

# TRMS School Counseling Newsletter: Remote Learning

## Maintaining a Routine Without a Routine School Day

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Now that a significant portion of the United States has joined the ranks of homeschoolers overnight, the question becomes: what do we do with all of this TIME? With the expected out the window, many students and their families are experiencing the stress and anxiety that comes with the unknown. Both education and homeschooling associations are suggesting the same: establish a routine. Below are some steps that every family can take to maintain a routine:

### 1) Talk to Your Student

It is important for students of all ages to talk about and give input into establishing the “new normal.” Just because your student is at home doesn’t mean he can play video games all day! Parents can have morning and evening meeting to make sure that everyone is on the same page and is being productive.

### 2) Create (and Write Down) a Daily Schedule

Students are more likely to complete classwork if their expectations are clear and visual. Families can use the school day as an example, since this is already familiar. Give your student “blocks” to study, a lunch/recess, and UAs such as art, playing outside, or practicing an instrument.

### 3) Create a “Work Space”

Any adult who regularly works from home will tell you — if you think you are doing work in the same room as the television, it’s probably a bad idea! Set up a space for your student that is structured and free from distractions. When they are at “school,” this is where they will be.

### 4) Use Electronics as an Incentive not a Given

Phones and video games can be

used as rewards *after* the school day. Make sure students are working in a different space and store phones where adults can monitor them.

### 5) Allow for Scheduled Breaks

Your student gets a few minutes of “down time” during the regular school day while they change classes, wait for other students to finish, or take “movement breaks” in the middle of a class. Schedule time-limited breaks for a mental refresh.

### 6) Email School Staff

Are you or your student “stuck”? Having a difficult time academically or emotionally? Email your student’s teachers and/or School Counselor for support.

### 7) Cut Yourself Some Slack!

We are all learning and in this together!

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## How to Virtually Socialize While “Social Distancing”

Sports, concerts, plays, lessons, and birthday parties are canceled or postponed. Although we are being encouraged to maintain distance from each other, that doesn’t mean that students need to feel isolated. Here are some ways for students to get the positive interactions they need:

1) Schedule virtual “hangouts” with family and friends

through Zoom, FaceTime, or Skype.

2) Organize a virtual group meeting through Google Hangout.

3) Walk or bike outside at a distance with friends in the neighborhood. The dog still needs a walk!

4) Chat with friends over Xbox

Live or the PlayStation Network (after classwork is done of course!).

5) Coordinate a streaming service viewing party and share thoughts with each other.

6) Share artistic creations like drawings, poems, and music with friends.

## Mental Health in the COVID-19 World

The COVID-19 outbreak is especially challenging for those with preexisting mental health issues and can exacerbate feelings of sadness and anxiety for those already vulnerable. It's important to pay attention to changes in your student's behavior such as: a return of old behaviors, acting out, increased worry, sadness and negative talk, changes in appearance or hygiene, changes in sleeping or eating, or excessive worry about their own or family members' health. Here are a

few ways you can support your student:

\*If your student is currently in treatment with an outpatient counselor, continue to work with and stay in contact with that provider.

\*Limit overexposure to news and make sure to watch together in order to immediately answer any questions or concerns your student expresses.

\*Reassure your student that

(s)he is safe.

\*Keep up household routines as much as possible.

\*Keep bodies strong and healthy by eating healthy, getting plenty of sleep and exercise, going outside for sunshine and fresh air.

\*Keep connected within your own household by doing activities together.

\*Encourage the use of calming techniques like deep

breathing and mindfulness.

\*Keep your student busy with hobbies (s)he enjoys, such as cooking, drawing, or crafts.

\*Emphasize the positive with every opportunity.

**If your student is facing a mental health emergency, contact his/her mental healthcare provider (if currently under care), take your student to the local ER, or contact Center for Life Management Emergency Services at (603) 434-1577, Option 1.**

## Fostering Family Social Connections

"Decades of evidence demonstrate that human connection protects individuals against anxiety and uncertainty," says Jamil Zaki (Washington Post, March 13, 2020). We humans are social beings. It's natural for us to seek out the comfort of the group to cope, especially when disasters happen. Fostering family interactions while hunkering down in our homes is a great way to stave off feelings of loneliness or

isolation.

\*Switch solitary screen time to family screen time by watching shows or playing games together.

\*Have a family board game night or, better yet, ask your kids to teach you a new game!

\*Get in the kitchen together – ask your kids for lunch and dinner ideas and prep meals

together.

\*Video/group chat with friends and family together.

\*While we normally cringe when our students' phones ping non-stop, it's important for them to feel connected during this time. Make sure you monitor the content of what's coming and going from your student's phone, and put reasonable time lim-

its on use so as not to diminish from family interaction

\*Get outside! Play a game, ride bikes or just go for a walk together.

\*Stay positive! Make a point of acknowledging what's going well, and practice gratitude.

\*Practice kindness! Remember how good it feels to make someone else smile!



# Yoga: A Great Way to Ground and Relax! (Credit to involvery.com)

## YOGA POSES FOR STRESS RELIEF



1. Child's Pose    2. Head to Knee Forward Bend    3. Bridge Pose



4. Cow Pose    5. Standing Forward Bend Pose



6. Easy Pose    7. Dolphin Pose    8. Eagle Pose



9. Cat Pose    10. Corpse Pose



11. Puppy Pose    12. Extended Triangle Pose    13. Legs Up the Wall Pose

## ABC's for Coping Skills at Home

A rt	B reathe	C ook and bake	D istraction
E njoy music	F amily	G oogle Class- room	H ealthy eating
I magination	J ournal	K indness	L augh!
M editation	N etflix	O rganize	P ets
Q uiet time	R ead	S leep well	T alk it over
U se stress ball	V irtual hangout	W alk outside	X -ercise
Y oga	Z oom with friends		

## Local Mental Health Supports and On-line Resources

### Center for Life Management

(603) 434-1577

\*\*Emergency Services Choose Option 1

### New Horizons (New Hampshire)

<https://newhorizonsnh.org/>

### Southern Rockingham Coalition for Healthy Youth (SoRock)

<https://www.sorocknh.org/covid-19>

### CDC Information on Stress and Anxiety

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

### Families in Transition

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

### New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

<https://www.nh.gov/covid19/>

## Community and Educational Resources

### Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen Options

#### **Sandown Food Pantry**

1 Hampstead Road Sandown, NH 03873

Arlene Bassett 603-887-3453

Tuesdays 4pm - 5pm, Fridays 9am - 10am

NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY

#### **St. Anne Church**

26 Emerson Ave Hampstead NH, 03841

Breakfast/Lunch for anyone under age 18

Drive-thru format 10:00 am until 12:00 PM Monday-Friday

#### **Sonshine Soup Kitchen**

6 Crystal Ave Derry NH, 03038

Open Monday- Friday 1 PM to 6 PM

Take-out meals available only at this time

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

### Internet Support

#### **Comcast Internet Essentials**

Phone #- 1-800-934-6489

<https://www.internetessentials.com/covid19>

Internet for \$9.95 a month for qualifying families.

## Community and Educational Resources (continued)

### School/Educational Resources

#### **Google Classroom–**

<https://pyxisedu.com/collections/google-classroom>

<https://pyxisedu.com/collections/2019-2020-google-classroom> Info on Pyxis

**TRSD Clever Sign In** – Sign in with your TRSD Google Account

**Newsela Reading Social Studies Science** – Sign in through Clever

**MobiMax Reading Social Studies Science Math** – Sign in through Clever

**BrainPop-** Science, Social Studies, Reading – sign on to Google , click on the 9 dots, scroll down to BrainPop and log in with a school account.

**Edpuzzle–** Sign on using Google and students can view videos chosen by the teacher and a quiz can be added too.

**Smart Music**

**Prodigy**