

# **Supporting Your Teen During COVID19**



**November 17, 2020  
Issaquah School  
District**

# Services and Introduction-Swedish School Based Mental Health Counselors

- **Who?** Summer Igaz, LICSW (SHS)  
Julie Schliebner, LICSW (GEHS)  
Sara Torelli, LICSW (IHS)  
Hillary Cohen, LICSW (LHS)
- **What?** Help students with stress, anxiety, depression, relationship challenges, social issues, grief and loss, identity and self-confidence, and coordination with outside resources.
- **Why?** Students whose mental health needs are met do better in school!

***School-Based Mental Health Counseling Page on ISD website:***

<https://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/family/counseling-services/SBHC>

# **November is National Native American Heritage Month**

- We would like to begin by acknowledging that this meeting is being held on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish People, who have and continue to steward this land throughout the generations.

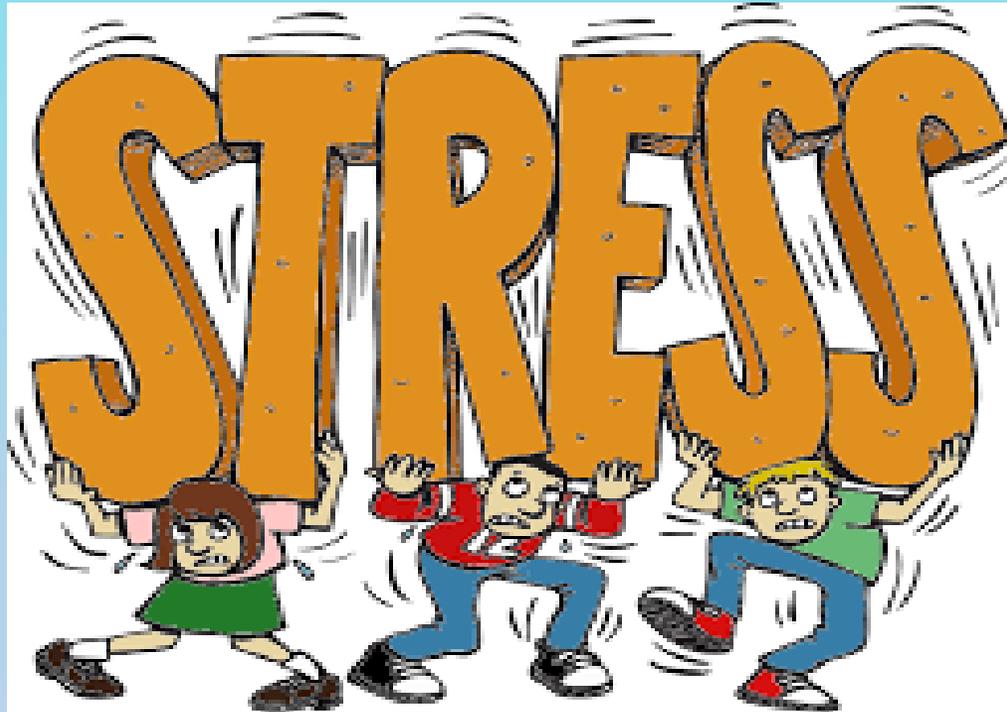
# Goals for today:

- Discuss how adolescents specifically are impacted by COVID-19 and remote learning
- Discuss ways to support your child through this time
- Talk about ways that you, the parent, can take care of yourself during this time
- Address general questions (*please type questions into the chat and we will address them after the presentation*)

*\*Please mute yourself and turn off your camera*

# How does it feel to be a high-school student during COVID-19?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXFjjwGIVsw>



# How COVID is Impacting Teens

A May 2020 Harris Poll survey showed:

- **7 out of 10** teenagers reported mental health struggles
- **61%** said they had experienced an increase in feelings of loneliness
- **43%** said they had experienced depression
- **55%** said they had experienced anxiety

Research shows that when young people suppress their feelings, intelligence and learning suffer. (Journal of Personality and Social Psychology)

# How COVID is Impacting Teens

Young people are struggling most with their mental health during the pandemic.

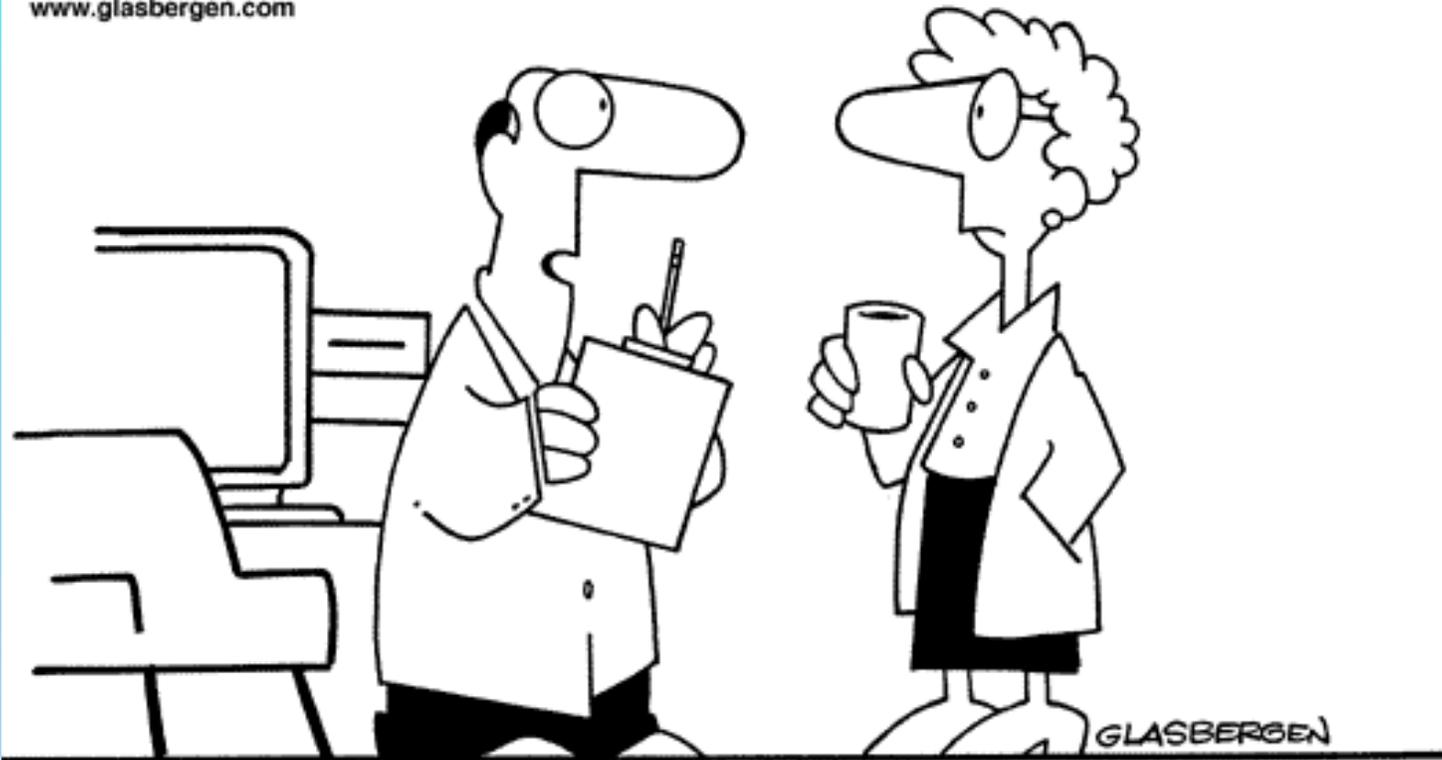
- Youth ages 11-17 who *accessed mental health screening* was 9 percent higher than the average in 2019.
- youth ages 11-17 have been more likely than any other age group to score for *moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety and depression*.

Rates of suicidal ideation are highest among youth, especially LGBTQ+ youth.

- In September 2020, over half of 11-17-year-olds reported having thoughts of suicide or self-harm more than half or nearly every day of the previous two weeks.
- From January to September 2020, 77,470 youth reported experiencing frequent suicidal ideation, including 27,980 LGBTQ+ youth.
- Intentional self-harm/suicidal intent **up by 5%** (ages 13-17)

**Substance abuse of illegal substances, such as alcohol and cannabis, up by 34% (ages 13-17)**

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www.glasbergen.com



**“According to the latest research, the average human body is 20% water and 80% stress.”**

# COVID19 Impact on Our Hierarchy of Needs

- **Survival mode**
  - Basic needs must be met first
- **Social Isolation**
  - Directly affects adolescent age-appropriate development
  - Can commonly lead to:
    - Depression
    - Anxiety
    - Feelings of grief and loss



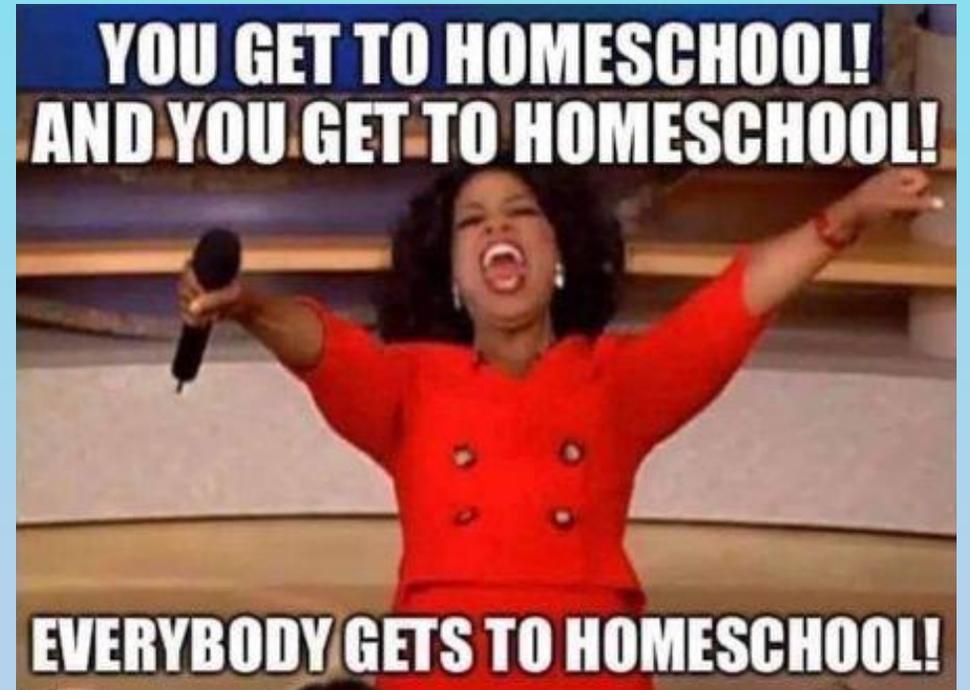
# Impact of COVID on teens related to school/learning

- Difficulty paying attention, having a hard time focusing on schoolwork
- Trouble remembering what was learned and remembering to complete tasks
- Having too much energy, acting too silly
- Feeling really tired all the time
- Sleep and appetite disturbances
- Having headaches or stomachaches
- Being cranky, having outbursts, or crying often
- Impulsiveness or having a hard time thinking before speaking or taking action



# How to support your teen during remote learning

- Make sure you are *taking care of your own needs*
- Be *flexible, supportive* and *empathetic*
- Be an *active listener* (listening to understand, not to respond)
- Encourage your teen to have some *structure each day* (ex. A morning routine, specific times to do homework, etc.)
- Letting your teen *take breaks* from school work is necessary
- *Validate* your teen's experiences with remote learning (ex. "I know this is such a hard situation, and I see that you are doing the best you can")



# Strategies to Combat Social Isolation

- **Support a sense of belonging and connectedness at school**
  - Who does your teen feel connected to at school?
  - Any classes that they particularly enjoy?
- Encourage connecting with friends (socially distanced hang-outs, FaceTime, etc.)
- Suggest going for walks/getting fresh air throughout the day to help boost mood
- Do fun things as a family
- **Check in with your teen often about how they are doing (*not just about school*)**





NATURE WALK

# How can we be thoughtful about what we are giving our attention to and have control over what we are attending to?

- Keep to a schedule (predictability not rigidity)
- Daily positive parent-child interaction time
- Schedule fun!
- Make sure everyone gets enough sleep
- Make exercise a priority

Sleep Info. Resource:

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/teens-and-sleep>



# I CANNOT CONTROL

(So, I can LET GO of these things.)

IF OTHERS FOLLOW THE RULES OF SOCIAL DISTANCING

THE AMOUNT OF TOILET PAPER AT THE STORE

# I CAN CONTROL

(So, I will focus on these things.)

THE ACTIONS OF OTHERS

MY POSITIVE ATTITUDE

TURNING OFF THE NEWS

FINDING FUN THINGS TO DO AT HOME

HOW LONG THIS WILL LAST

HOW I FOLLOW CDC RECOMMENDATIONS

LIMITING MY SOCIAL MEDIA

MY OWN SOCIAL DISTANCING

MY KINDNESS & GRACE

PREDICTING WHAT WILL HAPPEN

HOW OTHERS REACT

OTHER PEOPLE'S MOTIVES



# Checking in with your teen (about more than just school)



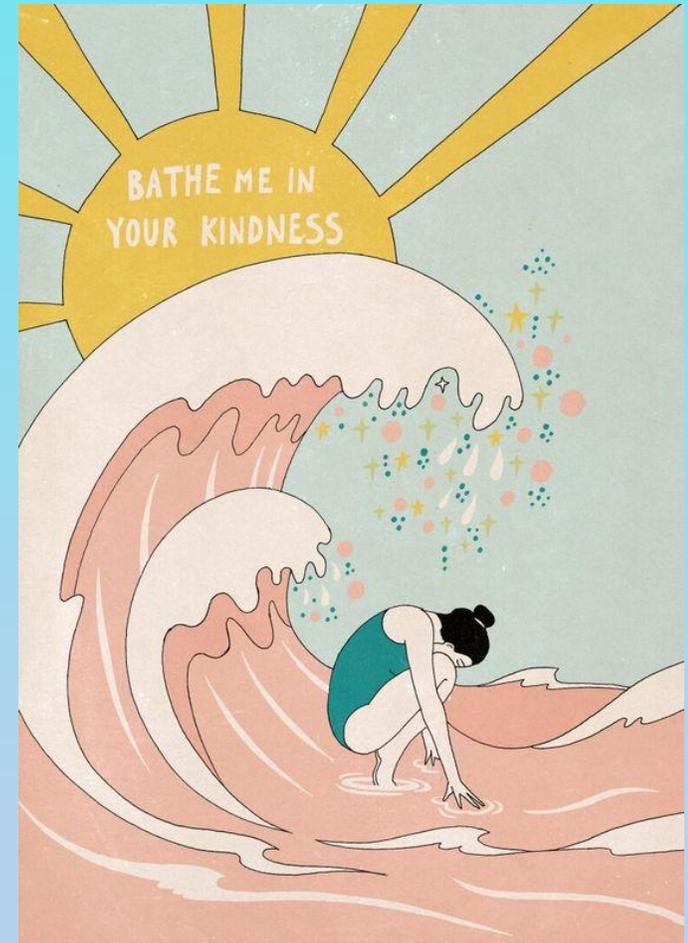
## Emotional check-ins are different than school-related check-ins

- Schedule time that you talk about school (whatever frequency works for you and your teen)
- Outside of that time, try not to talk about school – *check in about how your teen is doing mentally and emotionally*
- **All of the things that were built into a school day are now the parents' job to facilitate**
  - Socializing (even in small ways – seeing others in the hallway)
  - Moving your body (i.e. walking to the bus stop, walking from class to class, etc.)

# Check-ins

- During these regular check-ins, ask about what's coming up for the week, and how they're feeling about things. Ask about grades and teachers.
  - If you pose a general question like "How are things going?" and you get an unconstructive and general answer like "Fine," **then ask a more specific question.**
- **These check-ins show your kids that you care**, give parents the chance to assess the big picture, and set the expectation that if things are *not* going well, they need to be acknowledged and addressed.

\*Research suggests motivation to persist is particularly important for online education. Studies of university learners find that [virtual learners can experience higher drop-out rates than those in traditional face-to-face environments \(JAMA\).](#)



# Parent Self-Care



- Be *intentional* about creating time & space to recharge and decompress
- Be *thoughtful* and intentional about how you're treating yourself.
- Be *realistic* – this time is unprecedented (cut yourself slack)

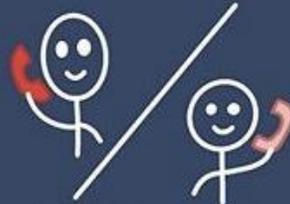
*Remember that being kind to yourself will not only help you stay calm during this difficult time, it will help ensure that you have the bandwidth you need to take good care of your family.*

# SELF-CARE

for parents



carve out  
time for  
yourself



reach out  
to an old  
friend



go outside  
for a walk



read a book  
that moves  
you



set  
boundaries  
(it's okay to say no)



buy your  
favorite  
snacks

(share if you  
want to!)



@CRISISTEXTLINE

# Resources

## Websites:

[Coping During COVID Resources for Parents \(Childmind Institute\)](#)

[Active Minds \(mental health during the pandemic\)](#)

[CDC - managing stress and anxiety during COVID](#)

[Anxiety Canada](#) (Cognitive Behaviorally based resources)

[Mental Health Resources for Adolescents](#)

[Mindfulness for Teens](#)

## Apps:

[Calm](#); [Headspace](#); [Mindshift](#); [Anxiety Challenger](#)

## Hotlines:

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line: text “Brave” to 741-741

Trevor Project (specifically for the LGBTQ+ community): 1-866-488-7386

Parent Edge and MI Forefront Team present:

**Youth Suicide Prevention for Parents**

**November 19, 2020**

**7:00 PM**

Learn evidence-based prevention strategies to help youth in crisis stay safe and get support.

***FREE of charge***

[www.intheforefront.org](http://www.intheforefront.org)

# Questions?

- Thank you!
- For questions specific to your child/school, please contact the Mental Health Counselor based at your school:
  - Sara Torelli @IHS: [torellis@Issaquah.wednet.edu](mailto:torellis@Issaquah.wednet.edu)
  - Summer Igaz @SHS: [igazs@Issaquah.wednet.edu](mailto:igazs@Issaquah.wednet.edu)
  - Julie Schliebner @GEHS: [schliebnerj@Issaquah.wednet.edu](mailto:schliebnerj@Issaquah.wednet.edu)
  - Hillary Cohen @ LHS: [cohenh@Issaquah.wednet.edu](mailto:cohenh@Issaquah.wednet.edu)