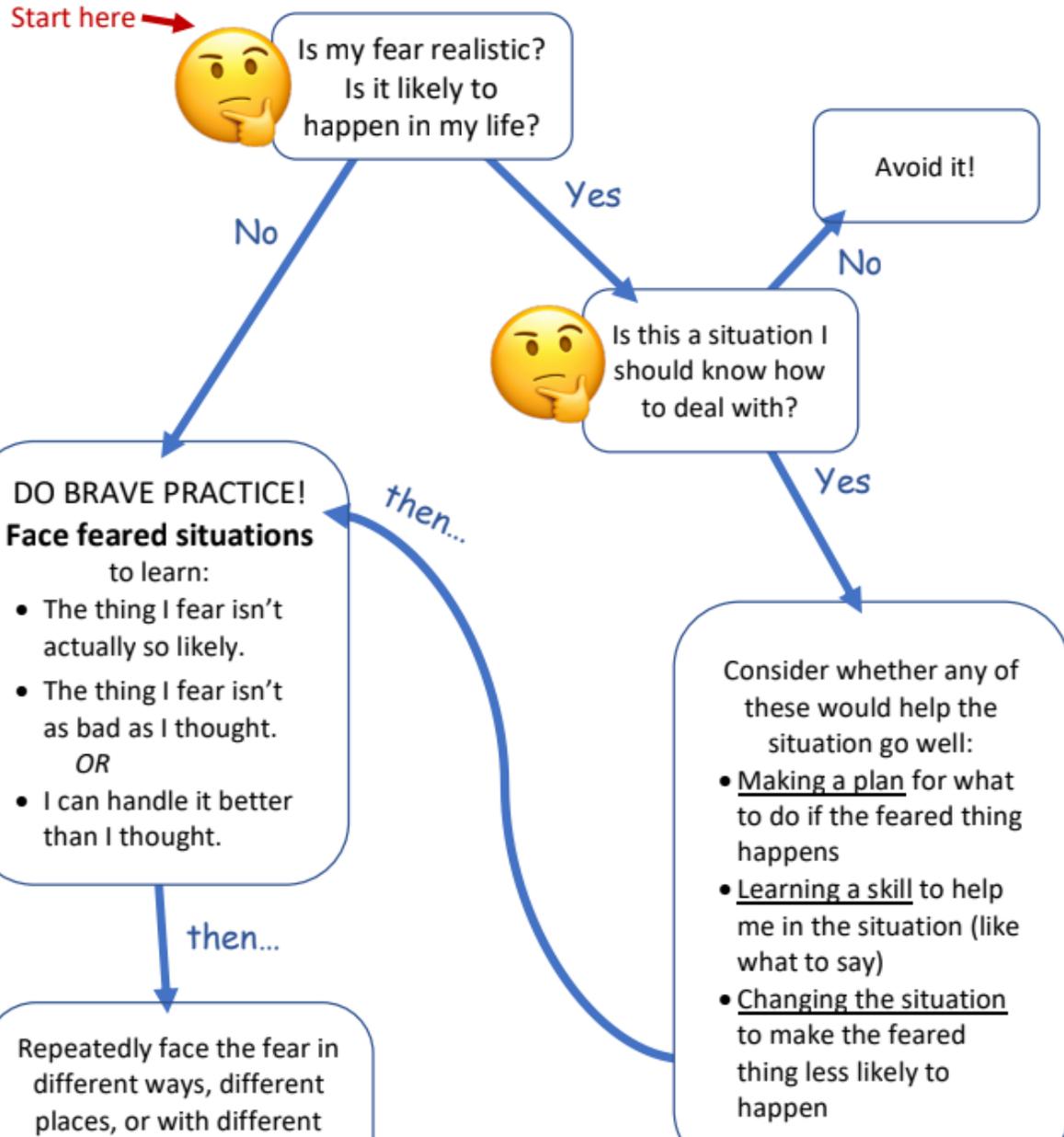
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How do COVID-19-related inequities relate to anxiety?

- Objective **risks** are different for different communities
- Important to consider context when addressing COVID-19 related anxiety
- Mental health consequences of COVID-19 may be more common for youth of color &, concurrently, youth may face greater barriers to treatment



# Guide for Overcoming Fears



## COVID-19 Context

Use a decision tree to determine whether an exposure plan “makes sense”



# Integrated Care

Implementing brief anxiety intervention in settings that youth typically frequent (e.g., school) helps address inequity

Many naturally occurring opportunities to practice facing fears



# Common Fears & Exposures

Fear	Exposure
Fear of negative evaluation by others	Being on zoom with camera on; making a mistake in a social setting, gradually increasing speech/engagement with new people
Fear of separation	Sit independently in a seat, have parent step out of the room
Fear of making mistakes	Answer a question incorrectly, make a mistake on purpose
Fear of physical sx of anxiety	Spin in a chair, have a jumping jack competition



# Supporting Students via Zoom

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Find the manageable first step:

- Join via chat – students can message you directly in chat, then message the whole class in chat
- Support early steps: positive reinforcement for saying “here” or their name



# What to Say

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“I know this is hard and I’m so proud that you’re trying”

Comment on what the student **IS** doing despite anxiety (rather than what they aren’t doing)

For example- for students who have trouble participating via Zoom (and may avoid joining all together), start by reinforcing their attendance (even if not on camera or mostly quiet)



# Anxiety & 504s/IEPs

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Should **not** include accommodations for avoidance (e.g., being able to leave, not having to talk/present)

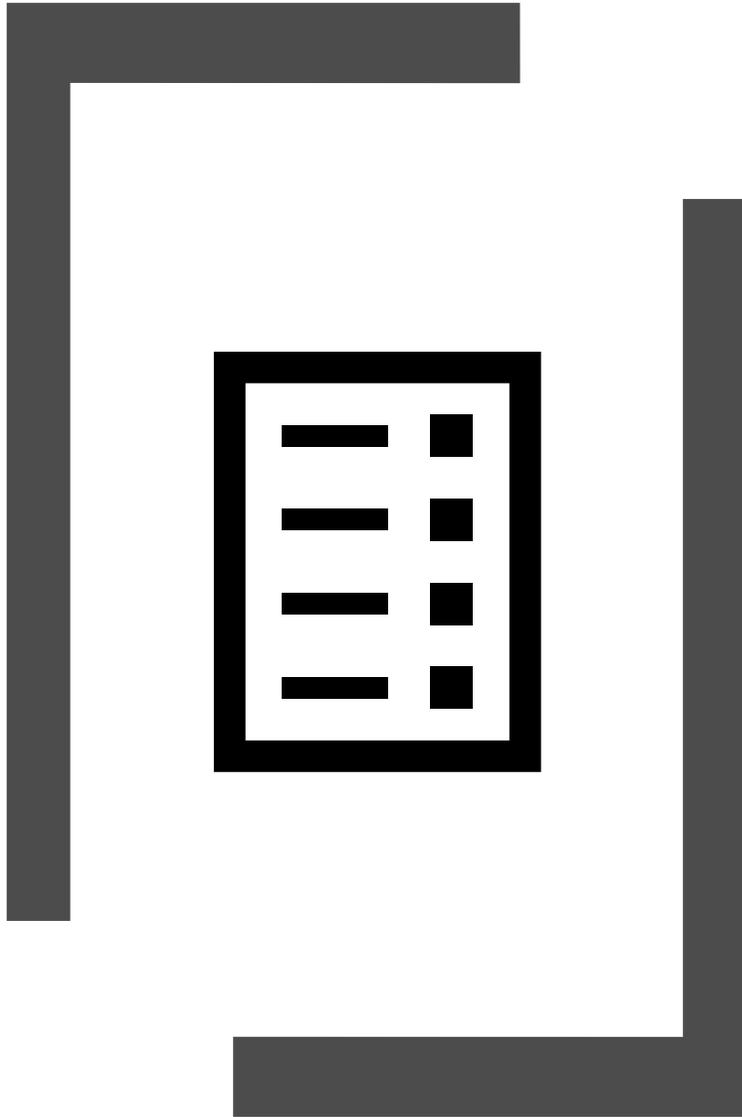
Should include practice approaching: say your name during morning check-in, turn in assignments on-time (even if there are mistakes)

There is no standard set of accommodations or goals- these **MUST** be different for each child based on the specific things they find anxiety provoking and how that is interfering in their education



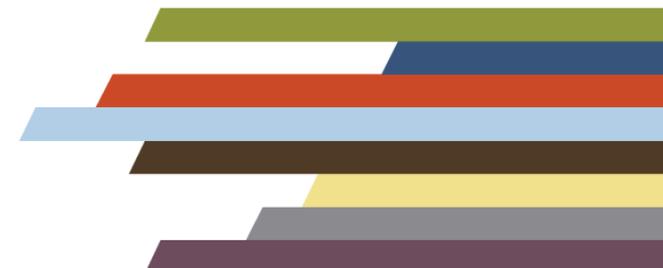
# Questions?





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# Thank you!

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Join us for Part 3!

Anxiety & School - Answering Your Questions

December 9, 2020

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm Pacific Time

Register Here: <https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/northwest-mhttc/event/part-3-anxiety-school-answering-your-questions>

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Take  care

