

Staying Healthy in Stressful Times

Hello Parents and Students:

I know these are difficult times. You or someone you know may be dealing with anxiety and/or depression during this difficult time. Are you aware over 42.5 million people in the United States have anxiety issues and 17.3 million deal with depression? The coronavirus pandemic will add to this number.

You may be finding yourself angry, scared, or sad about not being able to go to school, work, church, or family gatherings. These feelings are natural. It is how you manage them that **you** have control over.

Here are simple ways to deal with stress and the challenges you are facing:

- First Breathe! Take a few seconds to slow down and take some deep breaths.
 - Try taking a breath in through the nose, while counting to five. Hold the breath for a count of five. Exhale through the mouth, counting to five or seven. Repeat up to two times. Too many times in one event can cause you to hyperventilate (lightheaded).
 - Another breathing exercise: Breathe through the nose, closing one nostril with the pointing finger, then alternate, closing the opposite nostril when exhaling. You can do this as long as it takes to calm down.
- Count your teeth.
- Get adequate sleep.
- Maintain a daily routine.
- Take walks!!!
- Do Yoga Stretches or exercise.
- Color.
 - Yes, color! Get out the crayons or markers and just color.
- Play some board games.
- Play some happy, upbeat music and do some dancing around the house.
 - The children may laugh but that means they are enjoying being with you.

Things Not to Do:

- Do not use alcohol or illicit drugs to cope. This will not be effective as the stress will be there when you sober up.
- Limit watching the news, sad stories, or sad movies.
- Don't listen to sad or violent music
- Don't let your anger and uncertainty lead to hitting, yelling, or slapping a family member or do self-harm.

If you need to talk to someone, please contact the school counselor or your mental health counselor (if you are seeing one). You can also contact Cheryl Welch at 715-889-2866 (cell) to schedule an appointment or for resources. If it is an emergency call 911 or go to the local Emergency Room.

Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255.

These are difficult times. We will get through this together.

If you need a board game, crayons, or paper please email cwelch@counselingforhealing.com or text me at 715-889-2866. We will **try** to get some to you. If having enough food is an issue to feed your family, please check with your local food bank or church.