



## We All Face Crises

Everyone experiences personal crises. Crises are acute, time-limited events experienced as overwhelming emotional reactions to one's perception of an event. Crises are experienced by people of all ages, cultures, and socioeconomic conditions and may or may not be related to a specific mental disorder. A crisis can be defined as an unstable situation with an uncertain outcome in which an individual's coping capacity is temporarily overwhelmed. Such crises may be generated by external events, intrinsic processes, or a combination of both. A crisis for one person may not be for another, and what is now a crisis may not have been a crisis before or would not be a crisis in a different setting. Many crises will resolve favorably without intervention. Others, however, may require professional crisis management. Please access this link for support information: <https://wildirismedicaleducation.com/courses/mental-health-crisis-ceu>  
~ Submitted by Mr. Hobson (Crisis Intervention Specialist)

## Tools and Strategies for Behavior Support During Remote Learning

~ Submitted by Ms. Chiochankitmun & Ms. Simone (Child Study Team)



It is hard to believe we have been learning remotely since March! It has no doubt been an extreme challenge to balance work, life, and school for your child. If you have not already, it may be beneficial to consult with your child's teacher, case manager, and other service providers to create a plan of behavioral support for your child's remote learning at home. Challenging behaviors communicate an underlying need, and can tell us what a child wants or doesn't want in a given situation. As situations change, behaviors may change as well. Therefore, supports and interventions that were useful in school may need to be adjusted or changed to support the new learning environment at home. The important thing is to try to observe when your child is motivated to engage in remote learning, and when they are frustrated or off-task. Your child's teacher and/or case manager can support you to collect information about appropriateness of the chosen intervention and adjust if needed.

### **Here are some tips to get you through the home stretch of remote instruction!**

- Create a **structured schedule of daily routines** across the entire day (consistent morning routines, during the remote learning school day, as well as evening and night). Include your whole family in creating these schedules, and post them in visible locations (for example, on the refrigerator or in common areas).
- Some students may need **frequent breaks** in order to stay focused and complete work, consider setting up a break schedule so the student knows they can continue to take breaks and they know what they can do on breaks (e.g. give acceptable choices, consider movement breaks).
- Having **realistic and age appropriate expectations** for your child is important. Remember that your child is unique and has their own learning style and needs. Consider the age of your child; many students have difficulty sitting for lessons, especially during remote learning. Younger children may need a movement break, or hands on activity to supplement the learning, while older students may need peer interaction.
- **Consult with your child's teacher or case manager** regarding current management needs in the IEP, such as cues and prompts (e.g. verbal or visual, countdowns, timers).
- If your child begins to escalate behaviors (e.g. meltdown, yelling, expressing frustration, shutting down/withdrawn), **provide time to self-regulate, give time and space to calm down**. Think about your interaction; are you using a neutral tone, calm voice, without judgement? When your child is engaged and participating, **remember to offer praise, specific to task and behavior whenever there is opportunity**. Catch your child doing the right thing, or "being good." Consistency is important.
- When offering choices, **limit choices in number that are also acceptable to you**. This can help to reduce power struggles by giving children a sense of control. For example, if you want your child to clean their room you can give them a choice of what to put away first and provide them with praise or a reward for completing the task. If they are working on independent class work, let them choose which subject they would like to start with.
- **Stay calm** – in addition to modeling self-control for your child, it will reinforce that we are going to problem solve together. Even if you need to have consequences for your child's behavior, it should be done in a meaningful way that reminds them of appropriate behavior that you would have liked to have seen.
- During this time, **remember to practice self-care and be kind to yourself**. If learning did not go well today, focus on what did go well. (Yes, something did go well! Even if it doesn't feel like it.) Tomorrow is another day to try again or make a change. Use the team supporting you and your child, contact your child's teacher, paraprofessional, and related service providers for ideas and support.

**For additional support, watch your email for upcoming Family Workshops sponsored by the Department of Special Education that may address many challenges you are currently facing.**



## Counselors Care

Ms. Purnell and Ms. Mayers will be meeting with students on **Wednesdays @ 1:45pm-2:30 pm**, this will allow an opportunity for students to have some social interaction time with their peers during virtual learning. During this time students will be able to play games (Would You Rather, Kahoot, etc.) and have conversations with other students. Students are able to gain access to the meeting from the [Twin Hills Counseling Corner](#), the link that will be available to join at that time. If you have any questions feel free to contact Ms. Purnell at [tpurnell@wboe.net](mailto:tpurnell@wboe.net). ~ Submitted by Ms. Purnell (School Counselor)

## Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)

In an effort to keep parents informed of our commitment to fostering a safe learning environment for students and staff, We are including the information that was disseminated as part of our parent pamphlet.

The NJ Anti Bullying Rights Act (ABR) defines harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by an actual or perceived characteristic.

Knowing a problem exists is the first step to addressing it! School community members (employees, pupils, parents/guardians, and visitors) are expected to immediately report allegations of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.



- Allegations are to be directed to Ms. Purnell, Twin Hills' HIB Coordinator, to begin the process of investigating the concerns. Please email her at [tpurnell@wboe.net](mailto:tpurnell@wboe.net) or use the [HIB Reporting Link](#).
- We ask that incidents be reported in writing to ensure the details are accurately recorded. Incident reporting forms are available in the main office.
- Reporting information is also available on the district's webpage.

Additional information regarding the New Jersey Anti- Bullying Rights Act can be found online at :

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/>

**“Intelligence plus character; that is the true goal of education!”** -Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



### 2020-2021 Climate Survey Results

Twin Hills strives to be the best school we can be for our students. Your help in accomplishing this goal, as always, is essential!

We need parents/guardians to complete an online survey. The information is confidential and will only be collected to help us to improve our practices as a school and determine how we can best support your family's needs. The survey link below will be available on our school's webpage until February 28, 2021.

<https://forms.gle/3UftuPqz5ccg98g98>

### Guidance Words of the Month- January

**Attitude** is the word of the month.



Attitudes can positively or negatively affect a person's behavior. A person may not always be aware of his or her attitude or the effect it is having on behavior. A person who has positive attitudes towards work and co-workers (such as contentment, friendliness, etc.) can positively influence those around them.

## Spotlight on Twin Hills Excellence!

This school year, all of our Superstar stakeholders (staff, parents, and students) demonstrated how dedicated we are to maintaining a **high level of excellence— no matter what!** I visit classrooms and am pleasantly surprised to see virtual learning environments that feels very much like in-person classrooms. Here are just a few things that should be magnified for all to know and appreciate:

### Teachers:

- **Grades 1 & 2:** Primary grades (have been uniquely affected by the transition to virtual learning. Our 1st graders have never had an opportunity to experience our school community in person, and for many this school year is the first time attending a formal school. Many of the developmental practices that are introduced and reinforced in first-grade are not easily accomplished when working from our respective homes. Our grade 1 teachers crafted lessons and promoted routine-based practices that students could understand, follow, and enact without full adult dependence. What an accomplishment! Grade 2 teachers readily accepted the enormous challenge of bridging grade level skills for students who had their previous school year interrupted and altered. Kudos to grade 2 teachers who understood the importance of addressing the developmental losses that emanated from the initial school closure.
- **Grade 3 & 4:** Take a moment and think about what it means to plan for and enact virtual departmentalization for elementary-age students...WOW! Routines for organization and movement that are difficult when in-person were moved to a virtual platform. Twin Hills grades 3 and 4 teachers did not allow the obstacles they faced to minimize the importance of balancing emotional stability and instructional standards.
- **Specialists:** These teachers work hard to stay just as relevant as their core content counterparts to their students. Managing enlarged classrooms with minimal content area resources required these teachers to redesign their practices, many of which rely on in-person engagement to virtually accommodate large numbers of students.
- **Support Staff:** Paraprofessionals are equally engaged. They have Google Classrooms of their own that allow them to take their small group of students to support while the classroom teacher continues with others. The counselors work tirelessly to stay abreast of on-going needs, meet with teachers, students, and parents, and plan incentives to motivate students. The nurse leads our safety team and keeps our staff abreast of relevant information. The lunch aides assist with organizing instructional materials and beautifying the school in preparation for our return. And the custodial team continues to maintain the building with care and love.
- **Parents/Guardians:** We consider our TH Parent/Guardian Superstars to be our 'essential workers'! Despite all that has taken place for them individually, they overcame their personal obstacles and joined our staff in keeping our Superstar students **first**. As a parent, I more than understand how hard things can be when we, too, have to adapt to the unknown and make it feel safe for people who count on us. For every picture you scanned, lesson you viewed and re-taught, house chore that was delayed because of instruction, and all of the silent worries you internalized to stay focused— we THANK YOU!!! We know our best chance to get through this successfully is by working **TOGETHER**.
- **Students:** I am never as proud as when I experience my students in their virtual classes engaging and growing. There is no doubt that our students are affected in by this new way of being. But, I was reassured they will not be deterred from their greatness when we met for our New Years' meeting/celebration. 200+ students demonstrated their online etiquette to listen to my principal's address. I was most elated to see them return to learning without missing a beat. Our Twin Hills Superstars have shown me what can be accomplished with belief, hard work, and dedication. **I love you all!!!!**

|  <h2 style="text-align: center;">January 2021</h2>  |   |  |   |     |                                     |     |
|---|---|--|---|-----|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Sun   | Mon   | Tue  | Wed   | Thu | Fri                                 | Sat |
|   |   |  |   |     | 1<br>Winter Break-<br>School Closed | 2   |
| 3   | 4   | 5<br>Progress<br>Reports                   | 6   | 7   | 8                                   | 9   |
| 10  | 11 School Board<br>Mtg. @ 7pm                                     | 12<br>District Parent<br>Workshop<br>@ 6pm | 13<br>Staff PD-<br>Asynchronous<br>Learning Day | 14  | 15                                  | 16  |
| 17  | 18 Martin Luther<br>King Jr. Day of<br>Service - School<br>Closed | 19   | 20  | 21  | 22                                  | 23  |
| 24<br>31  | 25 TH Title-1<br>Mtg @ 1:45 pm<br>School Board                    | 26   | 27  | 28  | 29                                  | 30  |