

Supporting Youth and Families:

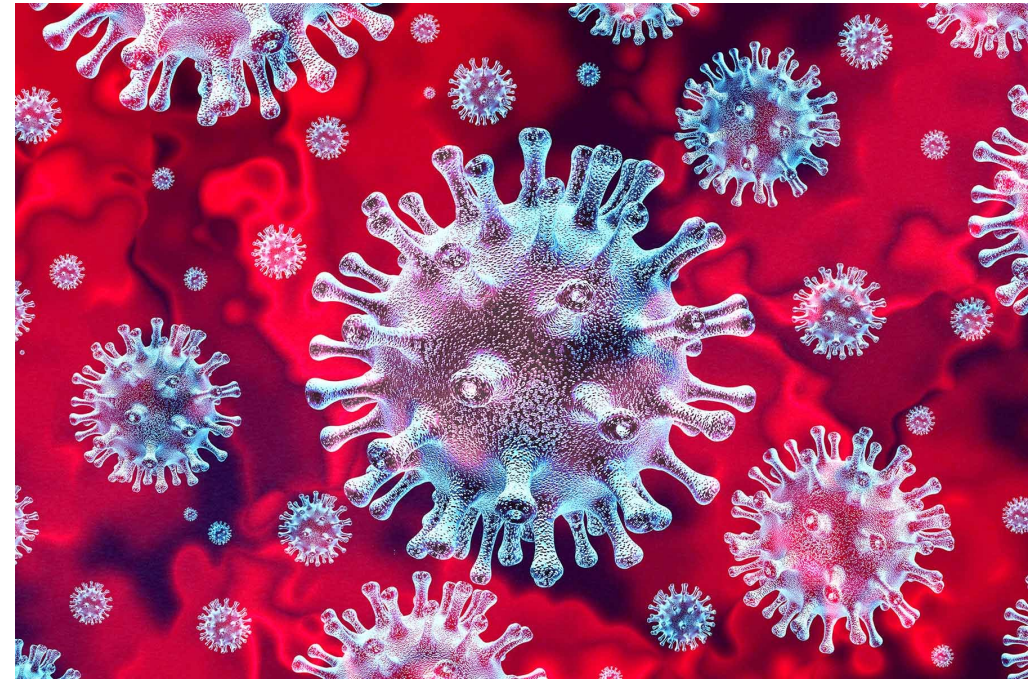
Managing Stress & Anxiety in the Age of COVID-19

Spring 2021

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Session Objectives

- 1) Describe how the stress and anxiety associated with COVID-19 impact youth, families and caregivers, and providers
- 2) Gain an understanding of how the frameworks of grief/loss and mourning apply to the COVID-19 pandemic for individuals of all ages
- 3) Develop skills for self-care and identify action steps to foster resiliency in youth, families, and “teams”





The Many Fatigues of COVID-19



Pandemic Fatigue

Compassion Fatigue

Zoom Fatigue

Moral Fatigue



Validating the effects of COVID-19 – A review

Grief and Loss Stages (Elisabeth Kubler-Ross)

- 1 Denial: Allows us the time to start to adjust to the loss
- 2 Anger: May give us a temporary structure to what we're feeling versus feeling lost
- 3 Bargaining: “What if” and “If only” thinking while we try for a temporary truce
- 4 Depression: Is the **appropriate** response to loss!
- 5 Acceptance: Doesn't mean you're “ok” with the loss, just that you've accepted the reality



The Big Idea: These stages help us process our grief experience and gives us a common language to understand our feelings.

Youth Reactions to COVID-19 – Depression and Suicidal Ideation

Adolescents

- Increased frustration, anger, and irritability
- Feeling hopeless or helpless/teary & sad
- Loss of interest in previous likes or social groups or grades drop
- Changes in sleep, hygiene, or appetite
- Use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Giving items away
- Talking about death or statements such as “life would be better if I were gone”
- Self harm



Younger Children

- Irritable or mood lability
- Increase in tearfulness or temper tantrums
- Tired and low energy
- Changes to sleep or appetite
- Physical complaints (belly aches, head aches)
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt or statements reflecting low self esteem
- Thoughts or talk of death and/or artwork and play themes seem darker and more focused on death/dying

Youth Reactions to COVID-19 – Anxiety

Adolescents

- Restless and/or agitated and having difficulty settling down
- Increased frustration, anger, worry, and feelings of being overwhelmed
- Feeling hopeless or helpless
- Teary, sad, and loss of interests
- Fingernail chewing, hair tugging, etc.
- Physical fatigue or other body symptoms, (butterflies in stomach, rapid breathing/heart rate, clenched jaw, etc.)

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Younger Children

- Regressive behaviors (baby talk, bed wetting, thumb sucking, not wanting to sleep alone, night light on, chewing and sucking on blankets/clothing)
- Rapidly changing moods
- Sleeplessness or nightmares
- Exaggerated startle responses
- Changes in appetite
- Increases in motor activity
- Skin picking, hair tugging, chewing nails, etc.



The Big Idea: Recognizing these symptoms helps youth and caregivers identify when more help is needed.

The impacts of COVID-19 on adolescent functioning

According to the National Institute for Health Care Management and the Harris Poll:

New October 2020 CDC Study:

The CDC survey data found that almost 41% of respondents are struggling with mental health issues stemming from the pandemic -- both related to the coronavirus pandemic itself and the measures put in place to contain it, including physical distancing and stay-at-home orders.

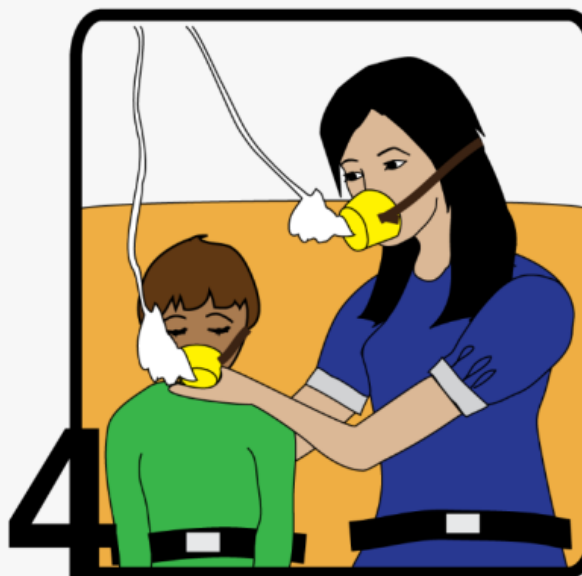
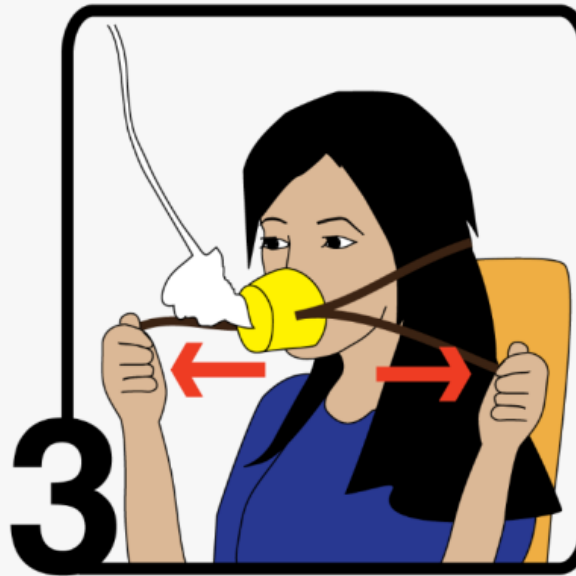
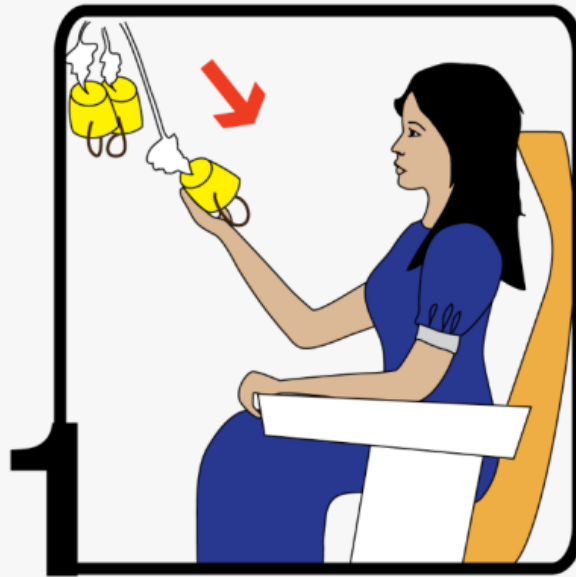
Nearly 41% of respondents reported at least one mental or behavioral health condition, including symptoms of depression, substance use or suicidal thoughts.

A recent report from the CDC shows that **1 in 4 young adults (18-24)** have “**seriously considered suicide**” in the past 30 days. This is up almost 30% from 2019

Confronting fear

- Remember what fear is – a well developed response to threats around us
- Be mindful of your own emotional state (own it!)
- Work to reduce stress levels
- Humor
- Talk with trusted friends and colleagues
- Practice good sleep and physical hygiene
- Embrace gratitude (send TY cards, journaling)
- Develop a new hobby
- Focus on things you CAN control
- Limit news exposure – Facts matter!





Common Reactions to COVID-19

Anxiety

- Restless and/or agitated
- Increased frustration or anger
- Sense of worry and being overwhelmed (sometimes, without knowing the “why”)
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Physical fatigue or other body symptoms, (butterflies in stomach, rapid breathing/heart rate, clenched jaw, etc.)
- Avoidant or distant
- Difficulty concentrating
- Attendance/Performance issues at work



Depression

- Fatigue and energy loss
- Feeling hopeless or helpless
- Sense of guilt or worthlessness
- Changes to sleep patterns or appetite
- Loss of interest in things that once brought joy
- Difficulty with focus or concentration
- Changes to work production or patterns
- Teary (sometimes without warning)
- Irritable or angry outbursts
- Unexplained physical symptoms (headaches, back pain, muscle soreness)



The Big Idea: Recognizing these us ALL identify when more help is needed.

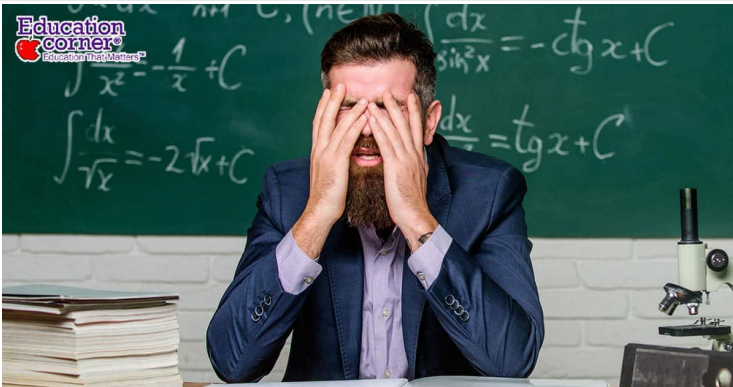
The Impact on Educators

The stress teachers are experiencing during COVID-19 could affect student outcomes and lead to teacher burnout.

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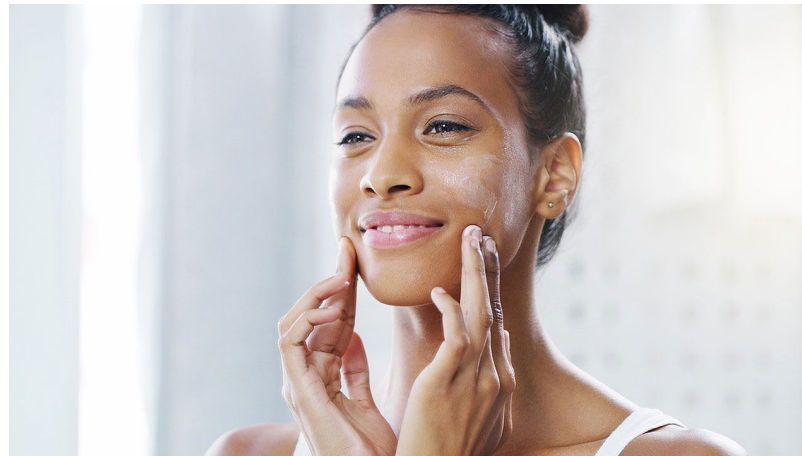
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Self-Care – The 2021 World (*According to Chris*)

- Self-care in 2021 looks much different than ever before
- It's all about “Micro-dosing”
- Without daily applications of self-care, we risk:
 - Ourselves
 - Our students
 - Our co-workers
 - Our loved ones
 - Our livelihoods



Enhancing your self-care

Step 1: Take Stock – Track your stressors at home and at work

Body Scan Exercises – Where are you holding tension?

Your Plate – Write down everything you do, in each role

Step 2: Work/Life Balance & Self-Care discoveries

Schedule your time – and stick to it.

Self-Care: What works for you? Practice these regularly.

- Take a Self-Care Inventory

Step 3: Relaxation Training & Stress Reduction Techniques

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

Make Self-Care a **PRIORITY** in your life

Step 4: Commit to the Change



Build your self-care plan

Breathing

Fidget
Toys

Music

Weekend
Time

PRE-ENCOUNTER:

Those strategies done just before the anticipated encounter (client in the waiting room, just before a tough class, or while parking your car to start the day)

DURING:

Those strategies that can be done while the encounter is happening

IMMEDIATELY AFTER:

Those strategies used as soon as the encounter is over

ON GOING:

Those skills committed to over time and as part of a long-term self-care plan

Self Talk

Stay
Hydrated

Walk

No Alarm
Clocks

Self-Care Strategies for Youth:

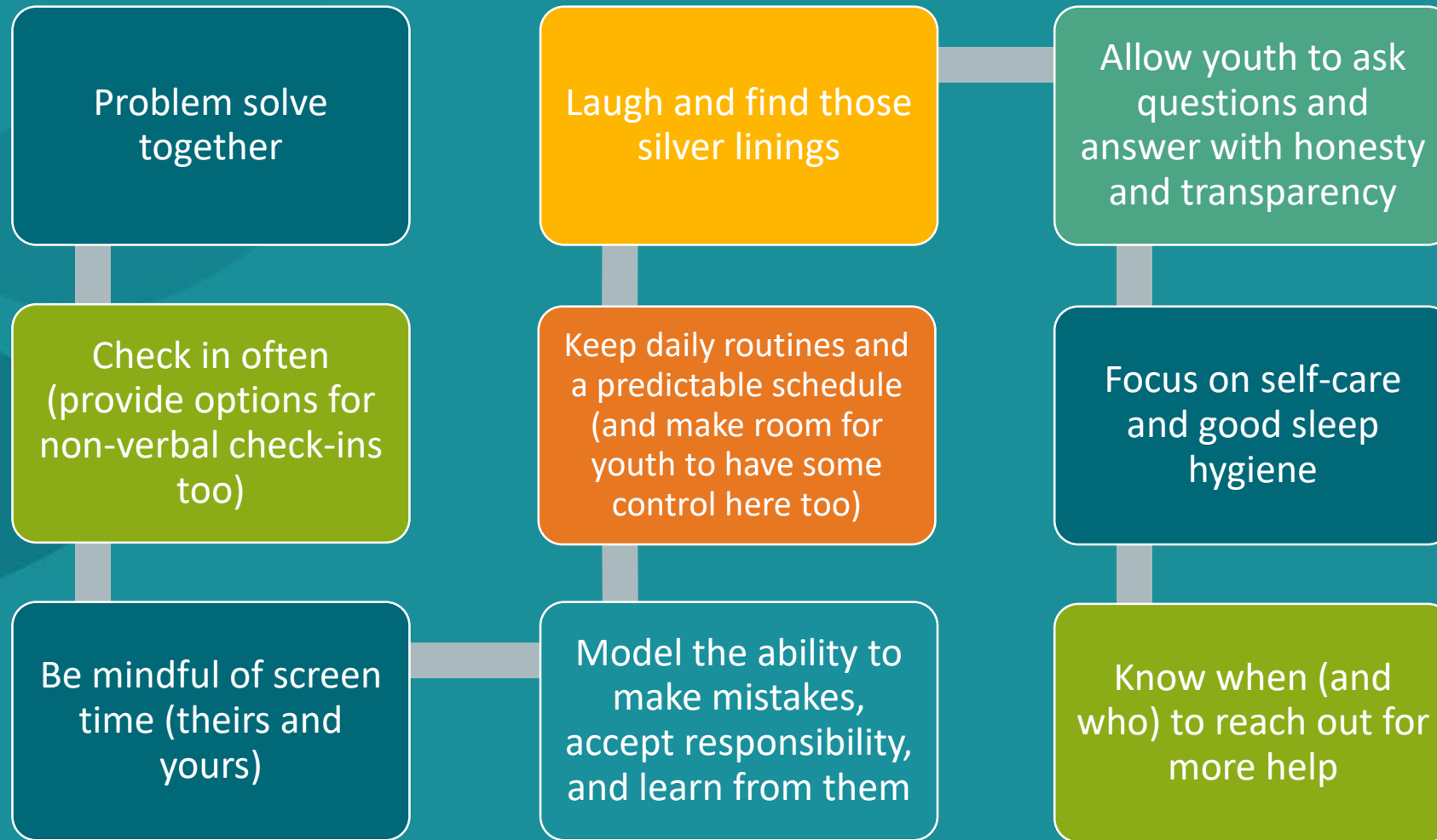
- Make time for yourself
- Stay connected with loved ones and trusted friends
- Self-talk strategies
 - “I’m OK!”
 - “What’s the worst thing that can happen right now?”
 - “Who can I talk to?”
 - “It’s OK to feel what I’m feeling.”
- Limit caffeine (soda, coffee, and energy drinks) and sugary snacks
- Identify triggers – “What happened just before I started feeling this way?”
- Distract with a good book, music, or re-watching your favorite TV show or movie
- Find ways to engage in physical activity that is meaningful for you
- Don’t underestimate the positive effects of sleep, sunshine, pets, hobbies, and helping others



Resiliency



Resiliency Strategies for Parents & Caregivers



The Big Idea: Parents and caregivers can encourage participation in everyday strategies that build resiliency.

Strategies for keeping kids engaged during remote learning



- Find opportunities for choice (camera on/off)
- Make it fun (backgrounds and filter effects)
- Seek real time feedback (chat box, polls, “thumbs up” button)
- Create a virtual plan on how to ask for help
- Integrate lots of breaks filled with kid yoga, mindfulness exercises and ways to get the “wiggles” out
- Keep healthy snacks and hydration near by
- Use gum/hard sour candy to integrate sensory breaks in the day
- Teachers/Families – Be mindful of kids’ need for privacy and safety and the differences in internet access or devices between households

Masking Tips to Maximize Compliance – The 3 P's

Practice

Find the style and material that's most comfortable (make masks at home with familiar material)

Increase tolerance over time (increase by 15-minutes a day if possible)

Pretend

Dress up as doctors, nurses, veterinarians and get masks on those stuffed animals

Two words: Fashion Show!!

Play

Create a mask photo album and get families and friends to send in their selfies too

Have fun with them – Mask up the dog, the family portraits on the wall, or action figures





Strategies to support physically distancing





You look like you could use some Champagne!

THE SAN FRANCISCO MARATHON FULL MARATHON

THE SAN FRANCISCO MARATHON

Questions

