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Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Strengthening School Communities for a Safe, Supportive Return: Part 2

May 26, 2021

Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center and
National Center for School Mental Health



Southeast (HHS Region 4)

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The Southeast MHTTC is located at Emory University in the Rollins School of Public Health.

Our Mission: To promote the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based mental health services in the Southeastern United States.

Our Vision: Widespread access to evidence-based mental health services for those in need.

Our Services: We use a public health approach to build leadership capacity and to provide mental health trainings and resources to providers, agencies, and communities across the Southeast.





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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).



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Learning Objectives

1. Increase understanding strategies and best practices for school systems to promote **student** resilience, wellbeing and success following COVID-related school closures.
2. Increase understanding strategies and best practices for school systems to promote **staff** resilience, wellbeing and success following COVID-related school closures.
3. Promote **cross-state networking and shared learning** about best practices, successes and challenges of supporting student and staff resilience and wellbeing during learning modality transitions.



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Agenda

- Current Context Necessitating Focus on School Mental Health
- Innovations in Virtual Connection and Support
- Student Support Strategies
- Staff Support Strategies



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Welcome!

Please type in the chat box
your name, organization
and state.



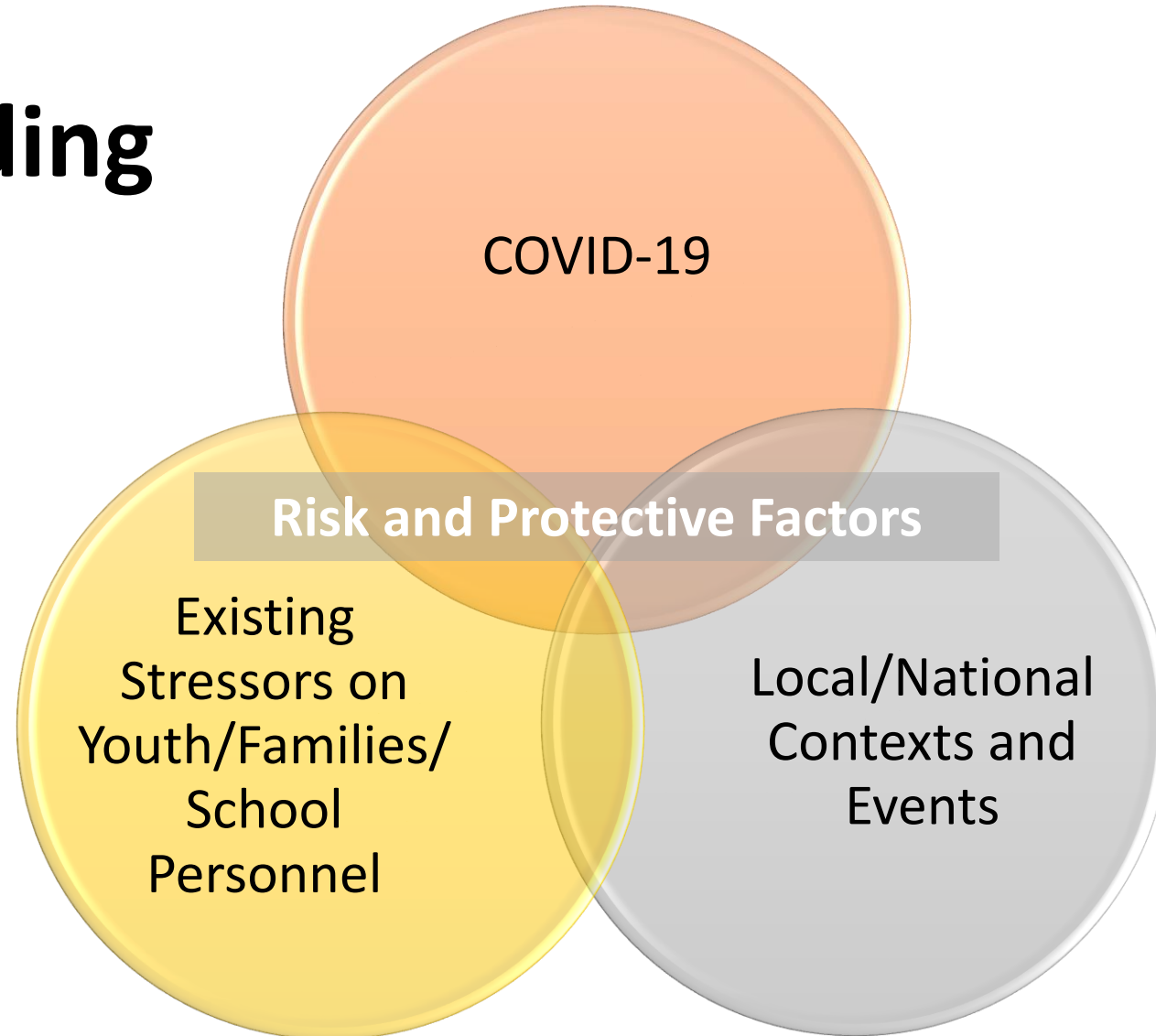


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Understanding the Context





Safe
Supported
Engaged
Connected





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May 10th Listening and Learning Session Themes

Parallel focus on student
AND staff mental health
and resilience

Lots of focus on
universal/school-wide
approaches

Efforts to increase early
intervention/treatment
capacity

Budgets not expected to
increase alongside
mental health need

Need for free resources

Student and parent
engagement is even
more challenging
virtually

COVID fatigue and
general burnout

Limited time, staffing
and ability to be
proactive and planful
("drinking from the fire
hose")



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Innovations in Virtual Connection & Support

Purpose

- Mutual connection and support
- Mental health awareness
- Shared learning on resilience and coping strategies
- Link to additional resources

Audience

- Students
- Parents
- Educators
- Other School Staff

Format

- Virtual (Zoom, Facebook Live)
- In-person
- Before or after school (parents/staff) or during school (students)



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Facilitating Virtual Connection & Support

- Mental health professional(s) as a facilitators
- Outline a structure and open-ended questions
- Introduce goals and “agenda” including how to participate
- Consider how to handle sharing in chat vs aloud
- Plan ahead for managing risk
- End with brief relaxation or other positive wrap-up

Don't Forget to Pick an Inviting Name!

Town Hall

Snack and Chat

Healing Circle

Blissful Break

Reset Fridays

Lunch Bunch



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Virtual Connection & Support Question Bank

- What one word would you use to describe how you have been feeling?
- What has the past year/month been like for you?
- What are some of the most pressing stressors you/ your students/ your community is facing right now?
- How have you been impacted by racial trauma/racial injustice/racism?
- How have you been impacted by the pandemic over the past year?
- What have you learned about yourself over the past year?
- How does stress show up for you/ your student(s)? (school/ home/ physical body/ emotions/ behaviors)
- What are you doing regularly – or would like to do more of – to cope with daily stress?
- How do you practice self-care? Self healing, group healing/community, professional supports, spirituality
- What would help you feel more connected to school/ community/ students/ teachers/ each other?
- What are sources of support in the school and/or community?
- What brings you hope, joy, and determination to stay strong and resilient?

**Please type in the chat
others that you use!**

South Carolina District Example

Virtual Snack and Chat

- Online sessions for all RHSD staff to connect and discuss concerns
- Facilitated by: mental health provider
- Platform: Zoom

Parent Academy Sessions

- Multiple evening livestream sessions with a focus on grief and loss, ACEs, mental health of children/adolescents, diversity, and parenting support throughout the pandemic
- Facilitated by: mental health provider
- Platform: Facebook, YouTube



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<https://www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/>



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Innovations in Virtual Stress Management: Reset Rooms Zen Dens Virtual Calming Rooms

Middle School Virtual Calming Room



[Sounds and Music](#)



[Guided Meditation](#)



[Visual Relaxation](#)



[Mindfulness](#)



[Live Animal Cams](#)



[Puzzles and Games](#)



[Coloring and Creativity](#)



[Exercise](#)



[Yoga](#)



[Smartphone Apps](#)



[Textlines and Hotlines](#)



[The Role of the School Counselor](#)

<https://sites.google.com/rcsdk8.org/rcsdvirtualcalmingroom/home>
[Bit.ly/resetroom](http://bit.ly/resetroom)



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Shared Learning



What are YOUR
innovations in virtual
connection and
support?

Universal Student Supports

To promote resilience, well-being and success for all students



NOW – Universal Supports During COVID

- “Encourage reassurance, routines, regulation”
- Translation of existing Tier 1 strategies
- SEL in virtual classes/home

Source:

<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/resources-for-supporting-childrens-emotional-well-being-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>





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Connecting with Students during Hybrid or Distance Learning

- Free SEL resources:

[Character Lab](#)

[Paths Program](#)

[EVERFI](#)

- [5 SEL Strategies for Hybrid Learning](#)
- [Free, electronic daily check in platform](#)
- [Distance Learning Daily Check-In](#)
- [Virtual SEL Calendar for 1 Month of Activities](#)





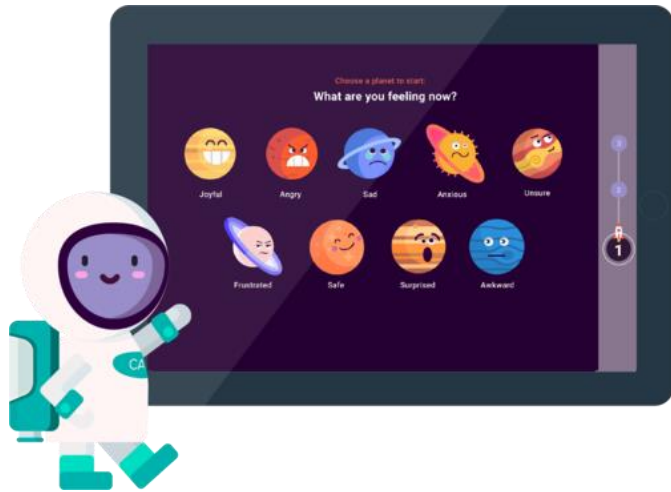
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Daily Check-ins (Closegap.org)

Students do a daily emotional check-in



Teachers and Parents
get Info in Real Time



Students connect with an
adult or participate in self-
guided activities





Screening topics to consider

- Impact of COVID-19
 - COVID-19 Adolescent Symptom & Psychological Experience Questionnaire (CASPE)
 - Epidemic Pandemic Impacts Inventory (EPII)
 - DERS for Coronavirus Pandemic
 - Coronavirus Impact Scale
- Life Satisfaction/Subjective Well-being
- Psychological distress/Symptomatology
- Positive Functioning
- School Factors
- Social Determinants of Health

School Mental Health System Certificate Report Update

System Performance My Schools Trauma Responsiveness **Screening and Assessment** Team Members

Welcome to the School Mental Health Screening and Assessment Library. Use the filters below to locate a measure that is appropriate for your needs. Each measure includes a one page information sheet, scoring details, and access to the measure.

Clear All 0 filters selected Search:

Focus Area	Instrument Name	Purpose	Focus Area	Reporter for (Student Age)
Assessment Purpose	Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC)	Screening/Initial Evaluation Progress Monitoring	Autism	Caregiver (2+) Educator (2+)
Student Age	Brief Problem Checklist (BPC)	Screening/Initial Evaluation Progress Monitoring	Anxiety Depression Disruptive Behavior	Student (7-18) Caregiver (7-18)
Reporter	CAGE	Screening/Initial Evaluation	Substance Use	Student (16+) Clinician (16+)
Cost	Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC)	Screening/Initial Evaluation Progress Monitoring	Depression/Mood	Student (6-23)
	Child Mania Rating Scale, Parent (CMRS-P)	Screening/Initial Evaluation Progress Monitoring	Depression/Mood	Caregiver (5-17) Educator (5-17)
	Conditions for Learning (CFL)	Screening/Initial Evaluation Progress Monitoring	Academic School Climate	Student (grade 2-12)

Promoting Student Resilience and Success

- Positive relationships with adults, including teachers, is protective factor that will help students cope and be resilient
- Schools, teachers and school staff can help by:
 - ✓ Checking in with students about how they are feeling
 - ✓ Creating opportunities for sharing experiences to give and receive peer and adult support
 - ✓ Providing routine and structure
 - ✓ Providing a sense of community and connection
 - ✓ Taking care of yourselves!

Guidance, Scripts, Strategies, & Resources for Supporting Students and Educators During COVID-19



Managing Your Stress Load and Caring for Yourself

Managing your stress load and caring for yourself during COVID-19 is essential to your health and ability to support others. Use this link to review the source of your stress load and create your own self-regulation plan. [Link](#)

1

Connect with Students

Identify a developmentally appropriate and safe platform to connect with your students. [Link](#)

2

Listen and Reflect

During the connecting activity, listening and reflecting feelings will help decrease student stress load as it increases connection and feelings of safety. [Link](#)

3

Provide Reassurance

As students share their feelings, they may also ask questions. Here is a link to guiding statements for helping reassure them if they have fears, anxiety, sadness, and for some, grief. [Link](#)

4

Coping/Managing Stress Load

Because these feelings will likely be ongoing, helping students identify self-regulation activities that manage their stress load and help them feel calm and alert will be important. Activities linked here: [Link](#)

5

Additional Support if Needed

If a student or family needs additional support because of mental health needs or a crisis, use this link for more guidance: [Link](#)





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Shared Learning



What are YOUR
strategies to support
student resilience,
well-being and success
right now?

Universal Teacher/Staff Supports

To promote resilience, well-being and success for all students





Tools for Educators During a Public Health Crisis

*"It's the teacher that makes the difference, not the classroom."
 - Michael Morpurg*

Educators have been asked to fill many roles during this public health crisis. They have had to adjust to new learning environments, provide emotional support to students, maintain communication with parents, take care of themselves and their families, among other responsibilities. At the same time, they are experiencing the anxiety and worry about the public health crisis along with the rest of the community. Here are some tools to help.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

It's natural to feel stressed, worried, anxious, and overwhelmed during a public health emergency, but there are steps you can take to build your wellness.



BODY

- Be physically active or exercise regularly
- Eat well, maintain a healthy diet, drink water
- Get a good night's rest, keep a routine sleep schedule
- Relax your body with breathing exercises and stretching



MIND

- Engage in activities or hobbies you enjoy
- Try as much as possible to maintain a daily routine
- Meditate or pray as a way to relax and find support
- Take breaks throughout the day



EMOTIONS

- Notice and accept how you feel, try not to judge your feelings
- Treat yourself with compassion and understanding
- Talk about your feelings with someone you trust
- Use calming self-talk ("I can handle this", "One day at a time")



SUPPORT

- Reach out to others by calling, texting, email, social media
- Use FaceTime, Skype, or other video tools to talk "face-to-face"
- Talk about the emergency, but also enjoy other conversation
- Ask for help when needed from friends/family or professionals

STAYING INFORMED WITHOUT STRESSING OUT

While it's important to stay up to date with the most current information regarding the public health emergency, you don't want to overwhelm yourself with news or media that causes you to feel anxious or distressed. What can you do?



- AVOID** excessive exposure to media coverage
- LIMIT** your media exposure to a single credible source
- CHECK** for information updates at a specific time only once or twice a day
- GATHER** information that allows you to take practical steps to protect yourself and your loved ones

Access Reliable Information: www.cdc.gov | samhsa.gov/coronavirus

WHAT DISTRESS CAN LOOK LIKE



COGNITIVE SIGNS

- Forgetting things more often
- Feeling confused
- Having trouble concentrating
- Difficulty making decisions

*Useful Apps**
 The Mindfulness App
 Headspace



EMOTIONAL SIGNS

- Fear, Worry, Anxiety
- Anger, Guilt, Irritability
- Sadness, Depression
- Wanting to isolate

*Useful Apps**
 365 Gratitude Journal
 Smiling Mind



PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Stomach aches
- Headaches, Tight muscles
- Worsening chronic health problems
- Change in energy level

*Useful Apps**
 Calm
 Daily Water



BEHAVIORAL SIGNS

- Change in sleeping, eating habits
- Crying easily
- Increased alcohol, tobacco, drug use
- Difficulty carrying out daily activities

*Useful Apps**
 Slumber
 Productive

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING DURING COVID-19



COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Parents are also experiencing increased stress due to disruptions in their daily routine and the new demands of homeschooling

Listen to parents' concerns with empathy - hear them out and reflect back their concerns

Acknowledge their anxieties during this time without judgement - this is new to them and they may feel ill-equipped and unprepared



ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES

Try to maintain set work hours - establish a schedule that takes into account your work and home responsibilities, trying to keep some balance

Communicate your work hours and when you can be available to parents and students

You may not be able to respond to all communications immediately - let people know you will respond during your scheduled work hours



COPING STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

Facilitate a mutual support group among parents/caregivers during this time or ask a parent or other school staff to do so

Provide parents and students wellness tips and strategies to use during this time

Hold group meetings at a set time and invite parents and/or students so you can address general questions and concerns all at once

**Note: Inclusion or mention of a resource in this fact sheet is meant to provide an example and does not imply endorsement by the Northeast and Caribbean MHTTC.*

If you or someone you know needs help due to overwhelming sadness, depression, anxiety, or feelings that you want to harm yourself or others, reach out.

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline
 800-985-5990
 Text Talk with Us to 66746
 TTY 800-846-8517

SAMHSA's National Helpline
 800-662-HELP
National Domestic Violence Hotline
 800-799-SAFE

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 800-273-TALK
 TTY 800-799-4TTY (4889)



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Free Resource: Compassion Resilience Toolkit



Staying Resilient During COVID-19 with brief blogs and videos to share with others. [Learn More](#)

Facilitator resources to build the capacity of helping professionals, caregivers, and the systems in which they serve.



A Toolkit For Schools



A Toolkit For Health and Human Services



A Toolkit For Parents and Caregivers

<https://compassionresiliencetoolkit.org/>



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Classroom WISE: Well-being Information and Strategies for Educators

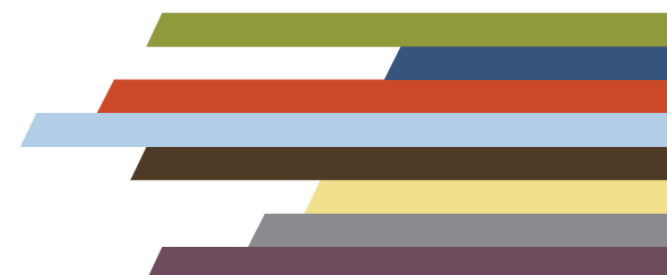
<https://mhttcnetwork.org/free-smh-course>



Classroom WISE

Well-Being Information and
Strategies for Educators

- A **FREE** 5-hour mental health literacy online course for teachers and school staff with brief, high-impact training videos and accompanying website
- Course development process includes input from educators, students, and school mental health leaders



Classroom WISE: Well-being Information and Strategies for Educators

<https://mhttcnetwork.org/free-smh-course>

How a Teacher Made You Feel Welcome

Think about a teacher who has made you feel welcomed safe and valued. What did that teacher do?



Video: Providing Praise



Elementary Examples

Thumbs up for sitting patiently on the rug.

Way to go sitting in your chair and listening for the whole lesson!



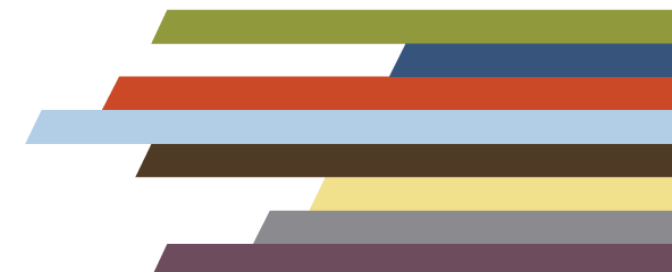
High School Examples

I'm so glad you're following along as she reads the poem.



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Shared Learning



What are YOUR
strategies to support
teacher and staff
resilience, well-being
and success right now?



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Evaluation

Please complete the following survey:

<https://ttc-gpra.org/P?s=543332>

If you have additional questions or suggestions please email us at
seschoolmh@gmail.com



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SAMHSA's mission is to reduce
the impact of substance abuse and
mental illness on America's communities.

www.samhsa.gov

1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) • 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)