

STAYING IN TOUCH

WHILE KEEPING OUR DISTANCE

MEETING THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND STAFF

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Connections, Caring and Communication During COVID

Typhanie Jackson, Director of Student Services

At this point in time I know many of us are tired of zooming, over being our children's teachers, and although we love our families-there is only but so much "together time" we can share. We have been personally and professionally impacted. When we are starting to feel down and overwhelmed, it is the time when we have remember the things we are grateful for-our good health, our friends, our family. How do we shift our mindset to one of hope and opportunity in the face of this pandemic event? Are there lessons to be learned? Right now we are all bakers, hairdressers/barbers, nail technicians, and a host of other professions we have assumed during this time. As social beings, the face-to-face communication and the personal connections that we make with others will soon come. This is a moment in time, an event we will share with younger generations. We are strong as a community, will continue to rise to the occasion for our students, and we will get through this together. As always, that you for supporting our students and families, thank you for going above and beyond. Stay safe!!

**Don't forget about the Student Services website! Here you can find resources and information in regards to COVID-19, SEL, Instruction, PPT Resources, and more!*

<https://sites.google.com/a/nhps.net/nhps-student-services/>



STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

Pre-School: Cassandra Frey, Nathan Hale

This week, the preschool special education department is recognizing Ms. Cassandra Frey for all of her hard work and dedication to the field of teaching. Ms. Frey has demonstrated her ability to adapt to distant learning. Day in and day out she shows that this field is where she belongs. Ms. Frey works with children ranging in ages from 3-5 and throughout this pandemic has provided her students/families with activities designed to stimulate cognitive, linguistic and social,emotional development. Every day Ms. Frey posts daily phonics, circle and story time lessons. Four days a week the students are provided with math and literacy lessons focusing on counting, shapes, and tracing letters. Fridays are dedicated to "Fun Friday!!" where the families are encouraged to take a break and enjoy each other!

Ms. Frey, you are doing a great job! Keep up the good work.

K-8: Christine Maursky, Truman School

I realize that many of our students are overwhelmed by the google classroom platform. During the school year, our students rely heavily on the verbal directions that are given. On the google classroom platform, everything is presented in written format which can be extremely difficult for our students who struggle with reading. It is further compounded at our school given the fact that many of our parents speak another language as their dominant language and may be unable to help. To provide students with auditory input they rely on, I asked my son (Hunter Maursky - 8th grader at ESUMS) to record a video providing instruction on how to enable accessibility features on Chromebooks. I shared it with my students on google classroom and with all teachers at Truman. If you think it might help your students, feel free to share. [Enabling Accessibility Features on Google Chromebook](#)

High School: Kelly Stalsburg, Co-Op High School

Here is something Ms. Stalsburg does with her resource kids to get some engagement. "A lot of the kids respond only to things like this (posts that seem fun). Just a good way to stay connected and for me to hear from them/them to hear from me."

Here are some of the questions. Students then leave their answers in the comments. Ms. Stalsburg has found this is easier for them than having to make a google doc, fill out a google form, etc.

"Happy Friday!!! Today I want to finish off the week with another game of would you rather!!! Please answer these, it makes my day reading your responses! Miss you guys, hope you have a good weekend <3 (that's a heart incase you guys didn't know)

P.S. Bonus points if you back up your answer with EVIDENCE (an explanation)

1. What would you rather eat for the rest of your life, tacos or pizza?

Me: Pizza because it's my favorite food.

2. Would you rather surf in shark-infested waters or jump free fall with a parachute into the Grand Canyon?

Me: Parachute into the Grand Canyon because I've always wanted to sky dive/parachute and sharks scare me.

3. Would you rather live in Narnia or go to school at Hogwarts?

Me: Hogwarts because I love the architecture.

4. Would you rather have the ability to read other people's mind or the ability to see into the future?

Me: See into the future because I'm not sure I'd want to know what other people are thinking all the time.

5. Would you rather be able to sing like a diva or be able to play the guitar like a rock star?

Me: Sing like a diva! because I'd love to be able to sing like Beyonce."

What a fun game! Keep up the creativity!

Self-Contained: Nicole Cassidy, Clinton Avenue

Each week Ms. Cassidy discusses a different life skills theme with her students, such as washing dishes, sweeping the floor, making the bed, and sorting and folding laundry. She posts videos of herself modeling these tasks and challenges her students to work on these tasks during the week.

Ms. Cassidy utilizes Google Sheets that the students are able to manipulate at home (like a binder). She purchases them from Mrs. D's Corner (an absolutely amazing blog). She is able to monitor student work and provide immediate feedback on Dojo with these digital binders.

Such engaging work, Ms. Cassidy!

Round of applause for the effort our staff is making to keep distance learning engaging and fun for our students!

SEEN AROUND NHPS

Here are some more highlights of the amazing work NHPS staff is doing!

Click [here](#) to watch a video made by Truman staff that was posted in their google classrooms to welcome students back from their April break! What a warm welcome!

Check out this amazing video of Edgewood Staff singing and dancing to their students!
[Edgewood Staff - Can't Stop the Feeling](#)



Here is a 5-year-old student from Dr. Reginald Mayo Early Childhood School working on speech and language temporal concepts. Parent laminated worksheets for multiple practice opportunities. **Practice makes perfect! :)**

*Parent permission was received to post this photo.

NHPS STAFF CARES!

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING AT HOME

It is imperative that we take care of our social and emotional needs during this time - this is true for parents and children! This 31 Days of Self-Love Challenge is an interactive way for students (and adults!) to learn about and to practice healthy and safe coping skills.

31 days self love challenge

- Day 1: Write out your feelings.
- Day 2: Post a picture that makes you feel pretty.
- Day 3: Wear your favorite outfit.
- Day 4: Cook yourself a big, healthy breakfast.
- Day 5: Take a long bath with lavender oil.
- Day 6: Watch a movie that makes you laugh.
- Day 7: Put on a face mask and paint your nails. Pamper yourself a little.
- Day 8: Stretch. Do some sun salutations in the sunlight.
- Day 9: Forgive yourself for a mistake that you mad.
- Day 10: Talk to someone who makes you smile.
- Day 11: Belt out your favorite song as loud as you can no matter who's listening.
- Day 12: Write down all of your dreams and aspirations.
- Day 13: Pick up a book you've always wanted to read.
- Day 14: Organize your closet, strip your bedsheets.
- Day 15: Go to bed an hour earlier than normal.
- Day 16: Wake up early and watch the sunrise.
- Day 17: Try a new food.
- Day 18: Call up an old friend you haven't talked to in awhile.
- Day 19: Do something you enjoy.
- Day 20: Make a conscious effort to be more positive.
- Day 21: Stare in the mirror and list 5 things you love about yourself today.
- Day 22: Spend the day outside. Go for a walk. Sit in the sun.
- Day 23: Listen to new music.
- Day 24: Dye your hair the color you'd like.
- Day 25: Buy yourself flowers and watch them bloom.
- Day 26: Realize that you should be doing things for yourself and not for others.
- Day 27: Lie in the sunshine and daydream about life.
- Day 28: Buy yourself a new dress and go out with your best friends.
- Day 29: Fill in a coloring book.
- Day 30: Bake cookies. It's okay to treat yourself every once in awhile.
- Day 31: Reflect on what makes you happy.

infograph by sasikumar Myinfomaniya.com

SOCIAL DISTANCING SELF-CARE

Remember: It is **essential** to practice self-care during this time.

SELF-CARE ISN'T SELFISH!

[Mama, Take Care of Yourself During COVID-19](#)



SELF-CARE DURING COVID-19

1. FEEL YOUR FEELINGS

Everything is uncertain and stressful right now. It's important to feel your feelings and identify them. Naming and expressing your emotions out loud can help eliminate misunderstandings, projection, and displacement.

2. PRIORITIZE SLEEP

You may find that you are oversleeping and/or under sleeping given the lack of structure. Re-establish or continue your normal routine to ensure adequate sleep. We know that sleep aides in: decreasing sickness, maintaining a healthy weight, lowering risk of serious health problems, reducing stress, improving mood, improving clearer cognition, improving academic and work productivity, and improving relationships.

3. TAKE A SHOWER

Seriously, it makes a huge difference!! Change back into loungewear or for that matter push yourself to dress normally. It will improve your psyche. Spice up your routine by additions such as: masks, consistent skincare routines, home manicures/pedicures.

4. GO OUTSIDE

GO outside and get sun and fresh air!! It turns out "sunny disposition" is more than just an expression. Researchers found more mental health distress in people during seasons with little sun exposure. On the contrary, days with plenty of sunshine were associated with better mental health — in fact, the availability of sunshine has more impact on mood than rainfall, temperature, or any other environmental factor.

5. FIND WAYS TO MOVE INDOORS

If the weather is bad or you just don't want to go out, it's good to have options indoors. Here are a few suggestions: Yoga with Adriene, use your stairs at home, listen to audiobooks while

engaging in home exercises, build objects/items, sit in a squat position or engage in ab workouts while watching TV, impromptu dance parties, use your kid as your backpack, online dance/barre/Zumba class, create walking “zoom” meetings, “standing desk” versus sitting down, master a jump rope routine, hula hoop, master a yoga arm balance, deep clean, learn a musical instrument, active game nights (twister, charades, salad bowl, active video game), and virtual home boxing exercises (<https://www.titleboxingclubondemand.com>)-offers free 30 day trial.

6. FIND WAYS TO LAUGH

Seriously, we need to laugh. Find a fun podcast to listen to, send ridiculous GIFs to friends, or listen to/watch comedians on Netflix, Spotify, and Sirius XM.

7. LEAN IN TO YOUR HAPPY THINGS

Do you love coffee? Chocolate? Reading? Something else? Gardening? Painting? Coloring? Dancing? Discover yourself and learn what makes you happy. Engage in self-analysis and inventories:

<https://richardstep.com/self-tests/>

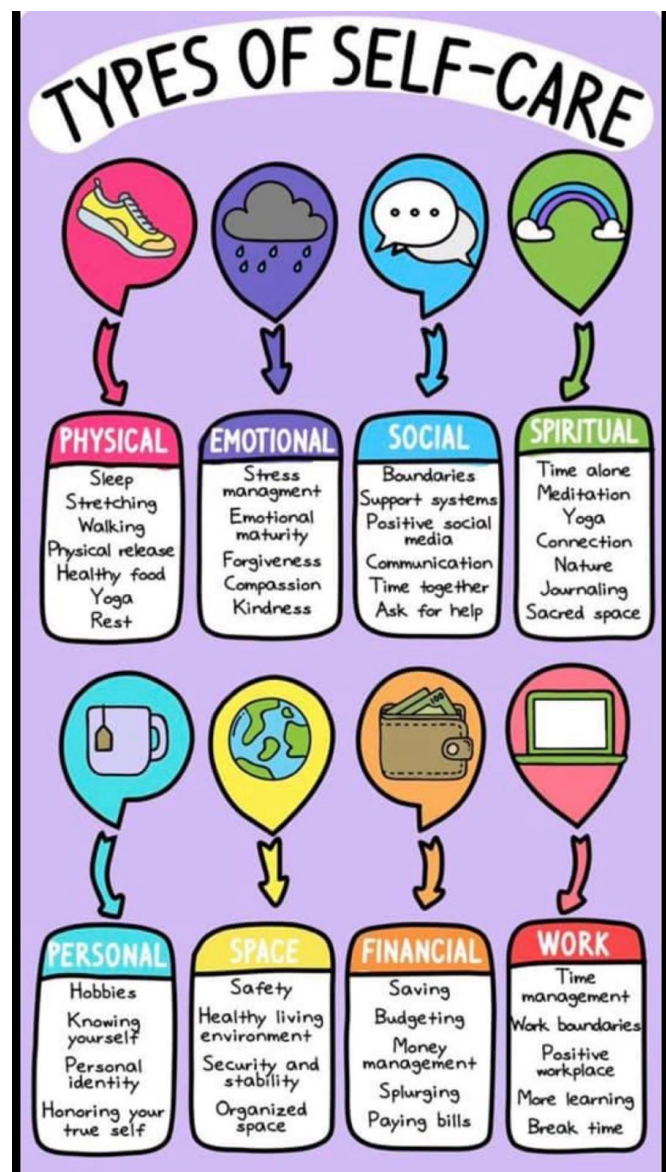
8. CONNECT WITH LOVED ONES

This is a tough and unusual time and especially if you are an extrovert you might be struggling. Text or Skype/Facetime with loved ones if that is what fills your tank.

9. GET YOUR KIDS TO DO CHORES

Get your kids to do chores is self-care because when your family shares in household responsibility you won't be resentful about doing everything yourself. Check infographic attached to this link: 20 life skills kids can master while they're stuck indoors.

Take a look at the picture for more types of self-care!



RELATED SERVICES

Shout-out to the following school psychologists: Dr. Tricia Mase, Sarah Northrop, James Demorro, Alexandria Hayden, Kelsey Schumann! The team worked collaboratively to develop online training for paraprofessionals about strategies to work with preschool students. Training includes videos, articles, and essential questions to help paraprofessionals support preschool students.

Another shout-out to the following school psychologists: Christopher Latka, Monique Holloway, Lisa Lareau, Sarah Connor, Aisha Brown! The team worked collaboratively to develop online training for paraprofessionals about strategies to work with students with emotional disturbance. Training includes videos, articles, and essential questions to help paraprofessionals support students with an emotional disturbance disability.



Here is a great picture that Wilbur Cross's support staff sent to their students!

Great job everyone! NHPS has such a dedicated staff!

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

AP Exams are currently underway. Although it is a very unprecedented time, we know our students have best prepared and wish you the best of luck on your examinations! Good luck!
<https://apcoronavirusupdates.collegeboard.org/students/taking-ap-exams/ap-exam-schedule>

May 1st is National College Decision Day! Congratulations to the Class of 2020 and those students who have chosen where they will continue their educational journey! We are so proud of each and every one of you!







CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR SENIORS!

HEALTH & WELLNESS DEPARTMENT

Greetings from the Health & Wellness Department!

Click [here](#) to find a mental health and SEL newsletter created by the Child Health & Development Institute of Connecticut, Inc. (CHDI). It includes SEL activities and handouts that educators may integrate into academic curriculum and caregivers can use within the home. Upcoming topics include: Caregiver Wellness, Digital Citizenship and Staff Wellness.

CHDI has also compiled a list of information and COVID-19 resources (<http://www.chdi.org/covid-19>). This link features sections on “health and safety, social services, supporting children’s emotional well-being, behavioral health crisis resources, domestic violence, and resources for providers (educators, early care and education providers, behavioral health providers, and pediatric health providers).”

PARA-EDUCATORS ROCK!

Shout OUT to our Paraprofessionals!

During our online meetings many self-contained teachers shared the amazing contributions the paraprofessionals are making to keep our students engaged. From daily calls and check-ins to homemade videos, our paraprofessionals know how much this communication helps our students and their families. So many of our parents have shared that it meant so much to hear from the paraprofessional staff. One parent said her student smiled for hours after the call! We also have some technologically savvy paraprofessionals who have stepped in to make everything a little more accessible for our classroom teachers. At one school, the teacher asked for some help with setting up some lessons on a Sunday. By Monday, the paraprofessional had set up all of the information in a highly engaging format on Google Slides. Most important for us all to remember is we miss our students and they miss us- thank you to all of our Paraprofessionals for all of the contributions you are making to keep our children connected!

PARENT CORNER

It's OK to Talk About Grief

"Many people have reported deep and unexpected feelings of sadness during the past days or weeks. The feelings were more than anxiety about becoming sick and more than loneliness because they haven't seen loved ones in a while. Some are recognizing the discomfort as feelings of grief." - Yvonne Bradley, LCSW

Click [here](#) to read the rest of the letter sent out to parents, staff and students. Thank you, Yvonne for this helpful information!

STAY TUNED!

Stay tuned for the next edition of *Staying In Touch While Keeping Our Distance* on May 29, 2020!