



# Telemental Health 101: Through the Tiers

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# Introductions

Please type in chat box

**Name**

**Role**

**Organization**



# Rate Your Familiarity with Telemental Health in Schools

- Please type in the chat box
- On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable are you with using telemental health services (0 is the lowest comfort, 10 the highest)



# Presenters



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**Co-Director**  
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# National Center for School Mental Health

## MISSION:

**Strengthen policies and programs in school mental health to improve learning and promote success for America's youth**

- Focus on advancing school mental health policy, research, practice, and training
- Shared family-schools-community mental health agenda

**Directors:** Drs. Nancy Lever & Sharon Hoover

**Faculty:** Jill Bohnenkamp, Ph.D., Elizabeth Connors, Ph.D, Brittany Patterson, Ph.D., Kris Scardamalia, Ph.D., & Cindy Schaeffer, Ph.D., Tiffany Beason, PhD, Cindy Schaeffer, PhD

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[www.schoolmentalhealth.org](http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org)  
[www.theshapesystem.com](http://www.theshapesystem.com)



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NCSMH provides training and technical assistance to support school mental health nationwide

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# National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH)

Connect With Us



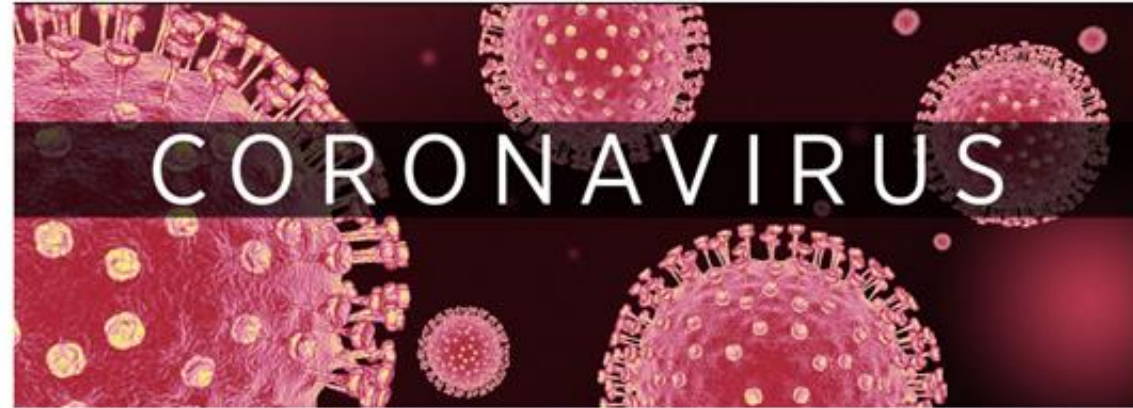


## National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH)

National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) > COVID-19 Resources

- Home
- About Us >
- Our Work >
- Resources >
- Conferences >
- The SHAPE System
- Connect With Us >
- COVID-19 Resources

### COVID-19 Resources



COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, is a global pandemic that has shut down much of society, including many schools. The stress associated with this virus may understandably increase worry and anxiety in our students, staff, families, and communities. At the National Center for School Mental Health, we want to support you as you protect your health and the health of those around you. To that end, we have accumulated resources and tips for you to use and share with others in your networks. We will continue to update these resources as we learn more.

- [Crisis Response](#)
- [Early Childhood Mental Health](#)
- [General Resources](#)
- [Guidance for School Staff & Administrators](#)
- [Stress Management & Self Care](#)
- [Students & Families](#)
- [Technology to Support School Mental Health](#)

Hosted on the NCSMH website:  
[schoolmentalhealth.org](https://schoolmentalhealth.org)



# What Is Telemental Health?

**Telemental health, or teletherapy,** is the use of video teleconferencing to deliver mental healthcare or education at a distance

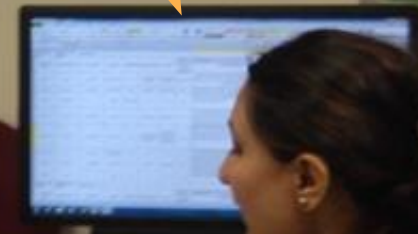
- Interactions using live audio/video
- E.g., a clinician and a student having an online session in real time, group sessions, family sessions, consultation with a specialist





**Student/Family**

**Mental Health  
Provider**





# Telemental Health Lingo!

**Originating site:**

The client's location



**Distant site:**

The therapist's location





# Why Telemental Health?

- Improves access to care (especially now)
  - Timely access to locally unavailable services
  - Spared burden/cost of transportation
  - Addresses workforce shortages
- Convenience
- Cost
- Students and families like it!
  - High satisfaction ratings
  - Some prefer Telemental Health – youth, anxiety, ASD
- Multidisciplinary team can be in multiple settings and come together at once
  - Collaboration better than in-person

*Exceptions: Safety concerns, student refusal*



# What is the Evidence?

- Services delivered through Telemental Health are feasible, acceptable, have been delivered across developmental status, and to youth with varied disorders
- Early work suggests that outcomes are comparable to services delivered in-person



# What is the Evidence?

- Satisfaction
  - High patient satisfaction ratings
- Rapport/Therapeutic alliance
  - High satisfaction suggests that a solid therapeutic alliance develops
- Safety
  - *Traditional outpatient model* – on-site staff assist with safety issues, SOPs
  - *Home-based* – Safety plan, high risk patients may be inappropriate, patient location must be known



# University of Maryland School Mental Health Program -- Satisfaction Data

- Telehealth since 2014!
- Children and caregivers satisfied with telepsychiatry services
- Clinicians and psychiatrists were satisfied, but less satisfied than families
  - Compared with face-to-face visits, expressed less satisfaction mostly with their own performance

“This is a very good and great idea.”

– Anonymous Student

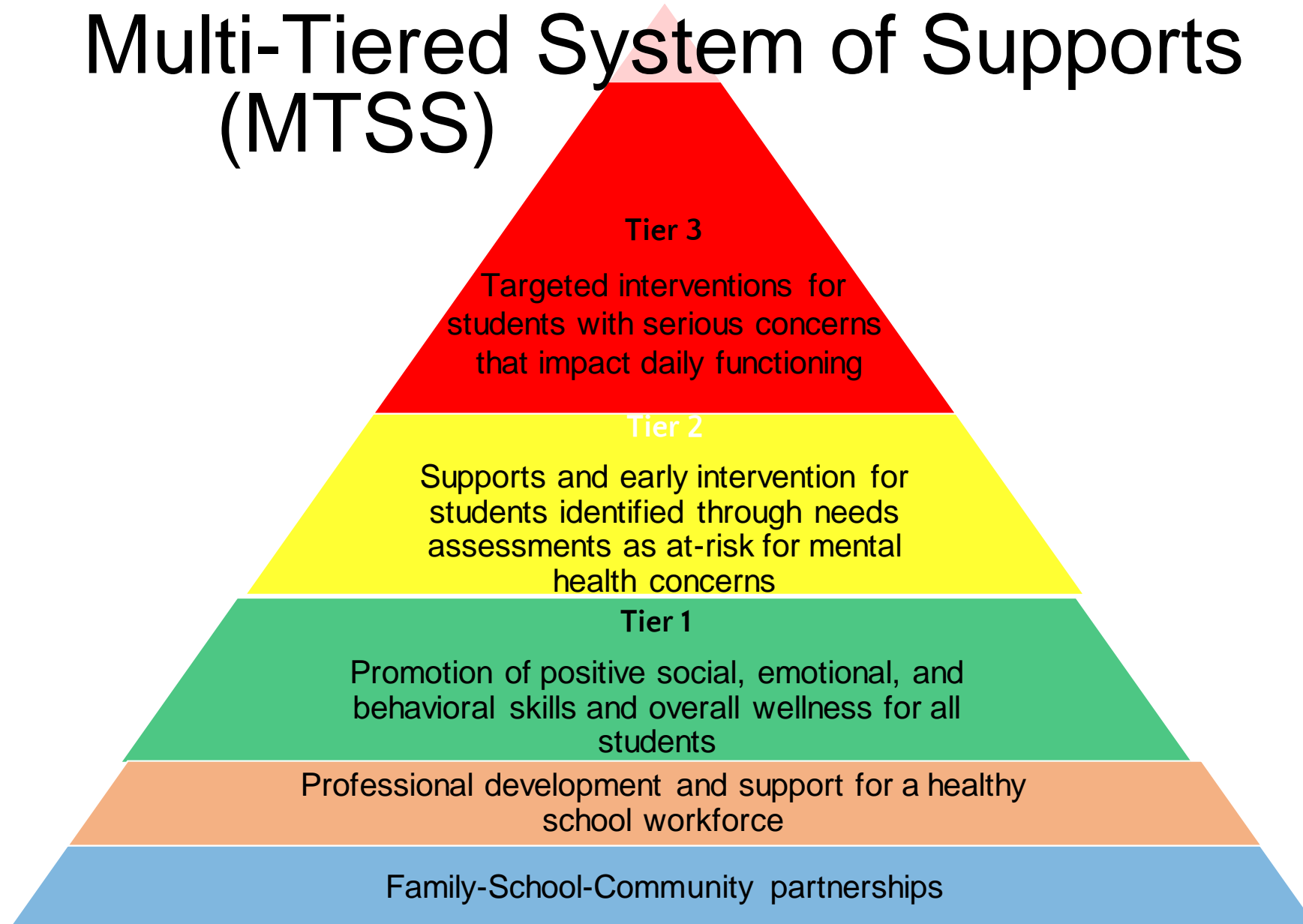


# Some practical pointers...

...to help you  
feel more confident, and  
become more competent  
**Telemental Health practitioners!**



# Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)







# Selecting a Telehealth Platform

## Tips for Individual Sessions

(Keep in mind, many of these tips can be use for all tiers!)



# Selecting a Telehealth Platform

## Considerations

- Cost
- Technology offered
- User-friendly
- App or web-based
- HIPAA Compliance
- Ease of setting up Business Associate Agreement (BAA)
- Compliance with specific regulations from professional boards, agencies, and organizations



# Preparing for Teletherapy

- Use an approved platform
- Plugs/chargers
- Clear plan for the session
- Resources or websites that you will need
- Appropriate background
- Routine consistent with in-person session
- Family resources for sessions (e.g.. pen, paper, crayons)
- Water
- Provider appearance (professional, consider color and try to wear solid colors)



# Physical Location

- Privacy: visual and auditory
- Adequate lighting: variety of light sources
- Minimize environmental distractions (e.g., noise, distracting backgrounds)
  - Give feedback to family (at originating site) on the above and make modifications as needed



# Establishing a Therapeutic Space

- Determine all persons present as part of the student's session (i.e., who is in the room and/or can hear the content of the session?)
- Inform and show students if there is anyone else joining the session (e.g., supervisors, psychiatrist, trainees)
- Have all persons on camera, if possible
- Allow time for a tour of your space

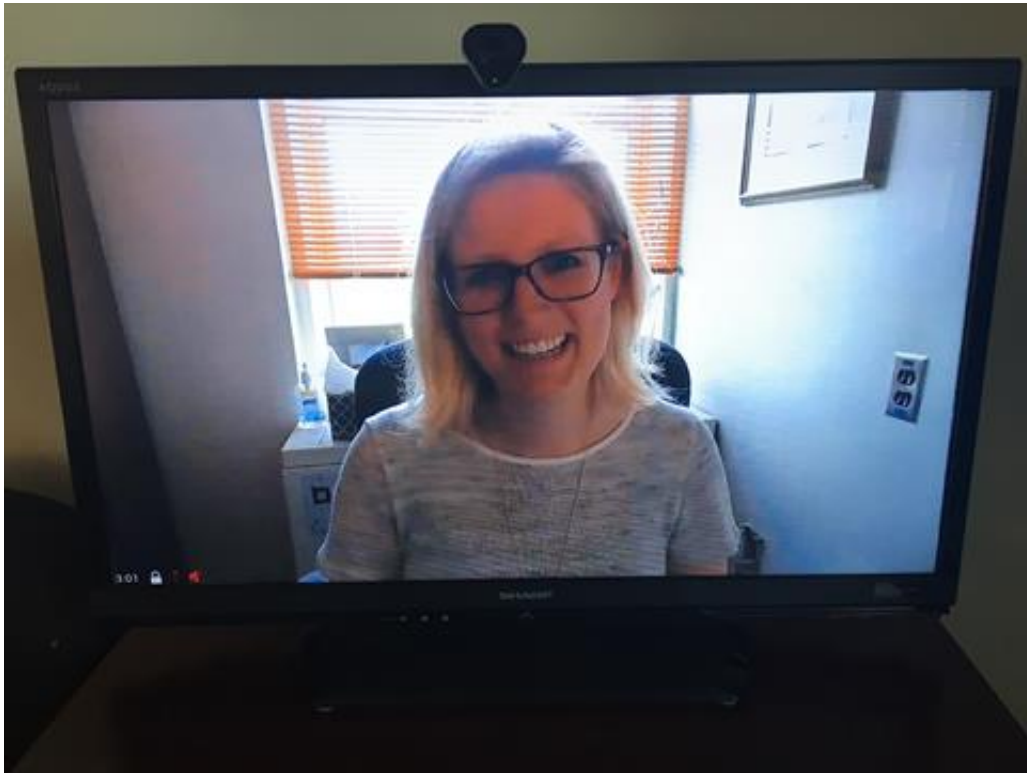


# Establishing a Therapeutic Space

- Have age-appropriate toys/resources available
  - Avoid distracting toys (e.g., Legos, a lot of pieces, wind-ups) and resources that will be hard to view on camera
  - Consider how to best integrate online tools and resources to engage students
- Establish eye contact by alternating gaze between screen and camera
- Keep your image on the screen to monitor your body language and affect



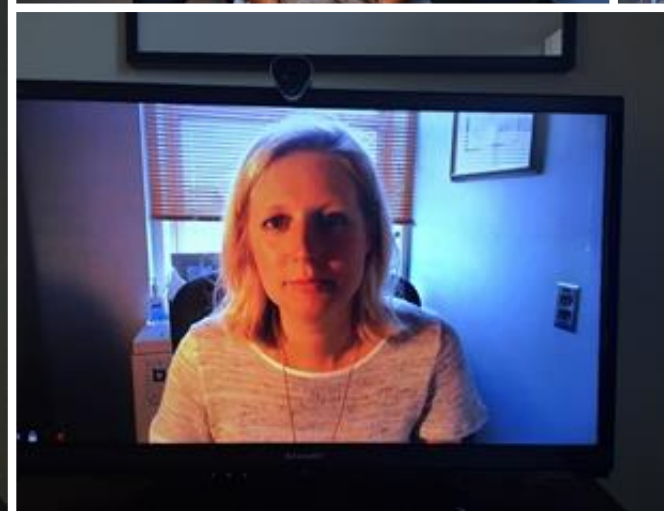
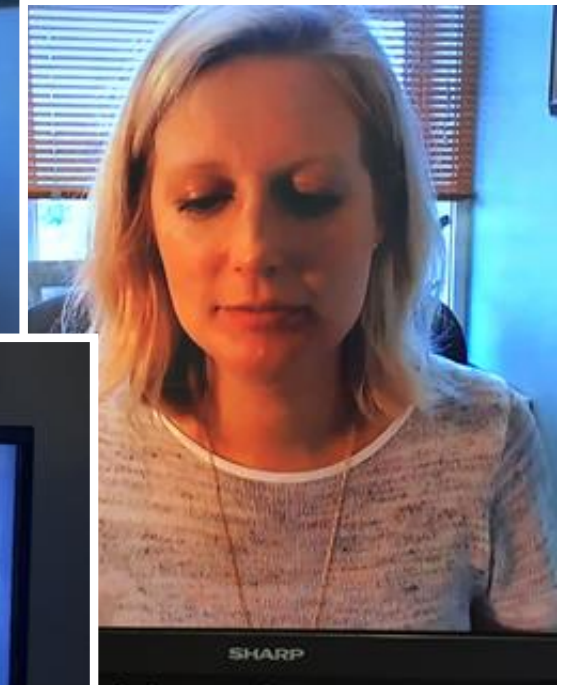
# Staging Matters



- Background objects and colors
- Frame participants
- Participant arrangement
- Apparent eye contact
- Lighting and sound
- Eyes 1/3 from the top of the screen
- Eliminate distractions
- Plug into network whenever possible
- Wear clothing with solid colors



# Staging Matters







# Self-Monitor, Use Nonverbal Gestures More Intentionally & More Often



Rapport, particularly the therapist's "affective availability," may require greater animation than during in-person

## Be 110% of yourself

- ✓ Virtual high fives
- ✓ Give a tour of your "office"
- ✓ Share artwork
- ✓ Check frequently for understanding and eye contact



# Avoid “Technique Face”





# Take Tips From Pros

What do you notice?





# Bring It!

## You set the tone for the teletherapy session!

- If you are excited and interested, the student will be as well
- Bring some extra “*umph*”!
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Use humor when appropriate
- Repeat lines you want students to internalize
- Model non-verbal cues and active listening
- Creatively engage the student
- Ride the wave of distraction – use breaks as needed
- Use praise throughout and at end of session





# Tips for the Therapist

## Before the Session:

- ✓ Turn off all smart devices
- ✓ Close all other browsers
- ✓ Use wired or wireless headphones
- ✓ Have a phone ready as a backup
- ✓ Plug directly into the internet if possible
- ✓ Set up space and use routines that are familiar to students who have had in-person sessions
- ✓ Use the same space each time (if possible)
- ✓ Have websites, resources or tools available
- ✓ Plan for the participation of the caregiver



# Tips for the Therapist

## During the Session:

- Allow time for a tour of your space
- Help student/family establish privacy
- Use names as much as possible
- Explain where to look - eye contact is not as obvious
- Use time checks
- Invite a caregiver to help with transition, homework, and planning for next session
- Check in about technology
- Use screen share to convey messages in a PowerPoint and/or to share resources/tools
- Be aware of the volume of your voice
- Allow child to create a bin or pile of things they may want to show you (similar to parking lot)



# Building Rapport

- Playful greeting with student (high five/dance)
- Ice breaker activity (charades/tic tac toe)
- Use interactive elements such as drawing/coloring/video
- Allow child to create a bin or pile of things they may want to show you (similar to a “parking lot”)



# Free Online Games

- Checkers, Chess, Connect Four <https://skillgamesboard.com/>
- Mancala <https://mancala.playdrift.com/>
- Battleship, Tic-Tac-Toe, Connect Four <https://papergames.io/>
- Mad Libs <https://www.glowwordbooks.com/blog/category/kids-online-mad-libs/>
- Mad Libs <https://www.squiglysplayhouse.com/WritingCorner/StoryBuilder/>
- Uno <https://play.unofreak.com/>
- Scattergories <https://swellgarfo.com/scattergories/>





# Tips for Students & Caregivers

- Make sure you have plug/charger available
- Have a stand or create a stand-a tissue box is great!
- Turn off all smart devices
- Close all other browsers
- Observe how eye contact works when using tele
- Use wired or wireless headphones
- Let therapist know if did not understand/hear
- Have a phone ready as a backup
- Plug directly into the internet if possible





# Student Privacy and Confidentiality

- Review standard confidentiality guidelines
- Who is in the home?
- Does the family/people in the home know about services?
- Does the student (or you) have a noise machine?
- Be respectful that you are entering a child's home





# Informed Consent and Confidentiality

- Discuss potential risks, benefits, and limitations of teletherapy
- Cover the student's/caregiver's rights to refuse or withdraw
- Determine 1-2 emergency contacts and create a plan in case of emergencies
- Discuss alternatives if there are technology issues
- Obtain and document assent and consent



# Student Safety

- Emergency information
  - emergency contacts (email/phone)
  - At least 2 contacts recommend
- Develop a safety plan
  - Review existing plan (if applicable)—adapt accordingly
  - Create a new plan if needed
  - Identify local hotlines/emergency resources
  - Refer to ER/Police
- Build toolbox of coping strategies and supports for student and caregivers



# Starting Your Session

- Remind student and family that not recorded
- Find out who is in the room or nearby who can hear
- Orient students to your space
- Let students orient you to their space
- Determine a special signal if not private in their space or need to stop
- Use an ice breaker or rapport building activity



# Introduce Tele Mental Health

- Explain what teletherapy is and how it works
- Describe benefits of teletherapy
  - Access to services
  - Students --as satisfied or more satisfied with tele compared to in-person
- Be confident, with no anxiety when explaining teletherapy
- Ask if teletherapy is a strategy caregiver/guardian a student will agree to



# During the Session

- Pay attention to non-verbal cues
- Clarify with students if you notice something “off”
- Make sure to look for your special signal
- If there are technical issues stop and address them
- Use online resources as appropriate
  - TF-CBT Online Resources
    - <https://telehealthfortrauma.com/resources/>



# Ending the Session

- Make sure to leave time to transition
- Include caregiver to discuss actions/plan recommended
- Ask for feedback for next time
  - What did they like/not like?
  - How can it be improved?
- Plan for next time
  - When is your next session?
  - What materials do you need?
  - Who will attend next time?
- End on a positive activity or statement!





# Supervision



- Support trainees through training, supervision, and coaching
- Seek peer-to-peer supervision from other clinicians
- Seek additional trainings
- Increase your comfort through practice



# Review Federal, State and Board regulations frequently!

Telemental Health is  
evolving quickly and so are  
the regulations for therapists  
and trainees!





# What is a BAA?

- Business Associate Agreement
- Confirm that this is approved as well by your organization or school system





# Tier 2/3 Strategies



Maintain routines where can  
from in-person therapy



Consider how to best adapt  
structure



Web-platform interactive  
features



Confidentiality



<https://wedolisten.org/Lessons>

*MY CHILD/STUDENTS NEED TO WORK ON...*

*Being a better listener*

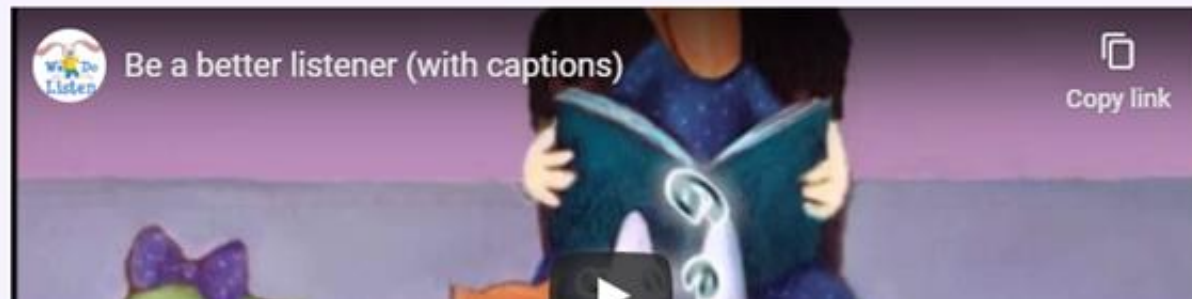
*Follow your heart and do your best*

*How to deal with bullying*

*Making the most of things*

*Managing anger*

*Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns to Listen*





# Tier 1 Strategies



Wellness Newsletters for school staff and families



Integrating SEL curriculum into online classes



Create or find SEL related videos that can be used in a clinical session



Holding office hours for school staff



Using other school platforms to connecting with families



Training/Informing Staff of new referral mechanisms



# Establishing a Routine and Schedule

- Schedules and routines need to be taught
- Visual cues for young children can help to teach the routine
- Disruptions to the schedule should be reflected whenever possible in advance of the change
- Choice should be provided whenever possible to foster greater engagement (when, what, and how)
- Students know how to seek help

## COVID-19 DAILY SCHEDULE

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Before 9:00am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, put PJ's in laundry
9:00-10:00	Morning walk	Family walk with the dog Yoga if it's raining
10:00-11:00	Academic time	NO ELECTRONICS Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal
11:00-12:00	Creative time	Legos, magnets, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or bake, etc
12:00	Lunch	
12:30PM	Chore time	A - wipe all kitchen table and chairs. B - wipe all door handles, light switches, and desk tops. C - Wipe both bathrooms - sinks and toilets
1:00-2:30	Quiet time	Reading, puzzles, nap
2:30-4:00	Academic time	ELECTRONICS OK iPad games, Prodigy, Educational show
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air	Bike, Walk the dog, play outside
5:00-6:00	Dinner	
6:00-8:00	Free TV time	Kid shows on tv
8:00	Bedtime	All kids
9:00PM	Bedtime	All kids who follow the daily schedule & don't fight

John Crocker, Methuen Public Schools



# Tier 1 in the Classroom

- Many online SEL platforms are currently free to educators, including:
  - [Closegap](#)
  - [EVERFI](#)
  - [PATHS](#)
  - [RethinkEd](#)
- [WeDoListen.org](#) – Lessons, books, videos on SEL skills
- Teaching Tolerance to Students  
<https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/film-kits>
- Be creative! Colorado school psychologist Adam Parker [uploads videos to his YouTube channel](#) with engaging SEL stories and songs for children.





# Closegap: Daily Check-Ins (Closegap.org)

Students do a daily emotional check-in



Teachers and Parents get Info in Real Time



Students connect with an adult or participate in self-guided activities





# Teacher Well-Being and Support

- [Headspace](#) (available free to educators) is committed to addressing needs of educators such as:

- Reducing stress
- Increasing resilience
- Improving sleep

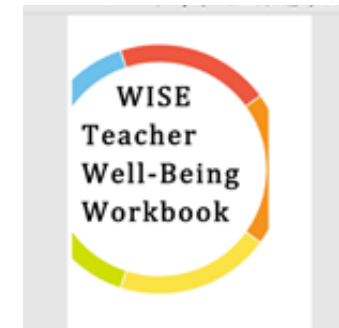


- [MHTTC Tools for Educators During a Public Health Crisis](#)

- Taking care of yourself
- Staying informed without stressing out
- What stress looks like
- Strategies for teaching during Covid-19



- [WISE Teacher Well-Being Workbook](#)  
Georgetown University and NCSMH
  - Workbook for teachers to assess and enhance own well-being





# Guidance, Scripts, Strategies & Resources for Supporting Students and Educators

## Guidance, Scripts, Strategies, & Resources for Supporting Students and Educators During COVID-19



### Managing Your Stress Load and Caring for Yourself

Managing your stress load and caring for yourself during COVID-19 is essential to your health and ability to support others. Use this link to review the source of your stress load and create your own self-regulation plan. [Link](#)

- 1 **Connect with Students**  
Identify a developmentally appropriate and safe platform to connect with your students. [Link](#)
- 2 **Listen and Reflect**  
During the connecting activity, listening and reflecting feelings will help decrease student stress load as it increases connection and feelings of safety. [Link](#)
- 3 **Provide Reassurance**  
As students share their feelings, they may also ask questions. Here is a link to guiding statements for helping reassure them if they have fears, anxiety, sadness, and for some, grief. [Link](#)
- 4 **Coping/Managing Stress Load**  
Because these feelings will likely be ongoing, helping students identify self-regulation activities that manage their stress load and help them feel calm and alert will be important. Activities linked here: [Link](#)
- 5 **Additional Support if Needed**  
If a student or family needs additional support because of mental health needs or a crisis, use this link for more guidance: [Link](#)





# School-Family-Community Partnerships

- School- family- community abilities and services
  - Know what is out there
- Know your resources
  - Promote school-family-community services through school and agency webpages
- Hotlines
- Crisis Response



# Family Resources

- **One-Minute YouTube Parent Training**
  - University of Utah is creating daily, short (less than 1 minute) videos with remote learning behavior tips designed for parents.
  - The videos are available in four different languages, and feature skills related to behavior specific praise, emotion identification, transitions, etc.
  - See their YouTube channel here: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxkGHLVVqVpni8rpWfK9p\\_g/featured](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxkGHLVVqVpni8rpWfK9p_g/featured)
- **Behavior Checker**
  - <https://behaviorchecker.org/>



# Hotlines

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 24/7, 365-day-a-year hotline for people experiencing suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
  - Call 1-800-273-8255 or [click here](#) to chat.
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**
  - Call 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- **National Sexual Assault Hotline**
  - Call 800-656-HOPE (4673)
- **SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline:** 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support for people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.
  - Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.



# Additional Telehealth Resources

## National Council for Behavioral Health Resources

- **SAMHSA**  
Telebehavioral Health Training and Technical Assistance
- **American Telemedicine Association**  
Practical Guidelines for Video-based Online Mental Health Services
- **American Medical Association – Telemedicine: Connect to Specialists and Facilitate Better Access to Care for Your Patients**
- **National Consortium of TeleHealth Research Centers**  
COVID-19 Telehealth Toolkit
- **National Telehealth Technology Assessment Resource Center**  
Home Telehealth
- **National Telehealth Technology Assessment Resource Center Clinician's Guide to Video Platforms**
- **American Psychological Association**  
Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology
- **Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation**  
Using Telehealth for Addiction Treatment



# Recommended Resources

- [Telemental Health 101](#)  
National Center on School Mental Health, (YouTube video, 47 minutes)
- [Telepsychology](#)  
American Psychological Association (telepsychology tips and resources)
- [Rural Telehealth Toolkit](#)  
Rural Health Information Hub, U.S. DHHS Health Resources and Services Administration (2020)
- [Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology](#)  
American Psychological Association (APA) Standards and Guidelines
- [Headspace](#) for Educators
- [Closegap.org](#) for Educators, and for Parents





# References

Gloff, N. E., LeNoue, S. R., Novins, D. K., & Myers, K. (2015). Telemental health for children and adolescents. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 27(6), 513-524.

Myers, Ka., & Cain, S. (2008). Practice parameter for telepsychiatry with children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 47(12), 1468-1483.

Case scenario and accompanying questions adapted from:

Hilty, D. M., Crawford, A., Teshima, J., Chan, S., Sunderji, N., Yellowlees, P. M., ... & Li, S. T. (2015). A framework for telepsychiatric training and e-health: competency-based education, evaluation and implications. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 27(6), 569-592.

[Introduction to Tele-Play Therapy: Considerations and Preparations](https://www.creativepsychological.com), Rachel Altvater, Creative Psychological Health Services, <https://www.creativepsychological.com>



# Thank You!