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The Navigator: Why, What, How

Strong relationships that provide support for the whole student are at the heart of a great education. We know from experience and research that sustained supportive relationships are key to our students’ success. During unprecedented disruption, relationships are more essential than ever. A virtual start to the school year is the safest choice for our students and staff, but it also presents challenges with connection and relationships with students and families. In order to address these challenges, we have created the Navigator. Each student will be assigned a Navigator based in their assigned school. Each Navigator will be responsible for checking in with a small group of students, one-on-one, on a weekly basis. As another layer of support beyond the classroom teacher, the Navigator will serve as a student’s mentor and advocate working to connect students to what they need to be successful. The weekly check-ins, facilitated by the Navigator, will focus on social-emotional supports, academic goal setting, as well as identifying and addressing needs and challenges. Though we are launching the role during the virtual start of the 2020-21 school year, we know that a one-size-fits-all approach never works for students, and the Navigator role will support us in meeting the needs of our students now and in the future.

What is a Navigator?

- **Mentor** and **advocate** for a small group of students to help them “navigate” a path of success through a personalized system of support
- **Builds relationships** and collects information on basic needs, academic challenges and social-emotional well-being to **connect students to resources and supports**
- Teachers and other school staff members connect one-on-one with a small cohort of students through **10-minute weekly check-ins**

Who can serve as a navigator?

- The most important attribute is the **ability to build strong, supportive relationships with students.**
- **Identifying Navigators occurs at the school-level.** Schools should consider who in their buildings could serve as Navigators.
- **Navigators may include** classroom teachers, related arts teachers, paraprofessionals, instructional coaches, Community Achieves or Community in Schools facilitators, family engagement coordinators, restorative practice assistants, librarians, etc.
- The Navigator is an **additional support beyond the classroom teacher.** It is recommended that a student’s classroom teacher not serve as their Navigator.
  - School counselors, school psychologists and social workers should support Navigators, not be them!
How does it work?

1. **Identify Navigators.** Schools identify staff who can serve as Navigators. We encourage schools to think across the staff in the building to identify potential navigators in order to keep the navigator to student ratio as low as possible. Because school counselors, social workers and psychologists will support the work of the navigators, they should not be included in the list of potential Navigators.
   a. What skills do Navigators need?
      i. Comfort talking with students and families
      ii. Interest in learning about students and building trusting relationships
      iii. Ability to connect with other staff and community providers as needed
      iv. Cultural and linguistic competency
   b. Possible school roles who can serve as Navigators:
      1. Core content/ general education teachers
      2. Related Arts Teachers
      3. Librarians
      4. Front office staff
      5. Paraprofessionals
      6. Dean of students
      7. Instructional coaches
      8. Community Achieves/Community in Schools
      9. Assistant Principals
      10. Restorative Practice assistants
      11. Family Engagement specialist
      12. Others as needed to reduce navigator to student ratio

2. **Form Student Cohorts:** Divide students into cohorts based on number of Navigators. It is recommended that students be assigned a Navigator that is not their classroom teacher. Navigators should be provided student name, student ID number, parent/guardian name(s), and contact information (email and phone).
3. **Complete Training:** Navigators review this handbook and watch a short training video. They also receive on-going training throughout the year. The Lead Navigator at each school is available to support Navigators and their work with students.

4. **Conduct Weekly Check-ins:** Each week Navigators will complete one-on-one check-ins with each student in their assigned cohort using the provided scripts. Though scripts will be provided to ensure that key areas of need and support are addressed, the most important and essential element of the Navigator role is establishing a supportive relationship between the Navigator and student-and with younger students, the student’s family as well. Navigators should use an interpreter when needed for non-English language background families. These check-ins will focus on:
   a. Establishing a baseline relationship
   b. Ensuring access to a computer and internet connectivity
   c. Assessing and addressing academic knowledge and needs
   d. Determining needs for social-emotional support
   e. Connecting students with needs including social services
   f. Guidance for families on supporting their students’ learning
   g. Goal-setting and connecting students to enrichment or other opportunities

Translation services are available for Navigators and/or families: [https://www.mnps.org/request-an-interpreter?rq=translation](https://www.mnps.org/request-an-interpreter?rq=translation)

EL Office: [https://www.mnps.org/english-learners](https://www.mnps.org/english-learners)

The Office of Translation and Interpretation Services should be your first point of contact.

- Reach out to your school’s assigned Parent Outreach Translator. If you do not know if your school has an assigned Parent Outreach Translator, [email]
Based on the current workload, the translator will determine if they can accommodate the request or if outside resources need to be utilized for this specific request.

- If you do not have an assigned Parent Outreach Translator, please send your request to [email address]. Our team will determine if one of the translators can assist or if outside resources need to be utilized to complete the call.

Outside resources:

- MNPS utilizes an outside resource (vendor) to provide telephonic interpretation when MNPS translation services are not available. The vendor is [vendor name].
- [Vendor] has a dedicated line for MNPS: [phone number]. Please make sure you know which language(s) is needed, as this is the first question the operator will ask.
- This service costs $/minute. Ensuring that the Office of Translation and Interpretation Services is your first point of contact will minimize the cost to MNPS.

In addition, translated scripts and other materials are available on the Navigator SharePoint site.

5. **Collect actionable data.** Through a survey aligned to the scripts, Navigators will capture individualized student data that will be used to connect students to needed supports and resources. Each school will have a unique survey link so that administrators, school counselors, social workers, school psychologists and others can provide support. Navigators will complete the survey during the check-in. See below for directions and information on the Navigator survey.

**MNPS Navigator Check-in Survey**

For ease of access and data collection, we are utilizing a Microsoft Form survey. Each school will have a unique link, so that data can easily be accessed by the school. While talking with the student and family, the Navigator will complete the survey. A separate survey will be completed for each student. Navigators will have access to the previous week’s submission by choosing “Send me an email receipt of my responses” at the end of the survey. See below for a listing of the questions in the survey.

**How to Use the Form During Weekly Check-ins**

- Each week, use your school’s specific Microsoft Form to take notes and record status updates during each student check-in while following the weekly script.

- Make sure you have the MNPS ID (190#) for each student in your cohort because it will be recorded on the Form each time. You will receive each of your students’ ID numbers when you receive their names and contact information.
• Before clicking “Submit”, remember to check the box (“Send me an email receipt of my responses”) to keep a copy of your submission for each student check-in.

6. Connect student and families with resources or other school staff as appropriate:
Navigators are not social workers or school counselors and are not expected to act in these capacities. This handbook provides both an overview of the role and resources. Navigators should connect with other staff at the school if they are unsure of how to support a student or family, or use the Collaborative Referral Form if they have specific concerns about a student.
Identify Needs

Tier 1 needs
- resource list in handbook
- provide information for family to meet need

Immediate needs
- address crisis need immediately
  - stay on the line with the child AND call 911 to do a wellness check
  - complete Collaborative Referral

- The student/family is in immediate crisis and needs assistance from the school immediately. For immediate physical danger call 911 and stay on the line with the child.
  - suspicion of abuse/neglect
  - student reports wanting to harm self or others

Long Term needs
- The student/family may need additional support in social/emotional or behavioral skills (such as anger management, stress management/anxiety, attention, etc.)
  - counseling, mental health needs
  - academic support needs
  - complete Collaborative Referral
  - MTSS-B Team determines tiered intervention need

Build Relationships
- weekly one-on-one check-ins with students
- document points of contact
- supportive/positive connection to school
Connecting with Students

The supportive relationship between a student and Navigator provides a conduit for information and can serve as a foundation of trust and support in the future. As with any interaction with students and families, and any use of student data, privacy and respect for the student and parent are vital. Review policies and procedures regarding FERPA here.

Navigators should attempt to connect with students weekly and report any missed check-ins. If a Navigator is unable to reach a student for two consecutive weeks, he or she should check with the student’s teacher(s) and notify the Lead Navigator at the school.

What to do when a Need or Concern is Identified

Navigators are not intended to serve in the role of school counselor, social worker or school psychologist. Navigators serve as mentors, advisors and advocates for students connecting them to needed resources and supports. If a need is identified, Navigators should complete the collaborative referral form which will access the MTSS and support systems at the school and district. If a need outside of collaborative referral is identified such as technology support or other challenges, Navigators can connect students and families with

- Technology Needs: [https://www.mnps.org/tech-support](https://www.mnps.org/tech-support)
- See pages 23-33 in this handbook for more information

Reminder of Child Abuse and Neglect Policy: The district has put policies in place to ensure the safety of each child in our care. MNPS faculty and staff are mandated by law to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to either the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services and/or the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department. If suspicion of abuse or neglect occurs after MNPS school hours, weekends and/or holidays, please notify and report suspicions to MNPD and request a well-being check be conducted at the child’s/student’s residence.
Preparation for the Start of Weekly Check-Ins:

Principal Communication with Families about Navigator Role

Principals should send out information on the Navigator, so that families and students know what to expect. See sample communication below.

Subject: MNPS Navigators: A Relationship-Based Strategy for Supporting Every Student

Dear ________,

I am writing to share information on an important support MNPS is launching, the MNPS Navigators. The Navigator is a trained school employee who meets regularly with the student and/or family to develop specific plans for students to succeed and thrive through the disruption of the pandemic. From research and experience, we know the importance of relationships for learning. In the midst of unprecedented disruption, relationships are more essential than ever. Each student is unique and needs planned attention to his or her assets and challenges.

Your student’s Navigator who will get to know them individually and act as a guide to develop a plan for success and support. The Navigator will connect students with the necessary academic, social-emotional, and other supports to get back on track. Importantly, the Navigator relationships can be sustained regardless of which format is being used—virtual, hybrid, and in person—and can provide crucial stability if that format changes through the school year due to the pandemic.

Navigators will check-in with students weekly. These brief check-ins will focus on getting to know the student and assessing needs and goals for the year. They also serve as a way for us to assess and respond to any needs and supports needed.

We want every student to be known and held in a culture of care. Your student’s Navigator will be reaching out during the next week. If you do not want your student to join the Navigator support system, you may opt-out during the first check-in.

Navigator Sample Email Prior to First Check-In

Navigators should reach out via email or text to students/families to schedule the first check-in.

Dear _____,

In the next few days, I will be (calling you/connecting via Teams) to check-in on the start of the school year. These are challenging times, and we want to hear how you’re doing and learn more about how to support your family and student during these difficult times. I will be calling from the number XXX-XXX-XXXX. Please let me know what the best time of day is to reach you. [Optional: If you would like to sign up for a specific time, please do so here <<Can use a tool like signupgenius.com to manage this>>.]

In order to stay connected to our students and families throughout the 2020-21 school year, we have created the Navigator role. A great education is built on strong relationships, and the Navigator role is designed to help connect students to what they need to be successful. Each Navigator is a trained school employee who will check in with you/your student every week. If you do not want your student to join the Navigator support system, you may opt-out by letting me know by responding to this message or during our first check-in.
Opt-Out Procedure

During the first check-in, a parent/guardian or a student over 18 may opt-out of the Navigator system by informing the Navigator. The Navigator should share this information with a member of the school staff who can enter the opt-out preference in Infinite Campus.

1. Locate Student Record in Infinite Campus
2. Choose Release Consent Tab
3. The last entry in the Release Consent tab is Navigator Opt out. Choose “Y: Yes” to opt a student out.

   - To see who has opted out, school users can run an ad hoc report in Campus entitled Release Consent Opt Out - Navigator – D.
   - When a student transfers in from another district school, someone should either run the report or look at the student’s tab to make sure they have not been opted out of participation.

Scripts for Weekly Calls

These scripts are a guide, so please adjust to make them appropriate for the student. They are provided to lower the preparation required by the Navigator. Each week there are required questions as we check in on students’ basic needs, well-being and technology support. Other questions are optional, and Navigators are encouraged to customize the script. Remember the goal is to build relationships and connections with our students.

**Week 1 Script: Getting to Know You, Technology Access, Food Needs, Census Information**

- Share your name and role at the school. Explain the Navigator role. Make sure you identify yourself clearly.
  
  My name is ___________________. I will be serving as your Navigator this school year. We want to make sure you have what you need to be successful this year, so I’ll be checking in with you every week to be a point of contact for you, build relationships and connections, ask you questions, answer your questions, and provide other supports. I’m excited to get to know you this year.

- Ask the student to share some information about themselves. Share information about yourself.
• If the student is new to the district or country: Welcome to Nashville. We are so glad you are here. Last spring MNPS closed early in response to COVID. What was your experience like?

Required questions:

• How did the rest of the school year go for you after schools closed this spring?
• How are you feeling about the coming year?
• Is there anything you’re worried about?
• Did you have any trouble joining the virtual learning opportunities last week?
  o Do you have consistent computer access?
  o Do you have reliable internet access?
• Are you receiving information from the school and MNPS? [Note: If family is non-English background, make sure they are receiving information in language needed.]
• [School-based question if needed]: Can you verify your contact information? [Address, home phone, cell phone, email address, etc.] If new contact information is provided, it should be shared so that it can be entered into Infinite Campus.
• Nutrition Check-in: How many meals do you eat a day?
• We deliver meals each day through our bus routes. Do you participate or are you interested in participating in our meal services? Share information below depending on whether your school is CEP or non-CEP.

CEP SCHOOLS

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) was created as part of the USDA’s National School Lunch Program. It allows schools with high eligibility for free and reduced-price lunches to opt in to provide free lunch for all students in the school regardless of income.
Our school provides breakfast and lunch meals at NO COST to you.
You can pick them up at school from 11:30am to 1:00pm each day that schools are in session.
We are also delivering them through our bus routes. Check mnps.org to find a bus stop and time for pickup near you or call the family information center at 615-259-INFO.

NON-CEP SCHOOLS

Breakfast and lunch meals are being offered for our students while we operate virtually.
Breakfast is free for all students. Lunch is free or offered at a reduced price for those in the Free and Reduced Lunch program, otherwise, it is $3.00 per student paid for through the My School Bucks app.
You can apply for the Free and Reduced Lunch program by picking up an application at our school, or going online to mnps.org/nutrition
Meals can be picked up at school from 11:30am to 1:00pm tomorrow or each day that schools are in session.
We are also delivering them through our bus routes. Check mnps.org to find a bus stop and time for pickup near you or call the family information center at 615-259-INFO.

• CENSUS (Share information on the census, if appropriate). It impacts our funding, so please encourage!
  Have you or your family completed the census? The census can be completed online, via phone, or mail in a short time span! In addition, language supports are available by calling the toll-free numbers on the Census paperwork or on the website below.
For children who are not counted in our district, our funding could be impacted for the next ten years! For this reason, it is critical that as many households in Nashville as possible submit the forms. The deadline is the end of September 2020. More information is available on the 2020 Census website at https://2020census.gov/en.

What is the 2020 Census information can be found here https://2020census.gov/en/what-is-2020-census.html. Connexion Americas also has information on the census: https://www.conexionamericas.org/censo2020/

Optional Questions (Feel free to ad-lib or revise the questions below.)

- What are some things you like to do outside of school?
- What subjects do you like best?
- What’s something you’re looking forward to this year?

Week 2: Get to Know You, Housing and Basic Needs

- How are you doing today? [What emoji, word or phrase describes how you are feeling today?]
- Share some other information about yourself (personal likes and dislikes) and ask the student to do the same.

Required Questions:

- What are some of your goals for this year? Why those goals?
- Do you have what you need for learning at home? [internet, computer, materials, supplies]
- The following questions are about housing. They are to make sure you and your family are connected to the supports you need. This information will not to be used for any other purpose and won’t be shared outside of MNPS.
  - Can you tell me about the place where you live?
  - Is that a: House or Apartment? Hotel? Shelter?
  - Is that a place where just your family lives or do you live with other people?

Note to Navigator: Based on these responses proceed as follows:
- If the student reports that they live in a hotel or shelter, email that information along with their name, ID number and school name to [email address].
- If the student reports that they live with people other than their family, email that information along with their name, ID number and school name to [email address].
- If it sounds like someone has an urgent housing need, please complete the collaborative referral.

Week 3: Academic Check-in.

- How are you today?
  - What is a song title that describes how you feel in this moment?
- Continue to build a relationship by sharing more about you and asking to learn more about the student.
  - Since you last met, share one thing you did that you were proud of.
  - Since you last met, share one thing that challenged you and how you overcame it.

Required Questions:

- What is the typical routine for you on a school day?
- Where do you do your schoolwork? Is it quiet?
• Do you have the materials you need to complete your schoolwork?
• Discuss with student/family setting up the workspace at home.
• See Resources on pp.
• Follow-up on any questions from last check-in and noted in survey.

Navigator Scripts, Weeks 4-6- Updated 9/8/2020

Notes to Navigators:

Thank you for all your hard work as a Navigator. It is making such a big difference for students and families and is foundational to supporting our students’ learning. See below for the next set of scripts. You have worked hard to build relationships with students through check-ins, and we encourage you to use the scripts below as guides, tailoring them to the student. The information below includes time sensitive information to share with students, as well as outlines for check-ins.

More General Resources:

Tips:
1. Check-in or follow-up on key areas of need noted in previous check-ins. Some students and families are facing changing circumstances, so it is important to ask about areas of need in case circumstances have changed and a need is emerging.
2. Check in on academic supports and progress. Support students in goal setting and staying on track.
3. Provide space for the student to ask questions and share about themselves. As you are comfortable, share about yourself. The most supportive relationships are built on reciprocal communication.
4. Use the survey to record notes to track check-ins, noting areas of follow-up.
5. Don’t forget to click the box at the end of the survey to make sure you receive a copy of survey submissions for your records.
6. If you are unable to reach a student for two consecutive check-ins, make sure to inform the Navigator Leadership team at your school.

Phrases from CASEL to draw upon as needed:
• Probe: “Tell me more about that.” “What does that look like?” “I want to make sure I understand what you’re saying. Can you explain a little more?”
• Communicate care and a calm emotional state: “Your teachers care a lot about your success.” “Your teachers all want to make sure you’re getting your needs met.”
• Validate emotions: “That must be so difficult. I see you and I’m here for you.” “I can only imagine how much that impacts you.”
• Stay solution-oriented: “It sounds like a lot has been happening that is out of your control, and that sounds really frustrating. What are some things you do have control over – something small you can do to start to make things better?”
• Wind down the conversation: “You’ve given me some things to think about. I’m going to take some time to process what you shared, and we’ll make some time to talk again in a few days.”
Please share the items below with all students ASAP:

**New Resource for Technology Support (through September 18):**
There are six Outdoor Tech Help Centers located throughout the district that provide in-person technical support for students and families. Support is available 9:00am to 3:00pm at each site through September 18 and includes device (computer and hotspot) and software/on-line learning support. For more information, go to: [https://www.mnps.org/tech-support](https://www.mnps.org/tech-support)

**For inclusion in check-ins occurring 9/8-9/15:**
Your parent or guardian should have received an email called “Family Decision Survey.” This is an important survey that requires a response by September 15. It asks about the option of continuing to learn at home versus returning to in-person learning at school. Please ask your parent or guardian to complete, and if they need support, reach out to_____________. [Note: Navigators should not advise students, parents or guardians about the choice. Instead, refer them to the FAQ documents and other information on the website that includes detailed information about in-person vs. virtual options.]

**Expanded Meal Distribution:**
No-cost breakfast and lunch are available to all students via grab/go and bus drop off locations. The schedule is changing to a Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule. On Monday and Wednesday, students will receive two days of meals (breakfast and lunch for two days). On Friday they will get three days of meals to include the weekend.

**Week 4 Check-In**

- We miss you at [school name]. What or who are you missing? [Share your own answer, too!]
- Has anything changed since we talked last week?
- What is one thing you wish you had help with right now?
- Did you have any trouble joining the virtual learning opportunities last week?
  - Do you have consistent computer access?
  - Do you have reliable internet access?
- What kinds of things do you do when you aren’t doing schoolwork or in class?
- What is something you’d like to learn or do outside of school?
- Share information on the launch of 2020 Virtual Afterschool Clubs:
  - Metro Schools will launch our 2020 Virtual Afterschool Clubs on September 8, 2020. The Virtual Afterschool Clubs are designed to allow students to continue to engage, discover, and connect in out of school time. Clubs are available for all students in Grades PK-12 every Monday-Thursday. To learn more or join a club, visit our website at [https://www.mnps.org/virtual-afterschool](https://www.mnps.org/virtual-afterschool).

**Week 5 Check-In**

- Remember to follow-up on any items from previous check-ins. Refer to the Navigator survey for support.
- If your mood were the weather, what would it be?
For example, if you’re angry it could be a thunderstorm, or if you’re happy it could be sunny. Give them a chance to think, then share their mood. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their feelings, or not. Share your own answer.

- Share a picture of something that inspires you to do/be better each day. Explain why you chose that picture. It may a picture of your family, a place you love to go to think, a loved pet, or something you are hoping to achieve in the future.
- What concerns do you have that might limit your ability to engage in learning activities over the next few weeks (e.g. responsibility for taking care of a sick family member, needing to share computer access with others in your house, etc.)? What can you do to be proactive in handling the situation as best as you can? Is there someone you will need to ask for help?

**Week 6 Check-In**

- Remember to follow-up on any items from previous check-ins. Refer to the Navigator survey for support.
- Think of your “high and low” for the day. A “high” is the best thing that you experienced during the day, and the low is the worst thing that you experienced, or a challenge you had during today.
  - [Give them a chance to think, then share. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their feelings, or not. When they are sharing their response to a challenge they faced, ask them to think through how they solved that problem, or how they will solve it next time. As you are comfortable, share your own answer.]
- As you reflect on your day (highs and lows), think about the people who were part of what you experienced today. Relationships matter in school. I imagine that almost everyone can recall a positive relationship with a teacher, coach, or mentor. Take a moment to picture that significant adult, someone who made a positive impact in your life, someone who inspired you to learn or reach farther than you thought possible. Take a few minutes to share who that person was and share what they did to motivate you.

**Navigator Scripts, Weeks 7-10 (updated 10/16/20)**

**Notes to Navigators:**

Thank you for all your hard work as a Navigator. It is making such a big difference for students and families and is foundational to supporting our students’ learning. See below for the next set of scripts. You have worked hard to build relationships with students through check-ins, and we encourage you to use the scripts below as guides, tailoring them to you and the student. The information below includes time sensitive information to share with students, as well as outlines for check-ins. There are some items specific to high school, as well.

**Update to Check-in Schedule:**

If a student has a weekly check-in and no needs or supports are identified by the Navigator, then the following week’s check-in may be skipped. This means that students with regular check-ins and with no identified needs or supports will receive Navigator check-ins every other week.
Return to In-Person:
We are excited to welcome some of our learners back to the building. Check-ins should continue for both in-person and virtual students. See below for some guidance on the transition to in-person. Need more support? Reach out to NavigatorSupport@mnps.org.

• **Do Navigators continue to use the Microsoft survey form for students they see in person?**
  o Yes- unless the school has developed another system designed to meet their needs. The form and associated Power BI dashboard allow central office to offer support and follow-up on identified needs. They are also an easy way for principals and the school-level Navigator leadership team to monitor check-ins, needs, etc. In addition, the follow-up system for collaborative referrals the central office team has developed will provide an extra layer of support for students and schools.

• **Can we change a student’s Navigator with the shift to in-person?**
  o We encourage you to maintain the Navigator-student match if possible, to continue to build on the established relationship. If shifts are necessary, a student’s initially assigned and new Navigators should connect to discuss the student and any identified needs so that seamless support is provided.

• **Can check-ins still happen via phone or Teams even if a student is in person?**
  o Yes! Check-ins can still happen via phone/Teams even if a student is in person. We encourage schools to keep the Navigator-student match consistent if at all possible. Navigator is built on strong relationships, so if shifts are necessary, the initially assigned and new Navigators should connect to discuss the student and any identified needs so that seamless support is provided.

• **Do we need to do weekly family calls to in-person students?**
  o Navigator check-ins are with students, but understandably families are involved especially for our youngest learners. This is up to the school. As we all know, it is important to keep in close contact with and engage families.

• **What are the considerations for Navigators and contact tracing for in-person learners?**
  o We are all working to think through systems of support and management during the pandemic. One consideration is contact tracing and the need to record and track in-person contact between students and staff. If Navigators are meeting in-person with students for check-ins, then tracking these interactions is needed in case a student or Navigator should test positive. In typical situations, it would be obvious that a student came into contact with their classmates and their homeroom teacher, but others like Navigators, school counselors, social workers, etc. could be in close contact with a student in a way that typically would not be recorded every day. Maintaining a log will support contact tracing and the health and safety of students and staff.

**Notes to Navigator Leadership Team:**

**Data Management and Support**
Each school-level Navigator Leadership Team now has access to a PowerBi dashboard that summarizes Navigator data for their school collected through the Microsoft form link. All principals, all Assistant Principals, all Counselors, and all Psychologists have access to the dashboard. See the directions below for support in accessing. Schools can request access for additional users, but these should be limited to Navigator leadership at the school since the dashboard includes data for all check-ins logged at the school. To request an additional user for the dashboard, reach out to NavigatorSupport@mnps.org

See below for information on how to access the PowerBi dashboard associated with the form:

1. Log in to Power Bi with your Office 365 account. The dashboard for your school can be accessed through the “Shared with me” tab on the left side in Power Bi.
2. If you want to see data for all check-ins, set “Survey Date” filter to show all visits recorded instead of just the last 1 week.

3. If you want to access student-level data, click to view student level data in filter mode (at the bottom of the screen).

- Can you export an Excel file from the PowerBI report, and if so, how? The button for "export" is currently "grayed out" and unclickable.
  - No, currently there is not the ability to download or export the dataset underlying the Power BI report. An Excel version of the school’s Navigator data is available by clicking “Open in Excel” on the Responses tab of the admin only link or data entry link.

- How do school teams get access to the "additional notes" section? This doesn't appear to be on Power BI. Is it just in the principal's "responses" link?
  - Yes, the best option to view these all at once would be to click “Open in Excel” on the Responses tab. Power BI is not very conducive to visualizing qualitative/open text data, so you’re correct that these responses won’t show up on Power BI.

More General Resources:

Tips:

1. Check-in or follow-up on key areas of need noted in previous check-ins. Some students and families are facing changing circumstances, so it is important to ask about areas of need in case circumstances have changed and a need is emerging.
2. Check in on academic supports and progress. Support students in goal setting and staying on track.
3. Provide space for the student to ask questions and share about themselves. As you are comfortable, share about yourself. The most supportive relationships are built on reciprocal communication.
4. Use the survey to record notes to track check-ins, noting areas of follow-up.
5. Don’t forget to click the box at the end of the survey to make sure you receive a copy of survey submissions for your records.
6. If you are unable to reach a student for two consecutive check-ins, make sure to inform the Navigator Leadership team at your school.
Phrases from CASEL to draw upon as needed:

- Probe: “Tell me more about that.” “What does that look like?” “I want to make sure I understand what you’re saying. Can you explain a little more?”
- Communicate care and a calm emotional state: “Your teachers care a lot about your success.” “Your teachers all want to make sure you’re getting your needs met.”
- Validate emotions: “That must be so difficult. I see you and I’m here for you.” “I can only imagine how much that impacts you.”
- Stay solution-oriented: “It sounds like a lot has been happening that is out of your control, and that sounds really frustrating. What are some things you do have control over – something small you can do to start to make things better?”
- Wind down the conversation: “You’ve given me some things to think about. I’m going to take some time to process what you shared, and we’ll make some time to talk again in a few days.

Announcement and Information for Students and Families: (added 10/16/20)

Note: Some of the items below are only for certain groups of students. These groups are noted in brackets in the heading for each update. Thank you!

[All Students] Meal Distribution:
Breakfast and lunch will now be delivered between 10 am and 11:15 am at bus stops throughout Davidson County. Route information and times can be found using the map at mnps.org/nutrition or by calling the Family Information Center at 615-259-4636.

Meals at bus stops and schools will be offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for any child 18 and under. Meals will continue to be offered at school locations from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Breakfast is free for all MNPS students. Lunch is also currently free through December 31 through a federal waiver.

[In-Person Students] Question about Returning In Person:
Students and families may have questions about the returning in-person. For more information on what to expect, go here: https://www.mnps.org/blog/2020/10/6/going-back-to-school

[In-Person Students] Student School Attire (SSA) Support:
We are anticipating a need for assistance with standard school attire (SSA) as students return to in-person learning. Community Achieves will leverage internal & external resources to help meet that need. As you learn of student SSA needs, please contact your school counselor and/or social worker who will use this link to make a request for clothing assistance.

[Virtual Students] Technology/Virtual Help Centers Continue:

MNPS continues to provide virtual help centers to support our students and families. Do you need in-person help with your computer or WiFi hotspot? Do you need help logging in to Microsoft Teams or Schoology? Do you have any questions about using the technology for online learning?

To support students who are still learning virtually, MNPS has outdoor virtual learning support centers at four different locations from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

- Glencliff High School, 160 Antioch Pike (Glencliff HS tech support is at the back of the building, off Holbrook Dr., near the tennis courts)
Maplewood High School, 410 Walton Lane
Overton High School, 4820 Franklin Rd
Pearl-Cohn High School, 904 26th Ave N.

Safety Requirements: To keep our staff, students and families safe, everyone in attendance must wear a mask, get their temperature checked and maintain social distance.

Questions? Call the Family Information Center at [phone number] or email [email address].

[High school seniors] Important Information for the Class of 2021:

- TN Promise: The Class of 2021 TN Promise application window closes November 2. TN Promise provides two years of tuition-free attendance at a community or technical college in Tennessee. Tennessee Promise is a last-dollar scholarship, meaning it will cover the cost of tuition and mandatory fees not met by Pell, Hope or the Tennessee Student Assistance Award. The application takes less than 15 minutes, and we encourage all students to apply. Don’t think you’re interested? Apply anyway. Keeping options open is important especially in these uncertain times. It doesn’t cost anything to apply, and it only takes a few minutes. Need help applying- reach out to your school counselor or tnAchieves (https://tnachieves.org/about-us/contact/)

- Financial support for college: Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the main college financial aid application students must complete in order to determine state and federal grant qualification and/or university scholarships.
  - Application window opened 10/1, and students should plan to complete it by 2/1 to maintain TN Promise eligibility.
  - Students and parents will utilize 2019 tax information to complete the application and should do so ASAP as some aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.
  - Need support? The federal financial aid hotline is 1-800-433-3243 or reach out to your school counselor who can connect you with more resources.

- Hope Scholarship- Finish strong!
  - Encourage juniors and seniors to push for at least a 3.0 GPA OR ACT of 21 in order to qualify for the Hope Scholarship. Finish strong for money in your pocket to attend one of Tennessee’s public college and universities or eligible private colleges.
  - FAFSA is also required for eligibility.

General Scripts/Supports for Check-Ins:
For high school seniors, please see the important information above on TN Promise, FAFSA and Hope scholarship eligibility. For virtual and in-person students, see the information on virtual help centers, SSA support and meal availability and delivery.

- Remember to follow-up on any items from previous check-ins. Refer to the Navigator survey for support.
- Has anything changed since we talked last?
- What is one thing you wish you had help with right now?
- Are you returning to school in-person when possible or remaining virtual? How are you feeling about [returning to school or remaining virtual]?
- You just completed 25% (or a big chunk) of the school year. Overall, how do you think you are doing? What goals do you have for the next quarter? What did you do well? Where would you like to improve? What support do you need?
Resources

Collaborative Referral Process:

![Collaborative Referral Form](image-url)
Section 3: Other Relevant Student Information and Supports

1. If items were checked in “Crisis, Safety, Health & Wellness” box, please provide relevant details:

2. Tier 1 supports implemented without consistent success (i.e. proximity, access to Peace Corner, embedded breaks, non-contingent attention, etc.). Please list.

3. Tier 2 or 3 supports (academic or behavior) previously attempted. Please list and attach data.


5. Where does the student do best and where does the student struggle the most?

6. Student strengths/interests-extra-curricular activities.

7. Any known current or previous diagnoses.

### MTSS-B DATA TEAM USE ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic concerns?</th>
<th>Yes □</th>
<th>No □</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If yes, attach grades.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral concerns?</th>
<th>Yes □</th>
<th>No □</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If yes, provide the following information:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total absences: |
| # Office Referrals |
| #ISS/OSS Days: |

### Referral assign to:

- [ ] School Counselor
- [ ] School Social Worker
- [ ] School Psychologist
- [ ] School Nurse
- [ ] Behavior Analyst
- [ ] Centerstone
- [ ] CIS
- [ ] Drug Education Office
- [ ] School Attendance Team
- [ ] STARS
- [ ] Student Health Services
- [ ] Trauma Specialist
- [ ] Vanderbilt
- [ ] Other:

### Assignment date:
Click or tap to enter a date.

- [ ] □ School Counselor
- [ ] □ Behavior Analyst
- [ ] □ Centerstone
- [ ] □ CIS
- [ ] □ Drug Education Office
- [ ] □ School Attendance Team
- [ ] □ STARS
- [ ] □ Student Health Services
- [ ] □ Trauma Specialist
- [ ] □ Vanderbilt
- [ ] □ Other:

- [ ] Email this referral to the assigned staff person and cc: central.intake@mnps.org
- [ ] Document referral on S & I page of Infinite Campus
- [ ] Confirm parent/guardian name and contact # are included at top of form

MNPS Student Services Department  Updated 09.07.2020
Translation Services

Translation services are available for Navigators and/or families: [https://www.mnps.org/request-an-interpreter?rq=translation](https://www.mnps.org/request-an-interpreter?rq=translation)

EL Office: [https://www.mnps.org/english-learners](https://www.mnps.org/english-learners)

The Office of Translation and Interpretation Services should be your first point of contact.

- Reach out to your school’s assigned Parent Outreach Translator. If you do not know if your school has an assigned Parent Outreach Translator, email [email address]
  - Based on the current workload, the translator will determine if they can accommodate the request or if outside resources need to be utilized for this specific request.
- If you do not have an assigned Parent Outreach Translator, please send your request to [email address]. Our team will determine if one of the translators can assist or if outside resources need to be utilized to complete the call.

Outside resources:

- MNPS utilizes an outside resource (vendor) to provide telephonic interpretation when MNPS translation services are not available. The vendor is [vendor name].
- [Vendor name] has a dedicated line for MNPS: [phone number]. Please make sure you know which language(s) is needed, as this is the first question the operator will ask.
- This service costs $/minute. Ensuring that the Office of Translation and Interpretation Services is your first point of contact will minimize the cost to MNPS.

In addition, translated scripts and other materials are available on the Navigator SharePoint site.

Suicidal Ideation Guidance

**MNPS After-Hours Crisis Response Guidance Document**

*What to do during school hours if someone discloses suicidal thoughts or intentions:*

**Act IMMEDIATELY** and **do not notify anyone by email** about a student or adult in crisis, or in danger of harming themselves, as the person you send it to may not read it in time to respond.

MNPS is privileged to have an abundance of support personnel trained to respond and intervene when our own students and adults are in crisis. If you become aware of students or adults who have disclosed suicidal thoughts or intentions during school hours, please do not leave the student/adult alone and immediately notify (by phone or in person) the school counselor, school social worker or school psychologist and your building administrator. MNPS has a Suicide and Self-harming policy in place that includes a specific protocol to address students in crisis (6.415).

**During Virtual Learning,** educators and support personnel should always verify the student’s address and emergency contact information at the beginning of each phone/video call. If a student discloses suicidal thoughts and intentions, please **do not hang up or end the video call with the student**, but request to speak with a parent or guardian. If a parent/guardian is unavailable, please notify the emergency contact provided at the beginning of the call. If a parent/caretaker is not available, then IMMEDIATELY contact 911, share your concerns for the student, ask for a Welfare
Check and provide the address given to you at the beginning of the call/video. Afterwards, notify the school administrator and school counselor/social worker to share all pertinent information related to the incident.

**What to do after school hours if someone discloses suicidal thoughts or intentions:**

Act IMMEDIATELY and do not notify anyone by email about a student or adult in crisis, or in danger of harming themselves, as the person you send it to may not read it in time to respond.

If you become aware that a student or colleague has suicidal ideations after school hours, try to obtain their location/current address, **call 911 IMMEDIATELY**, and utilize Infinite Campus to access the student summary information for contact numbers for a parent/guardian. Afterwards, notify the school administrator and school counselor & social worker to share all pertinent information related to the incident.

For more information about Suicide Awareness and Prevention, please visit the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network.

**What to do after school hours if you suspect abuse or neglect or that a student is in imminent danger:**

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, please contact the local Department of Children Services at 1-877-237-0004.

If you feel a student is in imminent danger, **contact 911 IMMEDIATELY** and request a welfare check on the student. If the student has given you their current address/location, use that information. Otherwise, please look on the Infinite Campus Summary page to obtain it.

For questions and more information regarding MNPS Suicide and Self-harming policy and procedure, please contact [email addresses]


**Connection & Conversation Starters:**

1. What candy bar best describes you?
2. What song always puts you in a good mood?
3. What was the last funny video you watched?
4. If you had more time in your schedule, what would you like to do with it?
5. Who is your oldest friend? Where did you meet them? What qualities do you appreciate in them?

**Referrals and Resources for Handle with Care during COVID**

Information Hotline: Metro Public Health Department COVID-19 Information HOTLINE: *(615) 862-7777*. It is available from 7 AM to 7 PM 7 days a week.

**Victim and Crisis Assistance:**

- Family Safety Center – Call-in or Walk-in services to assist with free and confidential referrals and services from a variety of providers for increasing the safety of victims of domestic and sexual violence, child and elder abuse, and human trafficking (including Order of Protection Assistance, Safety Planning, and Referrals including safe housing options).
  - Located at 610 Murfreesboro Pike for walk-in services (for urgent needs)
  - Call 615-880-1100 for Remote Advocacy from 9am-5pm
  - Email: FSCInfo@jis.nashville.org

**Life Threatening Crisis:** Dial 911
Mental Health Crisis:

- Mobile Crisis line at 615-726-0125
- Crisis Center at 615-244-7444.
- TN Statewide Crisis Hotline at 1-855-274-7471
- Text “TN” to 741741 to reach the Crisis Text Line and to immediately be connected to a trained crisis counselor 24/7. Click this link to learn about the Crisis Text Line.
- Mental Health Cooperative at 615-726-0125
- Middle TN Mental Health Institute (ages 18 and up) at 615-902-7535
- Parthenon Pavilion (ages 13 and up) at 615-342-1450
- Psychiatric Center @ Summit Medical Center (ages 18 and up) at 615-316-4673
- Skyline Madison Campus (ages 13 and up) at 877-342-1450
- Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital (ages 4 and up) at 615-327-7000
- Youth Villages at 615-250-7200
- Go HERE for free, anonymous, evidence-based screenings for anxiety, depression, trauma, etc. Parents can take a screening to determine if their children are showing symptoms of depression or anxiety. The back-end of the screenings provides local resources and do-it-yourself exercises to help.
- Helpful resources from Mental Health America: https://mhanational.org/mental-health-month. It includes some COVID-19 bonus materials.

If you, or someone you know, are experiencing thoughts of suicide, please know that you are not alone and contact:

- The Suicide Prevention Lifeline number is 800-273-TALK (8255). If preferred, you can go to the website and participate in a chat feature.

What to do if you are on the call with a student that expresses suicidal ideation (we will not be performing the suicide screener via teleconferencing):

1. While on the phone with the student request to speak with a parent/guardian/adult.
2. Contact the parent/guardian to inform them of the crises and share community resources to obtain support and/or walk them through the process.
3. If the student/situation presents imminent danger, contact 911 immediately.
4. If the student/situation does not present as imminent, but the student had disclosed a plan, contact Mobile Crisis at 615-726-0125.

Mobile Crisis is fully operational:

The 24/7 Crisis Triage Phone Line (615-726-0125) is available to triage situations and offer consultation.

- The 24/7 Youth Walk In Center at 275 Cumberland Bend Suite 237 is open for face to face crisis evaluations.
- The Youth Crisis Team is still able to do face to face community calls when needed.
- The Youth Crisis Team is completing crisis assessments at ER’s via telehealth.

Child Abuse:

- Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee
- Parent Helpline: 1-800-CHILDREN
• Domestic Violence Helpline: 1-800-356-6767
• TN Child Abuse Hotline: 877-237-0004
  o Online Referrals: https://apps.tn.gov/carat/
• YWCA Nashville
  o https://www.ywcanashville.com/
  o Crisis Line: 1-800-334-4628
  o Text Line: 615-983-5170

Addiction:

• The Tennessee REDLINE, 800-889-9789, is a toll-free information and referral line open 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, providing accurate, up-to-date alcohol, drug, problem gambling, and other addiction information and referrals to all citizens of Tennessee at their request. The Redline provides referrals for Co-Occurring Alcohol and Drug disorders that arise along with Mental Health disorders. Treatment and other Suicide program referrals are made on the REDLINE. Callers are provided with at least 3 referral sources when possible. The REDLINE staff does not provide therapy or counseling with the caller or substance abuser but gives them the information to put them in touch with someone who will provide a diagnosis, prognosis or assessment of the mental or physical health of the substance user/abuser. The REDLINE strives to provide the caller with specific referrals based on their stated needs.

Food Assistance:

• MNPS Family Food box distribution sites when MNPS is operating virtually.
• Every Wednesday (while supplies last)
  • Antioch High School 12:00 pm
  • Glenciff High 12:00 pm
  • Haywood 11:30 am
  • Hillwood 10:30 am
  • JE Moss 11:00 am
  • McGavock 11:00 am
• Every Thursday (while supplies last)
  • Pearl–Cohn/Westwood Baptist Church 4:00 pm.
• To find out about bus routes that will have meals for students click here. You will also find info about Supply Kits and Book delivery on the link.
• Click the following link https://www.onegenaway.com/ to see Davidson County Info for drive thru food distribution: April 18, 24 & 25th
• Second Harvest Food Bank Locations (please call these locations first to ensure their availability):
  o East Nashville Co-Op 3115 Gallatin Pike 615-540-0122 Mon/Wed/Thurs 10am-2:45pm; Tues 12-4:45pm; Debbie Guiley
    ▪ Salvation Army Magness Potter Center 611 Stockell Street 615-242-0411 ext. 225 Monday-Thursday 1-4pm; Darrell Short
    ▪ Olivet Missionary Baptist Church 144 Ewing Drive 615-227-8100 Wednesday 3-6pm; Thursday 10am-1pm; Linda Armstrong / Yvonne Joyce
    ▪ St. Philip’s Episcopal Church 85 Fairway Drive 615-788-1849 Monday 9-11am; Tues & Thurs 4:30-5:30pm; Pam Foster / Linda Grace
    ▪ Christian Cooperative Ministry 201 Madison Street 615-868-6865 Monday & Wednesday 9am (Last appt 12:15); Tuesday & Thursday 10am (Last appt 12:15); Joy Beach
    ▪ Inspritus (formerly St. Paul’s) 1628 Rosa L Parks Blvd 615-838-5550 Monday–Friday 8:30-11am (closed Thursday); Christie Farrar
- **Martha O Bryan Center** 711 South 7th Street 615-254-1791 Monday-Thursday 11am-2pm; Friday 2-5pm; **Jensen Simons**
- **Hamilton United Methodist Church** 3105 Hamilton Church Road  *(Corner of Hamilton Church & Murfreesboro Rd)* 615-361-7210 Saturday 9am-12:30pm; **Ellen Myrick / Bill James**
- **Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle TN:** [https://www.secondharvestmidtn.org/get-help/](https://www.secondharvestmidtn.org/get-help/)
- **TN Food Pantries** [https://www.foodpantries.org/st/tennessee](https://www.foodpantries.org/st/tennessee)

**Financial Assistance:**

- [Tennessee Justice Center’s website](https://www.tennesseefamilylaw.org) (scroll to the bottom for resources)
- Emergency cash assistance funded by TANF (in addition to unemployment benefits) for families impacted by COVID-19: Apply online at [https://tdhs.service-now.com/relief?id=relief_registration](https://tdhs.service-now.com/relief?id=relief_registration) (call special hotline to check status: 1-833-496-0661)
  - Two monthly cash payments with cash benefit levels at $500 for a household of 1-2 persons; $750 for a household of 3-4 persons; $1000 for a household of 5 or more persons

**Disaster Helpline:**

- The SAMHSA-sponsored Helpline offers counseling to those affected by human-caused and natural disasters. If you or someone you know has been affected by a disaster and needs immediate assistance, please call this toll-free number for information, support, and counseling. You will be connected to the nearest crisis center.
  - 800-985-5990 or Text **TN** or **TalkWithUs** to 66746
  - TTY for Deaf/Hearing Impaired: 800-846-8517

**Health Care:**

- The “My Health Care Home” website directs Middle Tennesseans to their nearest charitable clinic (i.e., Matthew Walker, Neighborhood Health, Neighborhood Health, etc.). It includes prescription discounts, screenings, and more information at [www.myhchTN.org](http://www.myhchTN.org).

**Parenting Support:**

- [The Family Center](https://www.thesafecenter.org)
- Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee
- [Tennessee Resources for Single Mothers](https://singlemothersgrants.org/single-mothers-assistance-in-tennessee/)

**Immigrant Families:**

Conexion Americas: [https://www.conexionamericas.org/](https://www.conexionamericas.org/)
Tennessee Immigrant Refugee Rights Coalition: [https://www.tnimmigrant.org/](https://www.tnimmigrant.org/)
Accessing Shelter Services in Davidson County

Are you in a Housing Crisis?
A housing crisis is anything that makes it hard for you to get housing or stay housed.

If you think you might be in a housing crisis, but you're not sure, call or walk in to one of the agencies listed on this flyer.

What is Coordinated Entry?
Coordinated Entry makes it easier for you to find housing and support services. By having your information in Coordinated Entry, service providers will know you're in a housing crisis.

Coordinated Entry is not a housing program. Having your information in Coordinated Entry does not guarantee housing or services, but it can make the process quicker and easier.

How do you get connected to Coordinated Entry?
Walk into: Metro Social Services
800 2nd Ave. N. Nashville, TN 37210
or call: (615) 862-6444

Do you need Emergency Shelter tonight?
The only walk-in emergency shelter in Nashville Davidson Co. for women and minor children is Nashville Rescue Mission's Women's Campus.
Location: 1716 Rosa L. Parks Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37208
Phone: (615) 312-1574

Family Shelter available through Coordinated Entry
Salvation Army Family Shelter and Safe Haven Family Shelter only take referrals from a wait list. To get on the wait list, a family needs to connect to Coordinated Entry.

Domestic Violence Resources
If you are fleeing Domestic Violence
Walk Into: The Family Safety Center
Location: 610 Murfreesboro Pike
Nashville, TN 37210
Phone: (615) 955-0620

Domestic Violence Emergency Shelters
YWCA 24/7 Crisis Line:
1-800-334-4628 or TEXT 615-983-5170
Morning Star Sanctuary 24/7 Crisis Line:
615-860-0003

Nashville/Davidson County Coordinated Entry
Supporting Learning at Home

Tips for Families for Supporting their Student’s Emotional Wellness
(from MNPS Family and Community Engagement)

Elementary Age

- Encourage children to communicate their feelings and emotions. Consider talking while on walks, creating a journal to pass notes back and forth, or even have them record videos or send texts on your phone.
- Try and establish a regular routine and schedule at home. Kids are reassured by structure and predictability.
- Give kids choices, as much as possible. You may not be able to visit friends or go to the movies, but you can pick which game to play or which show to watch.
- Help kids keep in touch with friends and family members by phone, e-mail, FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, Duo, Facebook, Instagram, etc.
- If kids have questions about COVID-19 or about why you’re sheltering in place, answer them honestly, using words and concepts they can understand.

Peace Corners are used in many MNPS classrooms. Consider having your child help you create one at home for times when they need help handling big feelings.
- Peace Corners are spaces that help children feel safe and help them feel more in control. Peace Corners are not the same things as time out and should not be used for discipline.
- Have your child help you create a list of things that can help them when they are having a hard time.
- Work together to put those items in the Peace Corner and have your child practice using those tools when they are not upset.
- Some items to consider might be:
  - A stuffed animal to hug
  - A journal and pencil to write out feelings
  - A pinwheel to spin by blowing deep calming breaths
  - Lotion with a calming scent to relax
  - A stress ball or pillow to squeeze to let out anger
  - Coloring pages and crayons to help refocus

Middle & High School Age

- Listen and keep lines of communication open when teens want to talk.
• Check in regularly by asking your teen how they are feeling. Even if they don’t open up in that moment these are good reminders to them that you care and will listen when they are ready.

• Avoid making comments that minimize their feelings. “Teen problems” are real to them, because they are their problems.

• Be empathetic. The teen years are a time when connection with friends is very important. Validate your child’s feelings regarding missed parties, celebrations, and regular hangouts.

• Encourage teens to choose something new to learn about. It could be a career choice, hobby, college they want to look into, or a game/craft.

• Often teens like to hibernate in their rooms. Encourage them to find ways to stay active during this time. Being active impacts not only physical health but also mood and overall wellness. You might suggest going for walks, finding workouts on Youtube, or even trying out a few TikTok dances.

Tips for Creating Space at Home for Learning

During these uncertain times, one of our greatest adjustments is supporting our children in distance learning.

One thing that can be helpful is to create a designated space for schoolwork to happen.

This space does not have to look like the classroom and it does not have to be magazine perfect.

Mostly, you want to create a space for your child to feel comfortable, be able to focus, and have access to materials they need to use.

Tips for Creating Space:

• Ask your child for input

• Think about tech— is it WiFi accessible? Is there an outlet nearby?

• Lighting— a lamp, a string of twinkle lights? Fun and function!

• Location— consider your child’s age and the traffic in the area

• Personalize it– try adding pictures or displaying your child's work

• If outside is an option– use it as an alternative school space

• Be flexible-the space you create may need to be adjusted

• These are unusual times. We can all only do our best.

Creating your at-home learning space together can be fun and can increase your child’s use of the area.
• Ask your child to write down the things that are important to them for the space. Read the list together. Use it to plan the space.

• Does your child prefer to share space with other children in the home or work alone? Which of these works best for the household?

• Can different areas be used at different times? One area for each subject?

• Think together about ways to keep technology safe from spills or falls.

• Is outside an option for physical activity and/or working on assignments?