

Mental Health Matters

April 2020



Teachers, How Can We Care for Our Mental Health Right Now?

(Retrieved From: <https://www.weareteachers.com/mental-health-during-covid/> ; written by Kelly Treleaven, middle school English teacher and blogger for loveteachblog.com)

VCOE COVID-19 UP-DATE

- ◆ School Closures extended for remainder of '19-'20 school year for all Ventura County districts
www.vcoe.org/coronavirus
- ◆ Distance Learning resources from VCOE and your local school district
www.vcoe.org/distance
- ◆ Meal Service for students will continue during the statewide stay home order
www.vcoe.org/meals
- ◆ Common Questions about testing, graduation, childcare and more
www.vcoe.org/faq

“If you’re anything like me, you’re experiencing a lot of different emotions right now. But chances are we are all marveling at how different the world looks than it did a few weeks, days, even hours ago. Big events canceled. Travel bans. School closures. Toilet paper becoming the nation’s hottest commodity.

This post is not about health measures or containment or COVID-19 symptoms. It’s not about curriculum or technology recommendations or teaching remotely. I’m not going to talk about flattening the curve or social distancing or exponential growth. There are 900 million other articles, posts, and podcasts for that.

This is about taking care of yourself and your mental health during COVID.

I love teachers, and even in the best of times I’m concerned about our self-care. But now, at a time when we’re all taking on the stress, anxiety, and fears of how a global pandemic will affect our children, it’s more critical than ever to remember that we *cannot effectively take care of other people if we are not taking care of ourselves.*”

[\(Please CLICK HERE for full article by Kelly Treleaven\)](#)

Key Info from HR

- Please check your work email regularly for health benefit information and updates from Kris Trotsky regarding your Health Savings Account (HSA), or Dependent Day Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Please check your work email for the District’s CA Schools Employee Benefits Organization (CSEBO) info

Need support or resources for your students and families? Mental Health Counseling Services may be able to help!

Many teachers and counselors have been reaching out to students to connect and/or to initiate Phase III Distance Learning during this time. Should you come across a student or family that may be in need of additional support during this time, the Mental Health Counseling Team is happy to help. Depending on the circumstances, we will connect you and the student/family to the appropriate school official and/or community resources. For support, please send an email to the primary contact listed below for your respective school to schedule a phone appointment with the Mental Health Counselor to discuss your concerns.

[Rachael Forbes-rforbes@santapaulaunified.org](mailto:Rachael.Forbes-rforbes@santapaulaunified.org) [Jason Claros—jclaros@santapaulaunified.org](mailto:Jason.Claros-jclaros@santapaulaunified.org)

Renaissance High School

Santa Paula High School

Isbell Middle School

Bedell Elementary

Grace Thille Elementary

Blanchard Elementary

Barbara Webster Elementary

McKevett Elementary

Glen City Elementary



Managing Stress

- Stay up-to-date about developments related to the infectious disease outbreak by using a reliable and accurate source of health-related information, such as the CDC or the Red Cross
- Stick to your usual daily routine.
- Focus on positive aspects of your life and things that you can control.
- Seek social support from family members and/or friends and maintain social connections.

Managing Stress (cont.)

- Engage in relaxation techniques for stress reduction.
- Engage in physical activity and other enjoyable activities.
- If you or a family member is feeling overwhelmed, seek support from your health care provider or religious leader.

Find full article at https://www.cstsonline.org/assets/media/documents/CSTS_FS_Corona_Taking_Care_of_Your_Family.pdf.pdf

How to look after your mental health during a pandemic

As people all around the world find themselves working from home or being home-schooled — unable to travel even down the street to visit friends or family — staying mentally healthy could become increasingly difficult for many.

So what can individuals, as well as society at large, do to preserve mental well-being and cope with stressors such as anxiety and loneliness?

To find out, Medical News Today have reached out to two mental health advocates: business neurolinguistic programming practitioner and mental health trainer Tania Diggory, founder and director of Calmer, and mental health first aider and coach Kat Hounsell, founder of everyday people.

This Special Feature presents some best practice tips for maintaining good mental health that Diggory and Hounsell suggested, as well as the official advice offered by experts from the WHO.

Unique challenges of working from home

Working from home may seem like the dream set-up for some, as it offers the possibility to tap into that latent creativity from the comfort of a cozy, familiar environment.

However, it can also bring a unique set of challenges — especially as an enforced measure.

“While [being able to work from home] can empower and up-level our working life, if taken to the extreme, we end up being switched on the whole time,” Diggory told MNT.

“In many cases, the boundaries between home life and work life can become blurred, and these boundaries are what enable us to stay healthy and well,” she cautioned.

In an enforced “work from home” situation, people may end up continuously sharing a space with other family members, and they may start to feel as though they have to attend to both domestic tasks and work assignments at the same time.

This blending of home and work life may also lead to working longer hours than usual.

“People may [...] fall into a pattern of overworking, a sense or feeling that they ‘should’ be working long hours, to show colleagues that they are being productive — even though no-one can physically see them working,” said Diggory.

Managing stress while working from home

So, how can people address these challenges and reduce the amount of stress that comes with working exclusively from a home environment?

“Firstly, accept that stress levels will likely be higher for many at this time — whatever you’re feeling is valid considering the current context,” said Hounsell.

That is why, “[w]hen working from home, prioritizing your mindset and well-being at the start of the day is essential,” Diggory told us.

One helpful way to set boundaries so that a person does not become overwhelmed with competing tasks is to create a physical space that is for work only, where the person will not face non-work-related disruptions and interruptions.

“Where possible, it is worth designating a space that is yours for work only. This separation can support you physically and mentally, and help get you into the appropriate headspace each time you settle in to work.”

Full article can be found at <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/how-to-look-after-your-mental-health-during-a-pandemic#Managing-stress-while-working-from-home>

Santa Paula Unified School District

Jason Claros, ACSW:
805.586.5116

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805.760.6782

RForbes@santapaulaunified.org

In case of an
Emergency:

- 911 For Immediate Support
- Ventura County Crisis Team (866) 998-2243 – (24 hours)

April's Events Calendar for Educators

April 2—International Children's Book Day

April 7—World Health Day

April 10—National Sibling Day

April 12—Easter

April 14—Sinking of the Titanic

April 22—Earth Day

April 23—William Shakespeare's Birthday

April 30—National Honesty Day

Community Resources

211 Ventura County

211 Ventura County, a program of [Interface Children & Family Services](#), is the comprehensive information and referral service for Ventura County. We connect over 30,000 Ventura County callers and texters each year with information about health and human services available to them.

211 Ventura County phone and text service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 211 is available in 150 languages through phone interpretation services

Website: <https://211ventura.org/>

Phone: 211

California Peer Run Warm Line

A non-emergency resource for anyone in California seeking emotional support. Provide assistance via phone and webchat on a nondiscriminatory basis to anyone in need.

Some concerns callers share are challenges with interpersonal relationships, anxiety, panic, depression, finance, and alcohol and drug use.

Website: <https://www.mentalhealthsf.org/>

Phone: (855) 845-7415

Optum Public Crisis Line

Our toll-free emotional support help line is free of charge and available to anyone, so you can share it with family and friends. Caring professionals will connect people to resources. It will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Website: www.liveandworkwell.com

Phone: (866) 342-6892

Food Pantries in Ventura County

Food Share

As Ventura County's regional food bank, Food Share provides food for over 75,000 hungry friends and neighbors monthly. Food Share is a member of Feeding America, the nation's largest hunger-relief network of food banks, as well as the California Association of Food Banks.

Website: <https://foodshare.com>

Phone: (805) 983-7100

Spirit of Santa Paula

Services range from serving a generous, nutritious hot meal each week for 600 people to assisting the community with rental assistance and utility payments, advocacy in Homeless Court, counseling at the Drop In Center for people who are homeless, hungry and lonely.

Website: [https://](https://www.spiritofsantapaula.org/contact)

www.spiritofsantapaula.org/contact

Phone: (805) 229-7750

