

In the Event of School Closings: Modified Remote Counseling Program Support for Students March 2020

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on schools throughout the United States. As a result, school districts are planning for modified schedules that may include closings. Our goal is to continue to provide your child with a level of support that will offer continuity of care during this unstructured time for your child.

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Modified Counseling Program Support in Event of School Closure

The following protocol has been designed to provide continued care for your child during the event of a school closure or modified schedule as a result of COVID-19.

Description of Services

In the event of school closure, your child's counselor, SAC, Case manager, Psychologist, Academy counselor or other school based clinician will continue to provide services. Services can include:

- Frequent email communication between counselors and students during the school day
- Up to two individual check-ins per week (or as needed) via an online conferencing tool
- One parent check-in per week (or as needed) via an online conferencing tool
- Parents /guardians or caregivers are asked to be present or available for sessions with your child
- Document all contacts on a spread sheet or student data sheets
- Adhere to the same ethical guidelines in a virtual setting as school counselors in a face-to-face setting
- Recognize and acknowledge the challenges and limitations of virtual school counseling
- Implement procedures for students to follow in both emergency and nonemergency situations when the school counselor is not available
- Recognize and mitigate the limitation of virtual school counselor confidentiality, which may include unintended viewers or recipients

If additional support is needed arrangements may be made between the counselor and the parent.

What to Expect: Scheduling Sessions

In the event of a school closing or modified schedule, you will receive an email to schedule your child's sessions. Please ensure that counselors have all the updated contact information for parents and children.

Office Hours

Our staff will follow the same hours of operation as a regularly scheduled school day. Counselors will monitor their email during these regularly scheduled hours. Outside of these hours, parents can email counselors and can expect a response in the next business day. In the event of a crisis /emergency, please call 911.

Please make sure your own family, friends other distractions do not interfere with your interactions with parents or students,

Things to Remember

Remote sessions can be ideal for short duration, but they come with some limitations. Therefore, the following is suggested:

- Remote sessions should take place in public areas of the house e.g. living room, playroom, den
- Parents should ensure that sessions are confidentially protected

Tips for Parents

In preparation for an extended school closure, proactive steps can assist in supporting your child. Specifically, structure and routine are the best defense against boredom, anxiety, and other potential negative mood states. For example:

- Create plans for ways to structure your child's day
- Provide consistency with bedtimes, wake up schedules and routines.
- Create plans for entertainment with your child. Suggestions include:
 - Books to read
 - Board games
 - Craft and art projects
 - Culinary projects
 - Structured technology time
 - Structured academic time

We look forward to partnering with parents to continue to support students during the event of school closure