#LIBERTYSTRONG

Newsletter from your Clinical Team

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How are we doing and what would you like to see in the Clinical Newsletter?

We want to connect with you! Please let Angie Huber know what you would like to see in the newsletter. We will do our best to meet your request. Send any requests to aahuber@fcps.edu.

Behavioral Expectations and Social-Emotional Learning

(by: Joanna Wheeler School Psychologist Liberty MS)

Let's talk about the classroom structure and social-emotional learning. From the start of the school year, teachers implement behavioral expectations and routines that provide the structure and consistency needed to support learning. Behavioral expectations are intended to be clear, concise, and have the purpose of improving learning for the individual while allowing for deeper engagement and learning for the whole classroom. Honoring behavioral expectations should provide a basis for students to value their school community, others, and themselves.

In addition to specific behavioral expectations, teachers are incorporating social-emotional learning. What is social and emotional learning? CASEL.org gives the following definition,

> "Social and emotional learning is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

Why will there be a focus on social-emotional learning? Teaching social-emotional skills through teacher instructional practices, integration with academic curriculum, and positive climate building, over the short-term, supports improved mood and enhanced learning. Over the long-term, social-emotional learning leads to better ability to comply with behavioral expectations, positive social behavior, increased capacity to adapt and manage emotional distress, and improved academic performance. Some ways parents may see social-emotional learning incorporated include the following:

- Morning meetings
- Teaching ways to manage peer conflict
- Structured and unstructured talk time
- Group work
- Virtual Zen Rooms (see website below)
- Online websites providing information and lessons on social-emotional topics
- Social-emotional classroom lessons
- Monitoring progress through goal setting

Parents may facilitate social-emotional learning at home by practicing good listening skills, showing respect for individual differences, committing acts of kindness, demonstrating goal setting, and even playing games as a family. Parents can also engage students in discussion about how building social-emotional skills and knowledge allows students to better understand themselves and how their behavior impacts others, engage in better self-care, and participate effectively and compassionately in their communities.

Together, we've got this!

Eliminating Stress!

By: Angie Huber, School Social Worker

Stress, stress and more stress! We are all in it, and some more than others. However, we all feel the stress of the forced changes with jobs, schools, limitations in what we can do, politics, racial concerns, time at home and concerns about health and what the future holds… just to name a few of our stresses. So, how do we cope with the stresses to continue to be successful in moving forward? We have all learned to cope in various ways but some key points to remember when trying to cope productively are:

- Take care of yourself. Eat healthy, well-balanced meals. …
- Engage in physical activity.
- Minimize electronic usage.
- Address problems and find solutions as soon as possible.
- Talk to others. Share your problems and how you are feeling so you can cope with a parent, friend, counselor, doctor, or pastor. Find ways to do it virtually or at a safe distance.
- Avoid unhealthy choices/distractions (i.e. drugs, alcohol, bad relationships).
- Take a break. Know when you need one.
- Recognize when you need more help.

What about navigating virtual schooling? Are you working at home? Are you able to supervise your kids and work from home? How are you going to manage the demands of work and parenting your children? What have you done to prepare? Preplanning discussions and strategies are going to be key in finding success and in keeping your stress low. Some discussions you may want to have are below:

- What will be the expected schedule for the days that you are working and when the children are in school? (i.e. wake up time, bedtime, doing active schooling, other activities, eating)
- Have the kids been able to log in and do they feel comfortable with their schedule for classes? What do they need to do it independently?
- Where will everyone be working? (i.e. do they have supplies they need, are they organized, does everyone have their own area, can they personalize it, how will they set it up, will they have privacy for virtual meetings and/or tests)?
- What will you be doing about food? (i.e. will everyone be allowed to eat throughout the day or will they need to plan their meals and have them ready to easily eat at meal times, what time will they be eating, what can they eat if you are not available, do they need to pack as if they are going to school)
- What will you expect regarding respecting each other's responsibilities, so that everyone can get their jobs/schooling done? (i.e do you need to define when to talk to someone, do you need to define when to give someone space, do you need to define how loud everyone talks and where they need to be when someone is working)
- What about animals? (i.e. are they disruptive, what will everyone do to take care of animals when needed and when they are being disruptive).
- What about any questions or needs your kids may have regarding school? (i.e. do you expect the kids to try to reach out to teachers before asking you for help)
- How will you organize? (i.e. what system will everyone use to organize, what visuals do they need, what about a virtual calendar with links and times for classes)
- How can you help everyone to be as independent as possible?

**You can be successful in doing this virtually. Prepare and tweak any problem areas as you go!" **

We will all be working together to continue to build our students' emotional and social learning. Pathway to Success offers some basic skill development ideas that we can use each day to help our children grow and de-

I GOT THIS

Social Skills · Basic Skills

Following Directions

Using Manners

Having a Positive Attitude

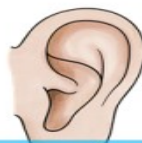**Working with Others**

Good Hygiene

Using Polite Words

Taking Turns

Greetings

Pathway 2 Success

Waiting & Having Patience

Being a Good Sport

Listening to Others

Understanding Personal Space

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For more social-emotional resources and lessons please visit the LS Clinical Team's website (works best in Google Chrome):

https://sites.google.com/view/liberty-ms-clinical-team/mental-wellness-topics

Online Etiquette

Parents can also help students meet behavioral expectations and support learning by establishing good online etiquette:

- Make sure students are dressed appropriately for online class.
- Make a designated area for online class! The best area would be a location with the least distractions where the student is sitting with a neutral background behind them. Keep in mind that, while comfy, staying in bed for online class is probably not the best option.
- When participating in online class, try to minimize the people traffic behind and around your student.
- During online class, consider how pets may be a distraction, and have a plan. (I love my dogs! However, they have proven to be my biggest distraction during online meetings.)
- Have a conversation with your student regarding asking for your assistance during an online class. Instead of your student bringing the computer to you, talk with your student about putting the class on mute, turning off the video, and walking to you (without the computer) for assistance.
- Discuss with your student the importance of being fully engaged during online class time. His or her participation is important for individual learning and for building a classroom community.
- Ask your student to avoid using other electronic devices, texting, or visiting irrelevant websites during online instruction.
- Help your student practice being courteous during online class. Good online etiquette includes muting your microphone to limit noise (unless you are speaking), raising a virtual hand to avoid talking over others, and keeping the conversation relevant in the platform chat box (if used).

** See visuals at the end that you may find helpful**

Are there any positives during the pandemic?

It is difficult to see the silver lining in the pandemic, but there are some possible positives for families during this time. Try to make the best of this overall very stressful situation and find some of the positive changes in your world.

Consider these thoughts:

1. More time to spend with the family. The pets love having you home!

2. Becoming more aware of what is really important to you.

3. Finding ways to bond in relationships that you have not been able to do because you were so busy (i.e. cooking together, playing games, talking, relaxing).

4. Having time to focus on what you appreciate in life.

5. Reaching out to people you have not seen in a while.

6. Finding creative ways to do things virtually.

7. Did you learn a new skill or talent?

8. Having time to get outdoors.

9. Finally getting some household projects completed.

10. Realizing that time is precious and life can change very quickly.

11. Virtual doctors appointments!

HOPE CHATS will continue this fall!

Your students will have the opportunity to participate in HOPE CHATS. This will be a time when the students can send in questions or concerns that they would like to have addressed by a multicultural and multiprofessional team. We will cover topics on racism, mental health, stress, coping, communication and other subjects that they might like to have addressed. Students will be given an opportunity to send in topics or questions each week. We will be available to answer questions during that time or individually at a different time, f they would prefer. If you would like your student to send questions or concerns, please send them to the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc_4bQMb9gOPrVQfbCo9RqVDSml1knspZ11cX7jl93uj7W8XQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Angie Huber, School Social Worker, will reach out to you to set up a time to chat.

More resources that you may find helpful!
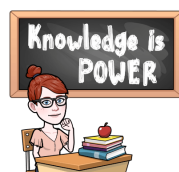
FCPS Parent Resource Center- (You can sign up for email notifications.)

They are offering many virtual trainings, such as:

 9/24   Setting the Stage for Good Behavior

10/22 Challenging Behaviors: Prevention Strategies and Teaching Self-Control

11/19 Challenging Behaviors: ABCs of Behavior & How to Respond

12/17 All Behavior Happens for a Reason: Behavior as Communication

01/21 Strategies for Increasing Replacement Behaviors

02/18 Teaching your Children to Follow Directions

03/18 Effectively Communicating with Your Child

04/22   Minimizing Prompts and Maximizing Your Child's Independence

Register for Trainings at this link: https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center/register-free-workshops-parent-resource-center

Fairfax County Office for Children- Three part webinar to support getting children ready to return to school virtually. Offered in English and Spanish.
https://classroom.google.com/c/OTM0MjE4OTQ3MTIa/m/MTUxNzIyNjY2ODY4/details

Virtual Parent Café's Offered with African American Cultural Focus
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/community-corner/new-virtual-parent-cafe-offered-with-african-american-cultural-focus

Social Stories to help explain the Pandemic to Children
https://www.autismlittlelearners.com/2020/07/covid-19-related-stories-for-schools.html?

https://youtu.be/x7KKkEIpyKQ

WELL-BEING
https://www.youtube.com/watch?

REUNITE

RENEW

THRIVE

SEL Roadmap for Returning to School

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HOW CAN PARENTS HELP WITH ONLINE LEARNING?

DESIGNATE A LEARNING SPACE
HELP YOUR CHILD FIND A SPACE WHERE THEY CAN BE PRODUCTIVE. SURE IT WOULD BE NICE TO HANG OUT IN THE BEDROOM ALL DAY, BUT THEY NEED TO "GET UP AND GO TO WORK" TOO.

CREATE A SCHEDULE
KIDS ARE USED TO ROUTINES WHEN IT COMES TO LEARNING. HELP CREATE CONSISTENT ROUTINES AT HOME AS WELL. THINGS MAY THROW OFF THE SCHEDULE NOW AND THEN, BUT DO YOUR BEST TO STICK TO IT.

LIMIT DISTRACTIONS
PLAN AHEAD. THINK ABOUT WHAT THINGS AT HOME MAY DISTRACT YOUR CHILD AND SET PARAMETERS /GUIDELINES TO HELP LIMIT THOSE DISTRACTIONS. YOU MAY NEED TO MONITOR AND ADJUST AS NEEDED FROM TIME TO TIME.

CHECK-IN WITH YOUR CHILD
MAKE IT A POINT TO CHECK-IN WITH YOUR CHILD. SEE HOW THEY ARE DOING – ACADEMICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY. THESE ARE UNIQUE TIMES, MAKE SURE THEY KNOW YOU ARE A SOURCE OF SUPPORT.

COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR TEACHER
WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER. IF YOU AREN'T SURE ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS OR DUE DATES – ASK. IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS – LET'S TALK. THIS IS NEW TO US AS WELL, BUT WE CARE ABOUT YOUR CHILD TOO.

DON'T FORGET TO EXERCISE
LEARNING ONLINE MEANS SITTING IN FRONT OF A COMPUTER FOR SEVERAL HOURS A DAY. BUILD SOME BREAKS INTO YOUR SCHEDULE. MAKE TIME FOR THEM TO GET UP AND MOVE. GOOGLE A FEW EXERCISES FOR THEM!

DON'T BE A "HELICOPTER"
THEY ARE LEARNING MORE THAN MATH AND SCIENCE. THEY ARE ALSO LEARNING TO BE INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE. CHECK-IN WITH THEM, BUT DON'T HOVER. IF THERE'S A PROBLEM – FOLLOW UP, BUT LET THEM LEARN TO TAKE INITIATIVE ON THINGS.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
THIS IS A TOUGH TIME FOR ALL OF US. YOU INCLUDED. MAKE A LITTLE TIME FOR YOU EACH DAY. DON'T LET STRESS ZAP YOUR ENERGY AND PATIENCE. WE NEED YOU. YOUR CHILD NEEDS YOU.

SEAN JUNKINS

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back to school checklist

Stock up on School + Craft Supplies
* Declutter and inventory craft / homework cabinet. (Or set one up!)
* Inventory school supplies.
* Make a list of supplies needed for school + home.
* Shop for supplies.
* Label and pack school supplies.
* Load and organize craft / homework cabinet.
* Order new backpacks.
* Make new backpack tags.

Declutter the Bedrooms
* Clear out old books and make space on the bookshelves for new books and reading materials.
* Try on clothes to see what still fits your child.
* Make lists of clothing needed for school, weekends, and special activities such as fall sports teams and outings.
* Set a day to go shopping and in the meantime, keep your eyes open for sale fliers and coupons.
* Shop for clothes and shoes.
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Update or Set Up a Family Message Center
* Set up message center (if needed).
* Update the family calendar.
* Update (or set up) a family reference binder.
* Carve out a spot for incoming school papers.

Declutter (or set up!) a Lunch Center
* Create a spot in the pantry and the fridge for lunch-making supplies.
* Create some lunch box notes!
* Check lunch-boxes and food storage containers.
* Purchase new lunch-boxes and reusable food containers (if needed.)
* Create a list of lunch ideas.

Take Care of Business
* Make appointments for hair cuts, dentist, doctor, etc.
* Register for fall activities such as sports teams, music, art lessons, and other classes.
* Ease into earlier bed times for the school year by gradually moving back bedtime.
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For more information about the projects mentioned on this checklist visit
http://creativeorganizing.typepad.com/creative_organizing/2011/07/back-to-school-organizing-tips-free-printable-checklist.html

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