

Meeting the Needs of *ALL* Students and Staff during the Dual Pandemic

Dr. Christina N. Conolly, NCSP
Director of Psychological Services
Montgomery County Public Schools, MD
dedication10@gmail.com

Learning Objective:

Participants will learn about meeting psychological needs of students and supporting staff during COVID 19 and other crises from a systems level perspective, attending to issues of social justice, equity, and caring for the caregiver.



The work is still not complete....

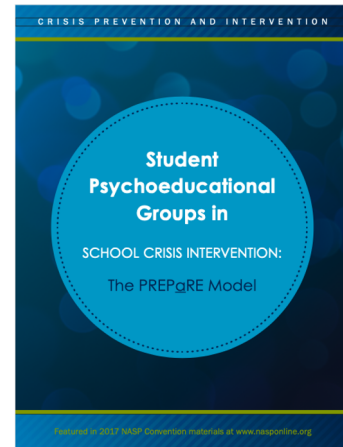


Be Well 365 Supports for Students

Social-emotional Learning and Interventions



- Psychological triage and crisis intervention support for students
- Psychoeducational lessons for all students to normalize crisis reactions and provide information on available supports and how to access them
 - Provided crisis facts and dispelled rumors on the dual pandemic
- Screening and ongoing follow-up and monitoring to determine if additional supports are needed
- Individual crisis intervention



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Student Psychoeducational Lesson Example



TEACHER NOTES

The discussion about race is uncomfortable for some people, however, it is an important discussion to have among ourselves and with our students. If you are uncomfortable with having this discussion with your students, please co-teach with your school counselor, psychologist, or social worker. Provided below are some resources for staff to support their journeys to make it easier for them to have discussions with their students.

[There's not too young to talk about race!](#)

[Notes and Discussion Questions from Irene X. Kendi \(author of Antiracist Baby\)](#)

From Penguin Randomhouse (publishers), *Antiracist Baby* introduces the youngest readers and the grown-ups in their lives to the concept and power of antiracism. Providing the language necessary to begin critical conversations at the earliest age, *Antiracist Baby* is the perfect gift for readers of all ages dedicated to forming a just society. For ages baby to age 3.

[Educator and Caregiver Learning Guide from Durgut Tebe](#)

Start Work Playlist - Here is a self-work playlist that is available to support facilitators of these lessons engage in their own learning before engaging in these discussions as well.

Dual Pandemics



Montgomery County Public Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Empowering, Inspiring and Nurturing Potential

High School
 Psychoeducational Lesson

MCPSS Return to School

BE WELL 365
 BE HEALTHY • BE KIND • BE YOU

Tell a Trusted Adult

- If you or a friend feel this way, tell a trusted adult:
 - At School:
 - Teacher, Administrator, Counselor, Psychologist, etc.
 - At Home:
 - Parent, Grandparent, Sibling, Guardian, etc.
- Montgomery County Crisis Hotline - Text Hello to 741741 or Call/Text 301-738-2255
- Montgomery County Crisis Center - (240) 777-4000
- EveryMind - (301) 424-0656

COMMON INITIAL CRISIS REACTIONS

EMOTIONAL		COGNITIVE	
Shock	Depression or sadness	Impaired concentration	Decreased self-esteem
Anger	Guilt	Memory impairment	Self-blame
Disgust	Irritability	Distaste	Worries
Phobias	Hypersensitivity	Confusion	Nightmares
Terror or fear	Helplessness	Distortion	Decreased self-efficacy
Guilt	Helplessness	Intrusive thoughts or memories	
Emotional numbing	Loss of pleasure from activities	Impaired decision-making abilities	
PHYSICAL		INTERPERSONAL/BEHAVIORAL	
Fatigue	Startle response	Alienation	Aggression
Insomnia	Headaches	School refusal	Crying easily
Sleep disturbance	Decreased libido	School impairment	Tartrums
Hypersensit	Decreased appetite	Vocational impairment	Change in eating patterns
Somatic Complaints	Gastrointestinal problems	Regression in behavior	Risk Taking
Impaired immune response		Increased relationship conflict	Avoidance of reminders
		Social withdrawal or social isolation	

Note: Compiled from Speier (2000); Young, Ford, Plazek, Friedman, & Gusman (1998).

Relaxation Activities

- **Deep Breathing:** A deep breathing exercise allows you to take slower, deeper belly breaths and reach a truly relaxed state.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** tensing and relaxing muscles throughout the body.
- **Visualization Imagery:** sights, sounds, and touch sensations associated with a particularly calm scene induce a state of pleasure.
- **Meditation:** a mental exercise to train the mind and promotes relaxation.



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Guidelines for School-based Student Well-being Teams

What are Student Well-being Teams?

The Student Well-being Team (SWT) is a collaborative, comprehensive learning. Their primary role, as we begin in an all-virtual semester of learning, is to support students to reduce barriers to learning, conduct outreach, problem-solve, and support students who are:

- Demonstrating mental health concerns
- Not engaging in their online educational program.

Function

The SWT is a collaborative problem-solving team focusing on unique student needs and family outreach. Student and Family Support and Engagement (SFSE) staff members, including PPWs, PCCS, and ETCs, are skilled at creative ways to engage families and are valuable resources when families are not responsive to initial school-based staff member outreach.

SWTs collaborate with families and engage in collaborative problem solving and root cause analyses to identify and remove barriers in order to improve student engagement. Targeted school-based and community resource can address these unique barriers.

During the first two weeks of school, SWTs should identify, contact, and check in with families of vulnerable and at-risk students.



Show Up!
Be present • Be prepared • Be engaged

SWTs need to coordinate regular review of attendance and engagement data, meet regularly, move away from notifications and warnings towards outreach, problem-solving, and support; and recommend outreach and support that considers a variety of factors, such as the unique circumstances of the student or family, previously outreach and support, and attendance trends. SWTs should identify the staff members who will be responsible for specific family outreach efforts.

Outreach Efforts

- Multiple documented attempts to reach parent/guardian via phone, text, or email at different times of the day and via contact information of known siblings or emergency contacts
- Attempts to arrange to meet the parent/guardian and student virtually
- In circumstances when all outreach attempts listed above are unsuccessful, reach out to known friends of the student

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

Members

The SWT should consist of 5 to 10 staff members who are well-versed in collaborative problem-solving, root cause analysis, mental health support, attendance and engagement interventions, and/or the availability of community resources, including:

- Administrator or designee
- Pupil personnel worker (PPW)
- School counselor(s)
- School psychologist
- ESOL transition counselor (ETC), parent community coordinator (PCC), or school-based ESOL counselor (if assigned to the building)
- Staff members with strong connections to students, families, and the school community

Ongoing Data Collection and Monitoring

SWTs develop internal data collection methods to document which student groups are referred most frequently. Data analysis needs to be regular and continuous to develop schoolwide strategies that address target populations.

Problem-solving and Support

- Initial outreach to parent/guardian designed to:
 - Educate student and parent/guardian on importance of regular live, virtual lesson attendance and engagement, or access of recorded lessons;
 - Informally problem-solve to determine why student is not participating in live virtual lessons or their recordings; and
 - Provide resources or support to address the issue.
- Additional formal problem-solving that includes parent and student, if appropriate, to:
 - Consider root causes of student's lack of attendance and/or engagement;
 - Plan interventions to address the root causes; and
 - Plan to monitor impact of interventions and support.

For more information, contact Student Family Support and Engagement

Additional Guidelines and Supports

Child abuse and neglect reports are down since schools closed because of COVID-19. However, the incidence of abuse and neglect have not decreased—it is just going unnoticed. It is our job to be vigilant and report any suspected abuse or neglect.

1 Regularly engage with students and their caregivers

2 Ask questions and be curious

3 Observe the environment

4 Observe student behavior, demeanor, and appearance

5 If a student discloses abuse or neglect and it is safe for the student to answer, ask open-ended questions to clarify (what, where, how, what)

6 Situations are required by law to report any suspicions of abuse and neglect. Remember, you do not have to verify that abuse or neglect has occurred

Click here to make an online report of child abuse and neglect

Questions to Consider When Student Engagement is a Concern

- Who, on the SWT, has attempted to contact the student and family? Have all known contacts been attempted and documented? Has the student's trusted adult at school made contact?
- Are there language needs or considerations?
- Are telephone numbers disconnected and emails being returned undelivered?
- Was student attendance and engagement a concern prior to COVID-19? Was there a history of mental health or safety concerns? Has Child Welfare Services been involved with the student and family before?
- Is there a history of self-harm behaviors, suicidal ideation, or other significant concerns?
- Are there known family challenges, such as food insecurity, housing, immigration status, or student working to support family?

For more information, contact Student Family Support and Engagement

Ask OSFSE

Ask OSFSE is a way for the SWT and central office-based staff members to stay connected with students and families, as part of the Montgomery County Schools (MCPD) Be Well 365 initiative. After exhausting and documenting all other methods to engage students and families, school administrators may contact Ask OSFSE to request a wellness check (e.g., because of concerns regarding food availability, social-emotional well-being, medical needs, academic or behavioral supports, or online learning). SFSE staff members, upon receipt of a submission, will connect with the SWT. SFSE staff members will monitor all requests to Ask OSFSE to ensure that school SWTs have the resources they need to work with students and families to ensure ongoing academic and social-emotional success and well-being.

REMEMBER: If you are concerned about a student's health and safety, contact Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) at 911 if it is an emergency or 240-278-8000 if it is not an emergency.



Wellness Checks

There may be occasions when a wellness check will be necessary due to concerns about a student's safety and well-being. The following guidelines should be considered.

- If the student appears to be in imminent danger, ask the student to retreat to a safe place in the home and call 911 so that the MCPD can conduct a wellness check.
- If the student is not in imminent danger, staff members can review safety provisions with the student in the event that the situation escalates. Student should be provided with resources, including the Montgomery County Hotline telephone number 301-738-2255 which is available 24/7.
- If the welfare of the student is in question but cannot be ascertained, school administration should consult with Student Welfare and Compliance (SWC), SWC and Systemwide Safety and Emergency Management may assign two staff members to conduct a wellness check, while observing safety protocols and with appropriate personal protective equipment.

Contact Information

Steve Neff, Steve_Neff@mcpmsd.org, 240-447-4034
Stephanie R. Iszard, Stephanie_R_Iszard@mcpmsd.org, 240-447-5471

Elizabeth A. Rathbone, Elizabeth_A_Rathbone@mcpmsd.org, 240-620-1744



Be Well 365 Supports for Staff Members



- Creating Balance: Staff member wellness webpage
- Public awareness campaign on employee wellness initiatives, resources, and supports
- Modeling wellness and self-care by leadership (i.e., Walk the Talk)
- Workshops for staff members on health, wellness, self-care, medical plan offerings, and Employee Assistance Program resources
 - Record and segment workshops to create library of easily accessible and translated short videos on a variety of topics



CREATING BALANCE

FOR STAFF

MCPS is committed to the physical, social and psychological well-being of its more than 24,000 employees. This website provides valuable district information and community resources to our staff members and their families. As we continue to navigate working remotely and coping with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's especially important that we care for our mental, emotional and physical health. We hope you will find support here for your work, home and personal concerns.

[SUBMIT FEEDBACK](#)

[WHAT'S NEW](#)

[MY WORK LIFE](#)

[MY HOME AND
PERSONAL LIFE](#)

[MY WELL-BEING AND
SELF-CARE](#)

[MY COMMUNITY](#)

[ARTICLES](#)

Be Well 365 Supports for Families and the Community



- Parent Academy To Go (i.e., virtual Parent Academy)
 - Parent Academy toolkits that include talking points, Google slides, and video clip content to be used by staff members in virtual chats with families and the community
 - Mental Health Monday's
- *Waymaking* video series, including the two-part conversation on mental health and race
 - <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/waymaking/specials/>

WAYMAKING SPECIAL

A COURAGEOUS CONVERSATION on the IMPACT OF RACISM ON MENTAL HEALTH

Hosts: Christina Conolly and John Landesman

PART ONE:

Addressing barriers and
stigma to receiving mental
health

WATCH ON YOUTUBE

Event Evaluation: Complete the Survey

PART TWO:

Eliminating stigma and
advocating for the need of
mental health services

WATCH ON YOUTUBE

Event Evaluation: Complete the Survey

New Initiatives Challenge Vulnerability



Opportunities for Growth

- Significant staff needs due to acute trauma due to the dual pandemic
- Staff members and families on different paths towards Equity and Social Justice
- Professional Learning needs
- Lack of time to fully develop initiatives based on changing district priorities due to the evolving pandemic



MCPS Fall 2020: *Be Well 365*
Reimagine, Reopen, Recover

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/reopening

Questions