

LISTEN, PROTECT, CONNECT - MODEL & TEACH

**Scripts adapted for the Mt. Lebanon School District
for re-engagement of learning in response to the 2020 Pandemic school closure.**

As educators, we are in a position to help our students after a disaster, infectious disease outbreak, school crisis or other emergency. Just as we engage in developmentally appropriate academic, social and emotional learning practices under typical circumstances, we can utilize these same skills to help students reduce stress and facilitate learning regardless of the platform or environment.

This 5-step framework of cognitive learning and behavior, supported by the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Justice, and the National Institute of Mental Health, helps students put their experiences and feelings into words, provides support and encouragement, encourages social problem solving, models calm and optimistic behavior and teaches healthy coping skills (Wong & NACTATR, 2020).

DAY 1.....p. 2-4
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DAY 3.....p. 7-8
DAY 4.....p. 9-11
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DAY 1

Teacher: We will spend a few minutes for the first few days of school talking and thinking about how our school, neighborhood and homes have changed because of the Coronavirus. Even though we all live in Mt. Lebanon and experienced changes, we all had different changes. It's important to think about how these changes make us feel. It is also important to talk about strategies that we can use to help ourselves feel better. A strategy is a tool that helps us solve problems, so we are going to talk about tools we can use when we aren't quite feeling like ourselves. All of the changes are in place to help us stay healthy and safe. We may have many feelings about these changes, and all of our feelings are okay. I am always available to listen and help you, and all of the other teachers and staff from school are available to listen and help too. So let's start today by talking about starting school again. **K teachers should consider omitting or reframing reference to changes in school as some students may be experiencing school for the first time.*

(Q): What does it feel like to be starting school again?

(Q): What are the changes? (students should identify washing hands, learning at home again, masks, 6 ft. distance, small gatherings, reduced capacities in restaurants, etc.)

Allow students the opportunity to share.

LISTEN

Core Elements:

Provide students with an opportunity to share their experiences and express feelings or other concerns.

Establish rapport and trust. Convey interest and empathy.

Acknowledge what has happened, letting students know that it is okay to share their experiences with an adult.

Teacher: These are a few of the changes with school and they are intended to help us stay healthy. Doctors and scientists have worked very hard to study the best [strategies](#) that keep everyone healthy. Changes might feel different, and sometimes changes feel uncomfortable until we get used to them. It's okay to feel uncomfortable or have other feelings too. Let's listen to [this short story](#).

(Q): How do some of these changes make you feel?

(Q): Which changes are easier to get used to?

Answer any questions about the current school changes with facts. If you cannot answer the question, it is okay to explain that you do not know the answer but can find out and get back to that student at a later time. Reassure students that changes are in place to keep everyone healthy and safe.

PROTECT

*Core Elements:
Reestablish feelings of both physical and emotional safety.
Provide a calm routine and establish expectations.
Offer developmentally appropriate information.*

DAY 1

Teacher: Since the virus started and school was closed last school year, we all had to follow the same recommendations like staying away from others and wearing masks to stay healthy. Situations like the Coronavirus and closing school buildings are rare, so rare that we are making history with the choices we are making and will read about when we are much older. Even with all that has happened, you may have noticed the helpers in our community. **K teachers should consider omitting or reframing reference to changes in school as some students may be experiencing school for the first time.*

- (Q): Can you think of a time when you couldn't do what you wanted and had to stay away from others?
- (Q): What did you and your family do to help each other?
- (Q): What did you and your family do to help others in your neighborhood?
- (Q): How did it make you feel when you saw people helping others?
- (Q): What are some activities we could do to help others right now?

Empathize and validate students' responses. Create a list of activities and strategies that connect students with one another, their school and community to be revisited throughout recovery.

CONNECT

*Core Elements:
Help students and peers re-establish their normal social relationships.
Promote and restore stability, recovery and predictability.*

Teacher: When we talk and listen to each other about what is happening right now we are showing courage and kindness. Thank you for having the courage to think about what is happening and talk about how you feel. Thank you for being kind when listening to each other. When we talk and listen to each other we will notice that we all have different feelings on different days. Sometimes we even have several feelings on the same day, and that's okay! Our feelings will change because that's what feelings do. There are many strategies we can use to feel better, when we need them.

- (Q): What are things we can do to connect with friends and family that do not live with us? (visual list or oral)
 - (Q): Think about the strategies you use everyday to keep your body healthy. What are those strategies? (visual list or oral)
 - (Q): Now I want you to think about a time that you felt sad, worried, or upset. What did you do to help yourself feel better?
- Let's make a list of strategies we can use to help ourselves feel better when we are feeling sad, upset, or worried. (visual or oral)

MODEL

Acknowledge your own feelings and strategies you use to stay healthy (washing hands, coughing/sneezing in elbow) and cope (deep breathing going for a walk.).

*Core Elements:
Acknowledge the disruption to school and many other aspects of daily life.
Convey a positive and optimistic approach. Demonstrate, practice and reinforce effective coping.*

DAY 1

Teacher: We will also spend some time each day writing or drawing. This is called journaling. Journaling is important because it will give us an opportunity to record how we are feeling each day. You can do your journaling in a notebook, on a sheet of paper, or in the air with your finger! It can also help us think about strategies we can use when we want to feel better. Sometimes journaling helps us set a goal that we can focus on accomplishing that day. We can use journals to remind us how our feelings will change, how we can take care of different feelings using different strategies and celebrate the challenges we will accomplish. Generally, changes feel more comfortable with time. If our feelings aren't getting better, we can share our writing or pictures with an adult we trust for help. Today, let's draw or write about a moment that has stayed in your mind since the Coronavirus began. Please listen to [this](#) short story as you begin.

Allow time for students to write or draw and share as interested. Thank students for sharing and reinforce healthy coping and problem solving strategies and goals.

*Core Elements:
Reaffirm the normal range of reactions that we experience and will impact learning. Foster a sense of hope.
Identify, practice and reinforce healthy and adaptive coping, problem solving and goal setting strategies to include seeking adult supports.*

TEACH

DAY 2	
<p>Teacher: I would like to introduce you to John and Mary, two students about the same age as you. John and Mary have heard of the Coronavirus from their families and on television. They have different thoughts about the virus.</p> <p>(Q): What do you think are some of the things that John and Mary heard about the Coronavirus?</p> <p>Maybe you had or currently have similar thoughts like John or Mary? It's okay to talk about your thoughts with an adult you trust.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Allow students the opportunity to share.</i></p>	<p>LISTEN</p>
<p><i>Core Elements: Provide students with an opportunity to share their experiences and express feelings or other concerns. Establish rapport and trust. Convey your interest and your empathy. Acknowledge what has happened, letting students know that it is okay to share their experiences with an adult.</i></p>	
<p>Teacher: Now let's imagine that John and Mary were taught many strategies to avoid germs, but they forgot some of them.</p> <p>(Q): What strategies would you remind them to use? (refer back to list from DAY 1-MODEL if created and add to it)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Review strategies to stay healthy. Reassure students that changes are in place to keep everyone healthy and safe.</i></p>	<p>PROTECT</p>
<p><i>Core Elements: Reestablish feelings of both physical and emotional safety. Provide a calm routine and establish expectations. Offer developmentally appropriate information.</i></p>	
<p>Teacher: You have probably seen others using the same strategies that you reminded John and Mary to use.</p> <p>(Q): Let's practice with a game. If I say a strategy to keep your body healthy, stand up. If I say a strategy to take care of your feelings, sit down. (review healthy habits and coping strategies using a game).</p> <p>(Q): Who have you seen using these strategies?</p>	<p>CONNECT</p>

Empathize and validate students' responses. Revisit list of activities and strategies that connect students with their school and community to be revisited throughout recovery.

*Core Elements:
Help students and peers re-establish their normal social relationships.
Promote and restore stability, recovery and predictability.*

DAY 2

Teacher: Very good! John and Mary can use all of these strategies to help take care of their bodies and feelings just like us. This short [video](#) will remind us why we should use some of these strategies all of the time.

(Q): Now what strategies should John and Mary use as they return to learning or school online? (Create a visual or oral list to refer back.)

Acknowledge your own feelings and strategies you use to stay healthy (washing hands, coughing/sneezing in elbow) and cope (deep breathing going for a walk) and return to teaching and learning (early bed-time, eat healthy, exercise)

*Core Elements:
Acknowledge the disruption to school and many other aspects of daily life.
Convey a positive and optimistic approach. Demonstrate, practice and reinforce effective coping.*

Teacher: Let's draw in a journal or on a sheet of paper or in the air. Today, let's draw some pictures of what you imagine the virus actually looks like. What color is it, how big is it? We know it spreads through the air but let's imagine what it looks like if we could really see it.

Allow time for students to draw in their journals and share as interested. Thank students for sharing and encourage healthy coping and problem solving strategies and goals.

*Core Elements:
Reaffirm the normal range of reactions that we experience and will impact learning. Foster a sense of hope.
Identify, practice and reinforce healthy and adaptive coping, problem solving and goal setting strategies to include seeking adult supports.*

MODEL

TEACH

DAY 3

Teacher: I am very happy to see everyone today. I am very proud of all of you for working hard and doing your best. How are you feeling? I want you to remember that all of your feelings are okay. We are all getting used to a new school year with some new changes and we may have different feelings on different days.

(Q): Think about a time when something was hard for you. Why was it hard? How did you accomplish it or solve it?

Allow students the opportunity to share their experiences.

LISTEN

Core Elements:

Provide students with an opportunity to share their experiences and express feelings or other concerns.

Establish rapport and trust. Convey your interest and your empathy.

Acknowledge what has happened, letting students know that it is okay to share their experiences with an adult.

Teacher: It's important to remember that we are problem solvers. I want you to continue to remember that illnesses like the Coronavirus and changes in school and businesses like we are seeing now are rare, so rare that we will read about all of the healthy and safe choices we are making now, when we are much, much older!

(Q): How will you feel when doctors and scientists discover the solution to stop the Coronavirus?

(Q): How do you feel when you work with others to accomplish a task?

Answer any questions about the current school changes. If you cannot answer the question, it is okay to explain that you do not know the answer but can find out and get back to that student at a later time. Reassure students that changes are in place to keep everyone healthy and safe.

PROTECT

Core Elements:

Reestablish feelings of both physical and emotional safety.

Provide a calm routine and establish expectations.

Offer developmentally appropriate information.

Teacher: Let's think about famous people who are good problem solvers. Now let's think of people you know who are also good problem solvers. Picture them in your head and think about what you would say to them if you needed their help with a problem.

(Q): Who did you think about?

CONNECT

(Q): What makes them good problem solvers?
Remember, I am always here to help you solve problems, and so are all of the other teachers and staff from school.

Empathize and validate students' responses. Revisit list of activities and strategies that connect students with their school and community to be revisited throughout recovery.

*Core Elements:
Help students and peers re-establish their normal social relationships.
Promote and restore stability, recovery and predictability..*

Teacher:
Hope is a very important strategy that kids and adults use. This summer, I felt hopeful that we would be able to leave our homes and start to share time with small groups of family and friends again.

(Q): What is something that you can be hopeful for now that school has begun?

Acknowledge your own feelings and strategies you use to stay healthy (washing hands, coughing in elbow) and cope (deep breathing going for a walk.).

MODEL

*Core Elements:
Acknowledge the disruption to school and many other aspects of daily life.
Convey a positive and optimistic approach. Demonstrate, practice and reinforce effective coping.*

Teacher:
Let's do some writing or drawing about [hope](#). Write or draw about something you are hopeful to do or a problem you are hoping to solve. If you choose to, include the important person you thought about earlier that is good at solving problems and what they might say to you.

Allow time for students to record in their journals and share as interested. Thank students for sharing and encourage healthy coping and problem solving strategies and goals.

TEACH

*Core Elements:
Reaffirm the normal range of reactions that we experience and will impact learning. Foster a sense of hope.
Identify, practice and reinforce healthy and adaptive coping, problem solving and goal setting strategies to include seeking adult supports.*

DAY 4

Teacher: Welcome back everyone! Maybe you are wide awake and ready for school, or maybe you are feeling sleepy and still waking up, or maybe you are having other feelings today, but no matter what you are feeling, I'm very happy to see everyone here today. Today we should spend some time talking about bullying and the Coronavirus. Doctors and scientists have encouraged us to use many [strategies](#) to stay healthy because they help protect us from germs. Having a certain skin color or being Chinese or Asian descent or having allergies have nothing to do with staying healthy. We all have to use the same healthy habits no matter how we look or where we are from.

(Q): How do you think teasing someone about having the Coronavirus would make them feel?

Allow students the opportunity to share their experiences.

LISTEN

*Core Elements:
Provide students with an opportunity to share their experiences and express feelings or other concerns.
Establish rapport and trust. Convey your interest and your empathy.
Acknowledge what has happened, letting students know that it is okay to share their experiences with an adult.*

Teacher: Joking about the Coronavirus is not acceptable. Blaming an Asian person or someone who looks Chinese or Asian descent for the Coronavirus or teasing someone because they cough or have a health condition like asthma is [hurtful](#). Even if we think we are joking, we are not treating the other person or other people with respect or fairness. We are being mean. Coronavirus is a virus and not a person.

(Q): What can we [do](#) to stop this kind of teasing from happening?

Answer any questions about the current school changes. If you cannot answer the question, it is okay to explain that you do not know the answer but can find out and get back to that student at a later time. Reassure students that changes are in place to keep everyone healthy and safe.

PROTECT

*Core Elements:
Reestablish feelings of both physical and emotional safety.
Provide a calm routine and establish expectations.
Offer developmentally appropriate information.*

DAY 4	
<p>Teacher: Let’s think about who could help you if you saw or heard someone teasing or joking about the Coronavirus. I am always here to help you, and so are all of the other teachers and staff from school. A large part of my job is to keep all students safe, even if we are not all together in our school. All of the teachers and staff are available to take care of you so you can feel safe, so we can learn together.</p> <p>(Q): Who are people that could help if you saw or heard about teasing or joking about the Coronavirus?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Empathize and validate students’ responses. Revisit list of activities and strategies that connect students with their school and community to be revisited throughout recovery.</i></p>	CONNECT
<p><i>Core Elements: Help students and peers re-establish their normal social relationships. Promote and restore stability, recovery and predictability.</i></p>	
<p>Teacher: Remember we have talked about being problem solvers and helpers. This is a time when we can work together and help each other. All of the teachers, staff and students work together to have a welcoming school where everyone feels included. Adults work together, students work together and we will work together as a class. When we work together we are problem solvers and helpers for each other. Watch reading of <i>Whoever You Are</i> by Mem Fox.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Acknowledge your own feelings and strategies of coping.</i></p>	MODEL
<p><i>Core Elements: Acknowledge the disruption to school and many other aspects of daily life. Convey a positive and optimistic approach. Demonstrate, practice and reinforce effective coping.</i></p>	

DAY 4

Teacher: Today we have two choices for writing or drawing. Your first choice is to write or draw how you will be a helper to others when someone is being mean. Your second choice is to write or draw about someone that you admire (look up to) that is a helper to others.

Allow time for students to record in their journals and share as interested. Thank students for sharing and encourage healthy coping and problem solving strategies and goals.

TEACH

*Core Elements:
Reaffirm the normal range of reactions that we experience and will impact learning. Foster a sense of hope. Identify, practice and reinforce healthy and adaptive coping, problem solving and goal setting strategies to include seeking adult supports.*

DAY 5

Teacher: Congratulations! After today we have successfully completed the first 5 days of our new school year! We have accomplished a lot together so far.

(Q): What is your biggest accomplishment these first 5 days of school?

(Q): How did achieving that make you feel?

Allow students the opportunity to share their experiences.

LISTEN

Core Elements:

Provide students with an opportunity to share their experiences and express feelings or other concerns.

Establish rapport and trust. Convey your interest and your empathy.

Acknowledge what has happened, letting students know that it is okay to share their experiences with an adult.

Teacher: I hope you feel proud of your accomplishments these first few days, we are learning during a pretty historical time right now. We have been practicing the recommendations from doctors and scientists that keep our bodies healthy and practicing strategies that take care of our feelings.

(Q): What is one [strategy](#) for your body that you have been practicing this week that helps you feel your best?

(Q): What is one [strategy](#) for your feelings that you have been practicing this week that helps you feel your best?

Answer any questions about the current school changes. If you cannot answer the question, it is okay to explain that you do not know the answer but can find out and get back to that student at a later time. Reassure students that changes are in place to keep everyone healthy and safe.

PROTECT

Core Elements:

Reestablish feelings of both physical and emotional safety.

Provide a calm routine and establish expectations.

Offer developmentally appropriate information.

DAY 5

Teacher: We are all practicing strategies to help us be our best. Being your best takes courage, hope and kindness. On some days these strategies are easy to do, and other days they may be hard. We are all problem solvers and helpers. Let's have some problem solving and helping fun today with a game that helps us learn a little more about each other. The more we know about each other, the better helpers and problem solvers we will become together.

(Q): [Would you rather...](#) stand up for one; sit down for the other (play game).

Emphasize responses connecting groups together. Activities and strategies that connect students with their school and community should be revisited throughout recovery.

CONNECT

*Core Elements:
Help students and peers re-establish their normal social relationships.
Promote and restore stability, recovery and predictability.*

Teacher: Playing games is another strategy that can help people feel better. When we play, we practice many skills we use for learning like trying something new, not giving up, working with other people, and solving problems.

(Q): What is something you like to play and how do you feel when you are playing?

Acknowledge your own feelings and strategies of coping.

MODEL

*Core Elements:
Acknowledge the disruption to school and many other aspects of daily life.
Convey a positive and optimistic approach. Demonstrate, practice and reinforce effective coping.*

Teacher: We came up with several activities that we can play. Let's draw our favorite play activities or write a list of things that we can play. Maybe you play them with others or maybe you can play alone.

Allow time for students to record in their journals and share as interested. Thank students for sharing and encourage healthy coping and problem solving strategies and goals.

TEACH

*Core Elements:
Reaffirm the normal range of reactions that we experience and will impact learning. Foster a sense of hope.
Identify, practice and reinforce healthy and adaptive coping, problem solving and goal setting strategies to include seeking adult supports.*

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