

March 18, 2020

Dear RSU 10 families,

We, the RSU #10 school nurses, wanted to reach out to you to provide some information and reassurance to help you navigate the next few weeks. The following suggestions from the National Association of School Psychologists may be helpful in discussing COVID-19.

Remain calm and reassuring.

- Children will react to and follow your verbal and nonverbal reactions.
- What you say and do about COVID-19, current prevention efforts, and related events can either increase or decrease your children's anxiety.
- If true, emphasize to your children that they and your family are fine.
- Remind them that you and the adults at their school are there to keep them safe and healthy.
- Let your children talk about their feelings and help reframe their concerns into the appropriate perspective.

Maintain a normal routine to the extent possible.

- Keep to a regular schedule, as this can be reassuring and promotes physical health. For instance, typical bedtimes, wake times, and mealtimes can be helpful.

Many of the things you do to help prevent colds and the flu can help protect you against other respiratory viruses, including COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs and countertops) with household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.
- **Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others.**
- Giving children guidance on what they can do to prevent infection gives them a greater sense of control over disease spread and will help to reduce their anxiety.
- Encourage your child to eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, drink plenty of fluids and get regular exercise; this will help them develop a strong immune system to fight off illness
- If you develop symptoms of a fever, a cough or shortness of breath please call your healthcare provider **before** going into their office. **This will help to prevent the spread of viruses.**
- Practice social distancing
- Discourage handshaking, high-fives, and other forms of close contact.

You may find more additional information at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

Please reach out to your building nurse with any concerns, we will all be checking our emails throughout the day.

Nicole Pinkham - MES - npinkham@rsu10.org

Tracy Pinkham - RES & WFRP tpinkham@rsu10.org

Kim Clement - MVMS & MVHS Kclement@rsu10.org

Lee Berry - HSES & BJSHS lberry@rsu10.org

Adapted from

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climatesafety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climatesafety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)