



NEW PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 17, 2020

Dear New Providence Parents, Guardians, Teachers, and Staff,

Thank you to those who joined us last Wednesday evening, August 12, for the presentation from George Scott, EdS, LMFT on “Preparing Children for a Different School World.” We thank him for his thoughtful, realistic, and engaging take on what school life will be like for our children from a mental health point of view. Our administrative team is taking into account his suggestions, as well as the questions and comments from viewers, as we continue to prepare for the start of the school year.

On the following pages, please find the presentation PowerPoint from Mr. Scott. His contact information is on the last slide, should you have questions or concerns regarding the content. Next week, both parent and teacher websites that contain Mental Health and Social-Emotional Learning resources will debut, and we will also send contact information for the district’s mental health professionals for the 2020-2021 school year.

We hope you continue to remain well, and that you enjoy the rest of your summer break.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Dr. Joseph Harvey in black ink.

Dr. Joseph Harvey
Director of Special Services
jharvey@npsdnj.org
908-464-9050 ext. 4239

Handwritten signature of Mrs. Jillian Shadis in black ink.

Mrs. Jillian Shadis
Director of School Counseling
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PREPARING CHILDREN FOR A DIFFERENT SCHOOL WORLD

George Scott, EdS, LMFT
August 12, 2020

Presentation for the New Providence School District

ONLY 7 MONTHS AGO...



2020 was clearly going to be a NEW
(and different) YEAR...

IT IS NO LONGER OVER THERE....IT'S HERE



WE MAKE THE EFFORT TO HAVE FUN WITH IT...



WE TRY TO ACCOMMODATE TO STAY SAFE...



WE LEARN NEW RULES...



AND PRACTICE SOME OLD RULES MORE



THERE ARE NEW ESSENTIALS...



AND A REPEAT OF THE SAME MESSAGE



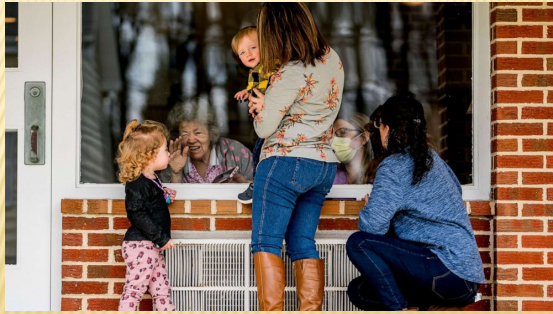
BUT WE DON'T LET GO OF SOME THINGS...



WE STILL LIKE BEING TOGETHER..



SOMETIMES TOGETHER IN NEW WAYS



FOR MANY THERE IS FEAR...



FOR SOME...LOTS OF FEAR



FOR OTHERS...OPTIMISM



WE TRY TO STAY HOPEFUL...



IT IS CLEARLY A NEW YEAR



AS ADULTS WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE:



THE ROLE OF ADULTS IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

When we have been traumatized, when we are terrified and scared, nothing calms us down like the reassuring voice or the firm (safe) embrace of someone we trust...

The Body Keeps the Score
Bessel Van der Kolk

How do caregivers, in school and at home, help our children make the transition back to school?

What are the considerations to be made, in advance of students returning to school, to allow a smoother transition, reduce fear, and encourage a more effective re-integration?

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DON'T WAIT, THE TIME IS NOW TO:

- ✘ Begin or continue the conversation about returning to school;
- ✘ Provide assurance that the adults are working very hard to keep the school healthy;
- ✘ Share that while you are worried at times too, you are confident that school will be a safe place;
- ✘ Encourage your child to share their concerns;

Children who have been traumatized, or have lived in chaotic circumstances, “need to be in environments that restore their sense of safety, control, and predictability...”

Is that your home, your school, your classroom, in **your presence**?

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“Children who are more resilient after facing adversity often had an important, reliable adult to turn to in their youth;

a grown-up who stepped in and helped them understand that what was happening wasn't about them and wasn't their fault.”

(**Childhood Disrupted**, Donna Jackson Nakazawa)

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We are inherently social beings, and this deep drive for connection becomes beautifully and painfully apparent in times like these.



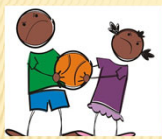
The COVID-19 outbreak has profoundly affected and disrupted our social relationships.

Adults and children alike, regardless of age, long for a reconnection to family, to school, to work, to the bigger world.

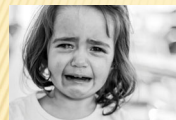
They miss being connected.

We simply don't know what the effects of this kind of social isolation are going to have on people (adults and children), and how long those effects will last.

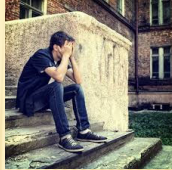
IT MAY LOOK LIKE THIS...



OR THIS IN REAL LIFE...



AND IN OUR BIG KIDS, TOO



RESILIENCY

The capacity to tolerate adversity, recover quickly and return to an original state of wellbeing.

WHAT IS IT THAT OUR CHILDREN NEED?

Because they are HUMAN, all children need soothing and calming attention delivered by adults who are healthy and calm.

A FIVE FINGER SUMMARY:



1. Sleep
2. Nutrition
3. Exercise
4. Meditation/Yoga/Mindfulness
5. Healthy relationships

PRACTICE AND ROLE MODEL SELF-CARE

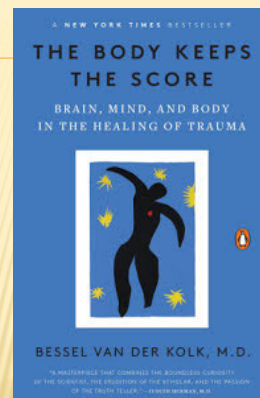
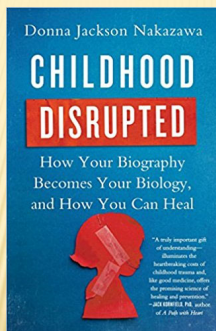
- ✦ Get plenty of rest.
- ✦ Maintain proper diet and nutrition.
- ✦ Drink plenty of water.
- ✦ Exercise.
- ✦ Use spiritual practices and/or relaxation skills.
- ✦ Seek out supportive people.
- ✦ Avoid use of alcohol, caffeine, and other substances.
- ✦ Ask for help.

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COMMUNITY SADNESS; COMMUNITY GRIEF

During COVID, New Providence has experienced the sudden and tragic loss of two of its students.

Let's talk about the effects of that for just a minute or so...



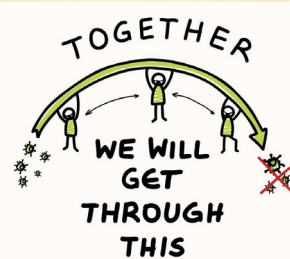
Download a soothing app to your phone to guide you in relaxation:



Stop, Breathe & Think

2nd Floor Helpline
1-888-222-2228 (talk and text)

NJ HOPELINE
1-855-654-6735



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