

WHEN THE KIDS COME BACK



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TODAY'S AGENDA

1. A few logistics.
2. What we're dealing with
3. What the research tells us (YES, there is research!)
4. A few general principles
5. Actions that Admins, Counselors, and Teachers can take
6. Our TO DO list:
 - a. What to do this summer
 - b. What to do right before the start of school
 - c. What to do during the start of school

NOTES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE END! YOU DON'T HAVE TO
SCRIBBLE ALL THIS DOWN.



QUESTIONS DURING TODAY'S WEBINAR? HERE'S HOW TO OPEN YOUR CHAT BOX

Dr. Meghan McCoy will answer questions "live."

1. Click on the purple thingy in lower right corner of your screen



2. Then click on the CHAT icon



3. Then click on "EVERYONE"

We'll also take questions at the end.

TODAY I'LL GIVE YOU LOTS OF SUGGESTIONS.
USE WHAT YOU LIKE AND THROW AWAY THE REST.





THE BAD NEWS: TRIFECTA OF STRESS/TRAUMA



IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES FOR CHILDREN

- **Financial stress** - losing home; moving; parent unemployed
- **Medical stress** - losing family members, or their being sick
- **"The Virus" stress** - fear, anxiety
- **Social upheaval stress** - neighborhood unrest or violence; scary images; family members/friends arrested or harmed

THESE ARE SERIOUS CHALLENGES - BUT THERE ARE COPING MECHANISMS



II. RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT (FIRST ,THE BAD NEWS)



AVAILABLE RESEARCH

- Research conducted during the current pandemic
 - Parents in the USA
 - Children in China
 - Data from child abuse records & hotlines
 - Research on children's mental health in Europe & the US
- Previous research on returning to school following disasters
 - Ex: return to school after repeated hurricanes in Louisiana

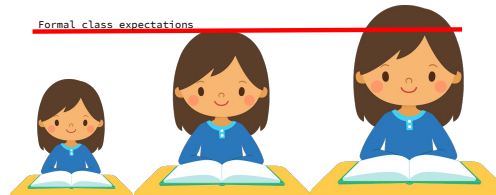
SO HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW

ACADEMIC CHALLENGES WE'RE FACING

- "Summer loss" magnified
- Kids in different places academically. Kids did none/some/all/more-than-required academic work.

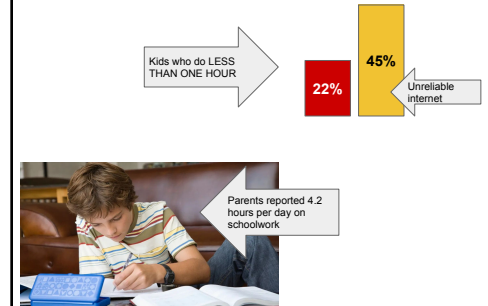


ACADEMICALLY, IT'S GOING TO BE A MIXED BAG



HAVE THEY DONE THEIR WORK?

LEARNING HEROES SURVEY- PARENTS 2020, REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE



LEARNING HEROES: PARENTS 2020 NATIONAL SURVEYS

WHERE ARE THE PARENTS AT?

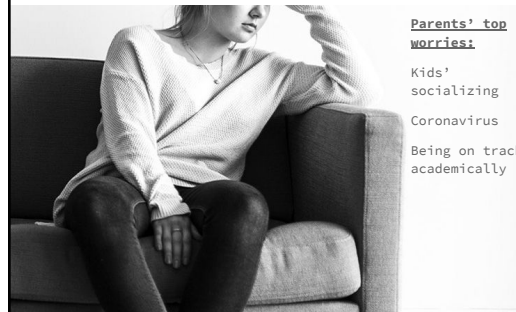
They're activated. More deeply involved.

They overestimate their child's academic ability and readiness.

75% hopeful, and 65% anxious/worried.



LEARNING HEROES: PARENTS 2020 NATIONAL SURVEYS

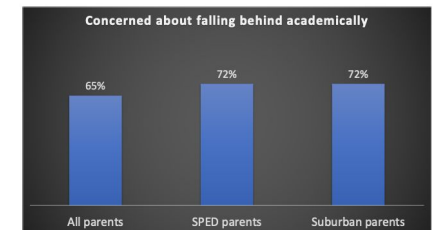


Parents' top worries:

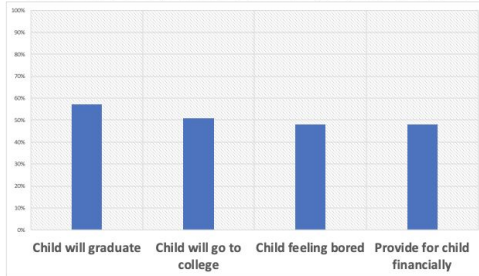
- Kids' socializing
- Coronavirus
- Being on track academically

SURVEYS OF PARENTS DURING CURRENT PANDEMIC

California survey of parents during Pandemic



California Survey: Other common parental concerns



PARENTS ARE ALSO ANXIOUS

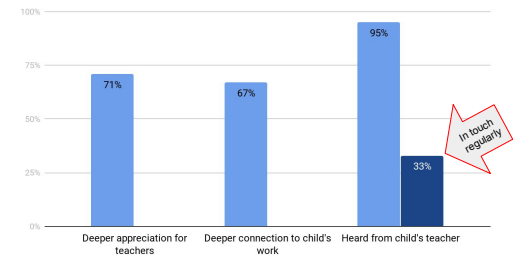


30% of parents worried about food stability
40% worried about being able to pay the bills

"WOW, NOW I APPRECIATE THOSE TEACHERS!"

LEARNING HEROES: PARENTS 2020 NATIONAL SURVEYS

Percent of parents reporting....

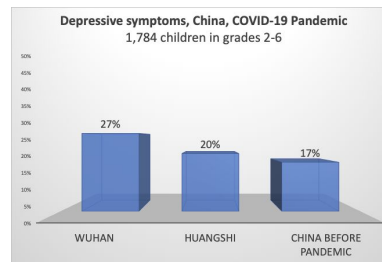


HOW MUCH HAVE THE LAST FEW MONTHS AFFECTED CHILDREN PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY?



STUDY OF DEPRESSION/ANXIETY IN CHILDREN IN CHINA

- 1,784 children in grades 2-6 (March)
- Compared children in Wuhan with Huangshi (not as badly affected by virus, but also closed down)



SAVE THE CHILDREN: APRIL SURVEY, 2000 FAMILIES (US & EUROPE)



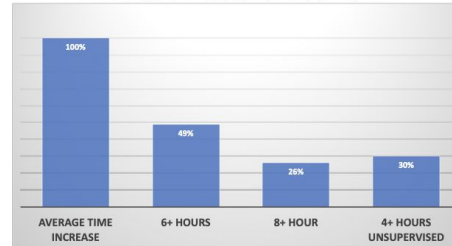
- During the lockdown, 17% of children felt depressed often or always
- 25% dealing with anxiety
- 32% struggled to sleep
- 30% feared the COVID-19 virus

INCREASE IN REPORTS TO CHILD ABUSE HOTLINES

- Every stressful situation results in some increases (e.g., 2008 recession)
- Texas: case trends in child abuse hospital admissions were 2-3x higher
- New York: 2x more domestic violence calls
- Sexual abuse hotlines: 22% increase in monthly calls from children under 18. Most reported perp as family member they were living with.

The challenge is clear. Screen time changes.

ParentsTogether Survey of 3,000 parents, April 23, 2020



BULLYING AND FIGHTING



- No real research, but anecdotal reports of increased cyberbullying
- Because these problems are predominately happening in digital environments, there will be more situations that began as misunderstandings or misinterpretations

Kids itching to fight

Social problems subsumed by other issues

BIAS, PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION (CAN TAKE SEVERAL FORMS)



PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES WE'RE FACING

- Increase in screen time
- Social skills decrease
- Vegetative functioning
- Social problems, like bullying, experiencing racism
- Increase in anxiety/depression, possibly trauma
- Increases in child abuse
- Expect varied reactions in class (more on this later)



FACULTY STRESS, LOSS AND TRAUMA (THEY'RE HUMAN TOO)



LOGISTICS WILL CHANGE. WHAT WILL THE IMPACT BE?



A BOILED-DOWN LIST OF HOW THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE THIS FALL

#1: dial back your academic expectations, especially at first



A BOILED-DOWN LIST OF HOW THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE THIS FALL

#2: Different routines



A BOILED-DOWN LIST OF HOW THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE THIS FALL

#3: New rules, and new procedures for enforcing those rules



A BOILED-DOWN LIST OF HOW THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE THIS FALL

#4: Social and emotional “stuff” is going to be front and center



SO HERE'S THE JOB OF THE MOMENT....

1. Prepare for kids with a variety of academic levels
2. Prepare for kids with a variety of emotional reactions
3. Re-examine our own school's systemic biases
4. Help support and prepare faculty & counseling staff
5. Help support and prepare parents
6. Revise logistics/life with COVID-19

AND THAT'S IT!



TO DO LIST FOR JUNE/JULY/AUGUST

TO DO LIST: ADMINS & COUNSELING STAFF, OVER THE SUMMER



MARC VIDEO FOR PARENTS ON PROMOTING THEIR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE PANDEMIC

This will be available soon on the MARC website, in the COVID-19 section.

VIDEOS FROM THE PRINCIPAL: "CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU"



VIDEOS FROM COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STAFF

Purpose is to introduce yourself and your contact info, if they need you.



LOGISTICS ISSUES AND ANXIETY PLANNING

1. Schedules, Class size, desk seating, hallway transitions, assemblies etc.
2. The issue isn't just danger. It's also *anxiety*.
 - a. Ex: even if assemblies are deemed safe, they may make kids or parents very anxious.



PREPARE : PARENT QUICK REFERENCE HANDOUT

1. Here's what will be new.

- Lunch in the classroom
- No assemblies
- Fewer transitions
- Single-file lines in the hallways
- Masks
- New rules, and consequences if rules aren't followed

2. Here's who to contact for:

- Emotional meltdowns (counseling staff phone #)
- Information about the new logistics (school secretary's #)
- Information about the current level of COVID-19 in Massachusetts (link to website)

PREPARE: FAQ FOR PARENT PHONE CALLS?

Prep a FAQ sheet for school secretarial staff who answer the phones. They can offer to email the FAQ and Parent Handout immediately to any caller.



PREPARE: LETTERS TO PARENTS: "HERE'S THE PLAN"

- Kids will be in different places academically. We'll assess the kids over the summer. Please cooperate if you can.
- We're aware that some kids will be struggling emotionally. We're prepared to help. Meet our counseling staff.
- There are no guarantees in life, but we're going to be careful. Here's how school will be different, to reduce exposure:
 - No assemblies, Masks, transitions, etc.
 - New rules, and consequences if rules aren't followed
- Like everyone, we're re-examining our school culture and policies, to help address systemic racism and bias.
- "It won't be just switching on a light. We're all going to have to be patient and readjust."

PUT UP A WEBPAGE WITH THIS INFORMATION



CONSIDER SETTING UP A BUDDY SYSTEM FOR FAC & STAFF



One on one or small group supports and check-ins for faculty and staff.

- In research, single biggest help psychologically for teachers and staff
- Some faculty/staff will prefer to select their own "buddies"
- "If you feel unsure who might be a good buddy, we can assign you one."
- Strictly voluntary, and use only if helpful. "May seem silly, but research suggests it can help - give it a fair try."

OFFER BASIC TECH HELP TO FACULTY. KEEP IT SIMPLE.



SET UP TRIAGE SYSTEM, SO TEACHERS KNOW WHO AND WHERE TO SEND KIDS WHO ARE EMOTIONAL/ACTING OUT.

(IT MAY SEEM OBVIOUS, BUT WRITE IT DOWN.)



ANTICIPATE PARENTAL CONCERNS

- Safety and virus transmission
- A new “wave” of infections
- Children’s emotional and social functioning
- Changes in a family’s financial status, and how that might affect their child in school
- How teachers are handling academic variations between students
- Bias and diversity challenges in the school community, including policies

PREPARE: FOR COUNSELING STAFF: DEVELOP PSYCH EVENTS & SYMPTOM CHECKLIST TO SEND HOME IN AUGUST.



COUNSELING STAFF TO DO: OTHER THINGS TO PREPARE

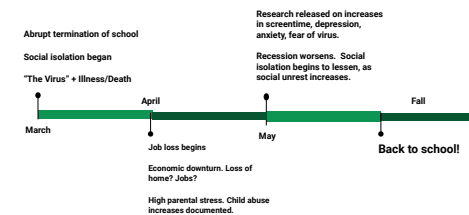
- Referral list
- Think of practical tips you will be able to offer teachers, to help them deal with behavioral issues
- Think of ways to handle Dwellers and Avoiders (more on this soon)



DOES ALL THIS SEEM LIKE OVERKILL?
THERE IS SUCH A THING AS BEING TOO CAREFUL.



I THINK WE HAVE TO GO AN EXTRA MILE THIS YEAR, AND
HERE’S WHY....



TO DO LIST OVER THE SUMMER, FOR FACULTY



PREPARE PICTURES/VIDEOS/LETTERS/EMAILS FOR STUDENTS (IDEALLY, PAST AND FUTURE)



TEACHERS: MAKE VIDEOS INTRODUCING YOURSELF TO STUDENTS

- Keep it simple - use your cell phone!
- If don't want to be filmed, consider a picture with a voiceover, or simply letters. Or calls. Consider video phone calls (skype, zoom, etc.).
- For younger students:
 - If possible, get video clips from both teachers for each child. Have teachers reassure kids that they (the teachers) are communicating and will be working together.
 - New teacher: here's the routine. Show kids the lockers, the desks, yourself.

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS ABOUT THE MASKS

- Help each child decorate and label their mask.
- Make extras.
- Practice wearing the mask at home.
- If the child seems anxious, put the mask on a doll or stuffed animal first.
- Parents can wear their own mask to show their child that it doesn't hurt.
- Google: "Make a no-sew face mask" - youtube videos with easy instructions.
- Show the child the pictures of their teachers, with and without their masks.

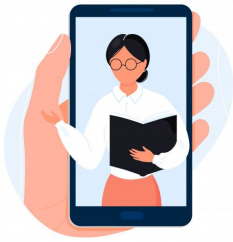
ISSUES FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN: THE MASK



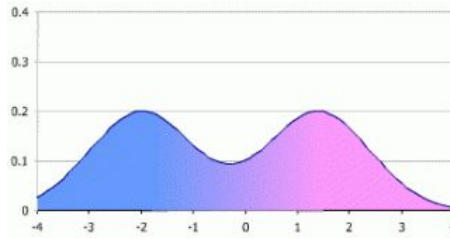
CONSIDER ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVES: TRANSPARENT MASKS? TRY ETSY.



THE BUDDY SYSTEM MAY SEEM DORKY. BUT I RECOMMEND YOU GIVE IT A TRY, OR AT LEAST CHECK IN WITH COLLEAGUES.



CONSIDER DEVELOPING AN ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT FOR LATE SUMMER (SHORT AS POSSIBLE)



GO OVER THE "MARC RED FLAG CHEAT SHEET" FOR TEACHERS (MORE SOON)



The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center
RED FLAG BEHAVIORS IN STUDENTS

Following their return to school after Extended Absence following a disaster, such as the COVID-19 Pandemic.

PREPARE CLASSROOM ROUTINES



WWW.KRISTINENANNINI.COM

PREPARE RELAXATION AND FOCUS TECHNIQUES

Deep breathing exercises
for young kids:
<https://copingkillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>

For adolescents:
https://www.adolescentwellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Relaxation_Exercises_for_Adolescents_and_Adults.pdf



OK: IT'S LATE AUGUST: MORE FOR TEACHERS



WHERE WILL YOUR CLASS BE, ACADEMICALLY SPEAKING?



- Send out the assessment.
- Will it be part of their grades? (I'd recommend NOT.)
- Ask the parents to help monitor, but do not assist.

PLAN FOR SMALL GROUP WORK WHEN POSSIBLE

- Use the assessments to pre-arrange small groups.
 - Let the more-prepared kids help the less-prepared kids. The pre-school assessment will allow teachers to pre-arrange these groups.
 - Promotes social connections for the kids. KEY.



CONSIDER HAVING OLDER KIDS WORK WITH YOUNGER KIDS PERIODICALLY

- Modeling prosocial behavior
- Connecting with each other
- They could help supervise small groups
- They could read to the kids
- Will improve behavior in both age groups

ETC.

TEACHERS AREN'T THERAPISTS, BUT.....

- No such thing as "just teaching" in these circumstances
- Everyone needs to be sensitized/have their antennae up



YOU SHOULDN'T EXPECT MAYHEM. BUT THERE WILL BE BEHAVIORAL ISSUES.



TIPS FOR RESPONDING TO AN UPSET CLASS

- Distraction (flash lights to get attention)
- Deep breathing exercise, relaxation exercise
- Ask for help from counseling staff
- Talk about what happened
- Kids will run the gamut from less impacted to traumatized

PAST RESEARCH FROM POST-HURRICANE LOUISIANA: EXPECT "DWELLERS" AND "AVOIDERS"

"Dwellers" - kids who want to discuss the current/past situation, at times compulsively

"Avoiders" - kids who show anxiety at such discussions and avoid them or withdraw

How to juggle the needs of both types of kids?

- OK to point out that not everyone will want to talk about this today (leave open possibility that we can all talk more in future)
- Carve out a discussion time, or let kids know discussion time will be happening in Health class, with counseling staff, etc.
- Meanwhile, in order to focus, Dwellers may need outlet (journal writing, psychologist)
- Don't force Avoiders to confront anything
- Advisories can be used for these discussions as well

RED FLAGS = SEND TO COUNSELING STAFF MOST LIKELY (BASED ON LOUISIANA RESEARCH)

- **Depression**
 - Persistent sadness; little/no reactivity; no pleasure in activities they used to enjoy; problems with attention
- **Significant anxiety and worry**
- **Aggressive acting-out**

RED FLAGS = SEND TO COUNSELING STAFF LESS LIKELY

- **Unpredictable emotions**
 - Hysterical laughter when a serious subject is being discussed
 - Bursting into tears unexpectedly
- **Bizarre denial**
 - Students who you know suffered a significant loss, but deny it
- **Physical symptoms**
 - hair-pulling, signs of cutting, can't sit still, etc.
 - Students who cannot stay awake, or who seem very fatigued
- **Hypersensitivity/ "paranoia"**
- **Excessive irritability**

SIGNS OF SIGNIFICANT ANXIETY

Anxiety presents itself in many different ways...



COUNSELING STAFF CAN HELP WITH MANAGING TROUBLED STUDENTS

WHEN IN DOUBT - Send to Triage

- Counseling staff ready with procedure to evaluate kids, make Plan
 - Help teachers with interventions ("Harold needs a moment to sit in the back of the room and gather himself")



**PREVENTION
IS BETTER
THAN
CURE**

FREE K-12 Curricula
from MARC
(relationships, bullying,
cyberbullying)- other
programs of course

Other SEL Curricula
(e.g., Commonsense
Media, ADL)

MARC Pilot program:
Bias and Diversity
Training (include
faculty training and
student lesson plans)

NOW, IT'S LABOR DAY WEEKEND
(OR RIGHT BEFORE YOU START SCHOOL)



JUST BEFORE DAY 1: RE-SEND EMAILS TO PARENTS



- Introducing yourself
- Introducing the counseling staff
- Parents Quick Reference Handout (what's new; who to call)

EMAIL SPECIFICS

- "Here's what your child needs to bring."
- "Here's what you'll see."
- Guidance about coming in with their kids; how long they can stay; parent meeting?
- Guidance about parking, dropping off, logistics.
- Where to get facemasks, gloves etc.
- Suggest labelling and decoration of facemasks for younger kids
- Email and US mail pictures of teachers, with and without masks

ON DAY 1 : GREETINGS WILL BE IMPORTANT

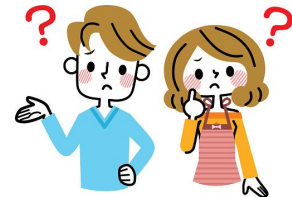
Be at the doorway

- Administrators at front door
- Counseling staff, support in front hall, hallways
- Teachers in doorways



ON DAY 1: BE PREPARED FOR NERVOUS PARENTS

- How long can they stay? Prepare them for leaving.
- Have a handout that reviews what you sent home in June
- Make sure the handout includes phone numbers



ON DAY 1: BEGIN A FOCUS ON SEL AND A POSITIVE CLIMATE

- Red Flag Cheat Sheet distributed to each teacher - what to look for
- Consider having counseling staff introduce themselves to kids, classroom by classroom



AFTER DAY 1: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT



HOW DID THE FIRST DAY GO? Send an email letting everyone know how well it went!

Acknowledge problems, but be positive too

AFTER DAY 1

- Have psych staff continue to introduce themselves to every classroom
- In Health, gym, history, advisory, homeroom: discuss pandemic, recession, social movements. (DOWNLOADS for this)
 - Ask what they know about what has happened.
 - Give SOME age-appropriate facts.
 - Disabuse biased and negative assumptions that come up (it's not the "chinese virus" and not the fault of asian-americans. Not the fault of immigrants. Social movements are not all about criminal activity).
 - Finish with positive (what can we all do to help ourselves and our friends/family/neighbors?) and empowering.
 - MARC conversation guide for teachers

WHAT RESOURCES CAN YOU DOWNLOAD OR USE ONLINE? COVID-19 SPECIFIC TOOLS



The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center DISCUSSING CURRENT 2020 EVENTS WITH STUDENTS

This guide is intended to help teachers begin conversations with students. It is not intended as a therapeutic intervention.

INSTRUCTIONS: Begin by asking your students questions. You can correct any misconceptions they may express or follow up the answers by making the information helpful.

We want to address issues in an age-appropriate manner. Remember, it is likely your students already have high anxiety about recent events and while adults should be truthful, you should consider in advance the level of detail you want to discuss and positive elements you can emphasize (e.g., the presence of helpers).

Be particularly sensitive to suggestions of bias or prejudice in any form.



The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center RED FLAG BEHAVIORS IN STUDENTS

Following their return to school after Extended Absence following a disaster, such as the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Classroom teachers should consider referral to counseling staff if any of the following symptoms are noted:

- **Inappropriate emotions**
 - Irritability
 - Hostility, anger, when a serious subject is being discussed
 - Bullying (or being bullied)
- **Attends detail**
 - Students who you know suffered a significant loss, but deny it.

WHAT RESOURCES CAN YOU DOWNLOAD OR USE ONLINE?

MARC Video on Helping Parents Promote Mental Health During The Summer

WHAT RESOURCES CAN YOU DOWNLOAD OR USE ONLINE?

MARC's **NEW Grades 6-12 Curriculum:**

Bias and Diversity (Fall 2020 Pilot for Faculty & Students)



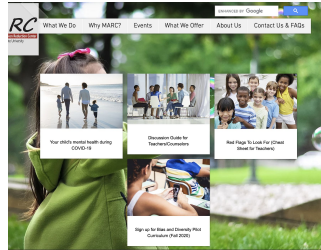
WHAT RESOURCES CAN YOU DOWNLOAD OR USE ONLINE?

- Online Needs Assessment Guide FREE
- Grades 3-12 Surveying services FREE
- Three MARC Curricula
 - K-5 bullying and cyberbullying Curriculum
 - MS Advisory Curriculum
 - HS Cyberskills Curriculum

WHAT CAN YOU DOWNLOAD?

<https://www.marccenter.org/pandemic-covid19-info-downloads>

Marccenter.org > What we offer > Pandemic COVID19



THANKS FOR LISTENING! QUESTIONS??

We hope this was helpful.
Everyone will get the notes for this webinar.
Best of luck with your new school year!

