



American Counseling Association

School Counselor Connection

Supporting Students and Stakeholders through COVID-19

As leaders within the school setting, school counselors impact students, guardians, and faculty/staff. In light of COVID-19, school counselors are facing novel situations which challenge traditional approaches and require innovative ideas. Counselors must be prepared to respond to stakeholder needs while at a distance and when in-person classes are back in session.

Suggestions to provide support from a distance:

- Establish a Google voice number so families can reach you via voice or text; be sure to set boundaries and expectations on working hours
- Conduct virtual student check-ins, especially for students who need additional support; document parent permission
- Develop short videos to share with students and parents
- Utilize electronic resources such as Nearpod, Class Dojo, FlipGrid, and Canvas to engage students and families
- Hold virtual office hours periodically via Zoom or similar method
- Create (or update) a comprehensive counseling department website to house all resources, videos, and links to community supports
- Periodically send out brief encouragers to administrators, faculty, & staff
- Intermittently send self-care tips to administrators, faculty, & staff

Considerations when returning to school:

- As much as possible, rearrange your classroom/office to allow for safe distancing
- Be prepared to respond to students who have lost loved ones due to COVID-19; collect grief resources in anticipation of this need
- Understand that many students may be negatively impacted by the abrupt end of the previous school year—be ready to help them readjust to the school setting
- Anticipate anxiety from students, parents, and faculty/staff; collect resources in advance to share as needed
- Prepare lessons and/or presentations to address coping strategies
- Continue to provide an alternate means for meeting with parents (i.e. phone calls or Zoom meetings) and sharing resources (i.e. comprehensive websites, routine newsletters, webinars, etc.)

Reference

- National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement: COVID-19 Pandemic Resources
- American Counseling Association: School Counseling During a Pandemic
- Anxiety Canada: Educator Resources

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