

Counselor/Social Emotional Resources Week of 4/20

Parents/Families

Why am I having such strong feelings with this Pandemic?

As hard as we may try, we can't avoid what is happening all over the world. At first, Covid 19 seemed like a distant problem, but now we have all been affected. We now know that this isn't a sprint, but rather a marathon.

In school, we teach children math, reading and writing, but social emotional learning holds as much importance when we are working to become productive and giving human beings. The Renton School District is integrating these very important skills throughout the school day. This week's message is about self-awareness. It is important to understand ourselves before we can understand and give to others.

Grief is a natural response to the losses we experience. This loss can feel overwhelming. We feel the world has changed, and it has. You may experience all kinds of difficult and unexpected emotions, from anger to shock, guilt, and sadness. We know this is temporary, but it doesn't feel that way. This can affect your health, making it difficult to sleep, eat, or even think clearly. These are normal reactions, and you can have a wide range of feelings. All feelings are O.K.

We have a "new normal"; worries about finances and less connection with others. We are experiencing this grief together. You or someone you know may be going through these stages of grief. Understanding the stages of grief is a start.

Stages of Grief, as identified by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross:

- **Denial** *This virus won't affect us.*
- **Anger** *You're making me stay home and taking away my activities.*
- **Bargaining** *Okay, if I social distance for two weeks everything will be better, right?*
- **Sadness** *I don't know when this will end.*
- **Acceptance** *This is happening; I have to figure out how to proceed.*

Acceptance is where the power lies. We feel more empowered when we focus on the things that are within our control.

- *I can wash my hands.*
- *I can keep a safe distance.*
- *I can learn how to work virtually.*
- *I can journal.*
- *I can stay socially connected.*
- *I can take a walk in my neighborhood.*

If we're feeling overwhelmed with grief, there is something powerful about naming it. It helps us feel what's inside of us and helps us acknowledge what we're going through. It is O.K. to feel your sadness, fear and anger. If we allow the feelings to happen, it empowers us. Once we practice self-awareness, we become more aware of other's needs. Please see the info-graphic below for further tips.

Please check out this video for more information on coping with Covid-19:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcBTBSrAg-8>

5 COVID-19 PARENTING

Keep Calm and Manage Stress

This is a stressful time. Take care of yourself, so you can support your children.

You are not alone

Millions of people have the same fears as us. Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling. Listen to them. Avoid social media that makes you feel panicked.

Take a break

We all need a break sometimes. When your children are asleep, do something fun or relaxing for yourself. Make a list of healthy activities that YOU like to do. You deserve it!

Listen to your kids

Be open and listen to your children. Your children will look to you for support and reassurance. Listen to your children when they share how they are feeling. Accept how they feel and give them comfort.



Take a Pause

1-minute relaxation activity that you can do whenever you are feeling stressed or worried

- ▶ **Step 1: Set up**
 - Find a comfortable sitting position, your feet flat on the floor, your hands resting in your lap.
 - Close your eyes if you feel comfortable.
- ▶ **Step 2: Think, feel, body**
 - Ask yourself, "What am I thinking now?"
 - Notice your thoughts. Notice if they are negative or positive.
 - Notice how you feel emotionally. Notice if your feelings are happy or not.
 - Notice how your body feels. Notice anything that hurts or is tense.

- ▶ **Step 3: Focus on your breath**
 - Listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
 - You can put a hand on your stomach and feel it rise and fall with each breath.
 - You may want to say to yourself "It's okay. Whatever it is, I am okay."
 - Then just listen to your breath for a while.

- ▶ **Step 4: Coming back**
 - Notice how your whole body feels.
 - Listen to the sounds in the room.

- ▶ **Step 5: Reflecting**
 - Think 'do I feel different at all?'
 - When you are ready, open your eyes.

Taking a Pause can also be helpful when you find your child is irritating you or has done something wrong. It gives you a chance to be calmer. Even a few deep breaths or connecting with the feeling of the floor beneath can make a difference. You can also Take a Pause with your children!

For more information click below links:

Parenting tips from WHO

Parenting tips from UNICEF

In worldwide languages

EVIDENCE-BASE



Parenting for Lifelong Health is supported by the UKRI GCRF Accelerating Achievement for Africa's Adolescents Hub, the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme and the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Oxford University Innovation GCRF Sustainable Impact Fund, UNICEF, the Leverhulme Trust, the Economic and Social Research Council, WHO, CDC, the National Research Foundation of South Africa, the Lazard Foundation, the John Fell Fund, the Evaluation Fund, the UBT Optima Foundation, USAID-PEPFAR, the Wellcome Trust, Grand Challenges Canada and Wellspring Advisors.

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-5-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=1b3ee706_6

Primary

Dear Students and Families,

As I'm sure you've heard by now, we all won't be coming back to Tiffany Park in person for the rest of this school year. I'm really sad that I won't get to see you around and check in with you in person like we used to do. However, we're working hard to make sure you still have some connections to Tiffany Park because the school year has not ended, it has just changed. Change is something that will always happen, like the seasons turning from winter to spring each year. What we can work to control is how we react and respond to these changes. This week's activities are meant to focus on noticing change and talking about and practicing the ways we can respond to it. How are you responding to this change in the school year?

When Spring Comes Read Aloud (changes and growth)

"When Spring Comes" [When Spring Comes](#)

Discussion Questions (related to growth and change):

- What happens in the Spring?
- Draw a picture of what something looked like *before* and *during* Spring
 - Examples: Grass, trees
- Draw a picture of what you looked like *before* and *during* Spring
 - How have you changed?
 - How do you feel now?

Follow through Activity "Grow a Plant at Home"

- Watch this video about how a seed grows into a plant [How to Grow a Bean Plant in a Jar](#)
 - Optional: Try this experiment with a family member
 - Material you'll need:
 - seed
 - Jar
 - paper towels
 - water
 - Every week, talk with a family member about what you observe
 - What do you see?
 - Gently touch it, how does it feel?
 - Is there a smell?
- Like the seed is changing, how are you changing? How are you growing?

Take a walk outdoors or watch Outdoor Nature Walk Video: [A Nature Walk in Early Spring](#)

- Discussion Questions:
 - What did you see or hear?
 - Pick something that you saw or heard and draw a picture
 - Examples: birds, water, trees, etc.

Nature Walk Activities:

- Nature Walk Scavenger Hunt (attached)
 - Using the attachment or a blank piece of paper, go on a nature walk with a family member and find these items or write down or draw what you see
- Nature Walk Story (attached)
 - Using the attachment or a blank piece of paper, write a story about something you smelled, saw and heard outside

Activity on Change: *From Ice to Water*

Directions: With the Help of an Adult, put 2 to 3 cubes of ice in a cup or small bowl. As you transfer the cubes from the freezer (or ice maker) touch them and keep track of how the chill of these cubes feels in your hand and on your fingers. Consider the following questions:

- How would you describe the temperature of the ice cubes on your skin? (*cold, freezing, stings, etc.*)
- What are some good uses for ice cubes? (cool your drink, play with on a hot day, etc.)

Next, allow the cubes to melt in your cup/ bowl. This can take awhile at room temperature-you are welcome to hold them in your hand to speed up the melt. Be sure to collect the water in your cup/bowl. Once the cubes have melted, consider the following questions in regards to the water:

When the ice became water, its usefulness as ice ended. Does this mean it has become useless? What are some good uses for the cup of water you have collected now that it is no longer ice? (Cool drink when thirsty, put out a fire, etc.)

Point to Remember: Change happens regularly, and at times can be sad, disappointing or even scary. It is important to first know that change is an ongoing thing—it is constant. Second, when change occurs and we recognize it, we should consider the new value. The ice is great for cooling our drinks, but when it melts, it also serves as a cold drink. Please also remember that the adults in our lives can help answer questions we might have about change, and are available to support us when our feelings and thinking produce negative self-talk.

Intermediate



How to feel less out-of-control when facing the unknown.

3 questions to help you stay grounded:

1. What am I feeling?
2. What options do I have?
3. What really matters?

While we cannot control the pandemic and all that it brings, we CAN control who we are and what we stand for. We can control how we support and listen to the people around us.

THE POWER OF NAMING FEELINGS

Research on anxiety reveals a crucial lesson on uncertainty: Name it to tame it. When we push away or ignore feelings, we don't solve our problems. So, as you're grappling with one of the world's biggest challenges if you're feeling big emotions (or those around you are) just recognize it. Your feelings are a message and they are trying to help you cope. Keep asking, "What else am I feeling?"

A short video on emotional intelligence and naming our feelings:

- [Name Feelings Video](#)

Some quick videos on breathing exercises to help you manage your feelings:

- [3 minute breathing video](#)
- [1 minute breathing video](#)