

Check-in from the School Counselor

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

Parents / Guardians:

Hello! I pray that this e-mail finds each one of you safe and healthy. Please extend my greetings to your child(ren) and know that you all are in my prayers.

I wanted to start by saying THANK YOU! Thank you to each and every one of you for your patience and support as we all navigate this new routine in our daily lives. I appreciate all that you are doing to help us make sure your child stays safe and continues their education outside of the classroom. While I am primarily here for the students, I wanted to make this e-mail about **YOU**. Please know that I know these new plans may be overwhelming for many as we smooth out the wrinkles and adjust during this first week of remote learning. As we tend to focus on the busy-ness and worry that is surrounding our society, it is important to remember to take care of yourself! It is also important for us all to take a cue from one of my favorite quotes: **“When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it’s our job to share our calm, not join their chaos.” - L. R. Knost**

In saying this, I wanted to provide you all with some strategies to help relieve stress as well as some articles about self-care and stress relief for you during this time. That information is in the attached document.

I will be sending home various social/emotional and academic resources for you and your child periodically over these next two weeks; please feel free to use what you want from those messages.

Should you have any questions or wish to have specific information that would better support your child during this time (this includes sharing websites and phone numbers for local providers), I am available via e-mail from 8 AM until 12 PM, Monday through Friday.

Please know that this new plan could not be successful without you! The saying is true – “it takes a village to raise a child.” We are grateful for your support and for having you as a part of our school family. THANK YOU for all that you do! :)

Take Care,

Miss Sole
School Counselor (PS3 - 8th)
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Stress Relief & Self-Care Strategies & Resources for Parents

When our lives are filled with worry and the busy-ness of life, it can be difficult to find the time to stop and focus on ourselves. It is important to remember, however, that we cannot pour from an empty cup. Even if it is just 5 to 10 minutes each day, take that time for you!

Below are some strategies / ideas and articles with a focus on self-care and stress relief as we embark on this transition:

Strategies for Self-Care (adapted from “20 Self-Care Practices” on HuffPost.com)

1. When you are feeling stressed, do something active! Go for a walk, stretch, run, or another physical activity you enjoy. YouTube has some great at-home exercises you can do (PopSugar Fitness or ReFit Revolution Dance are two great channels!).
2. Schedule it Out: With so many “unknowns,” it is important to plan for what you can. Write out a schedule of how you can spend your day, including building in time for relaxation! If you plan for it, you are more likely to follow through.
3. Journal: When you feel anxious or overwhelmed, it can help to write down those thoughts / feelings. Sometimes the action of writing it out brings a sense of relief / release from those negative emotions.
4. Create a “Gratitude” list. Each day, list one thing (or as many things as you want!) that went well or for which you are grateful. This can help combat all of the negativity we are hearing and seeing all around us.
5. De-clutter your space. While this can be self-care for you (a clear space often leads to a clear mind), you can also use this as an opportunity for activity for your kids. Make it a game (“who can find 3 books that need to be put on the bookshelf the quickest?”), and your kids will be happy to join in!
6. Cook or Bake your favorite thing. When you have a new task that you can focus all of your energy on, it can help your brain take a “break” from the worry and stress.
7. Create a mantra or mission statement for yourself. You can be as creative with this as you want, or choose something that is already written. One of my favorite things to say when I am stressed is, “Philippians 4:13 – I can do all things through Christ!”
8. Try some deep breathing exercises or meditation. Use an app like “Calm” to help with this, or sometimes the Apple Watch or FitBit have this built-in on the device. Focus on breathing in on a 5 count and out on a 10 count. As I often tell the students, practice “belly breathing” or pretend to blow bubbles.
9. Bring out your inner kid and color! Find coloring pages online and take a little time each day to hit “pause” and color. I am including one on page 4 of this packet for you. ☺
10. Buddy system is best! Have someone on whom you can rely to talk with you and share ideas. This is new for all of us, and we cannot do it alone!

Articles on Stress Relief & Self-Care for Parents:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/click-here-happiness/201812/self-care-12-ways-take-better-care-yourself>

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/ready-snap-7-tips-stressed-parents/>

https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/how-to-be-a-parent/angry_child/stress/#gs.03j98s



I can do
all things
through
Christ who
strengthens me

- Philippians 4:13 -