



## RHES School Counseling Newsletter Summer 2020

Dear Red Hill Families,

Summer break this year represents yet another big change for students, as they adjust to new routines without the same level of Check and Connect and virtual learning. It may take time to settle into summer vacation, and your child may need extra support during the transition.

See the attached handout, *Tips for Caregivers in Uncertain Times* for some ideas about how to help your child continue to adjust to the pandemic and navigate the transition to summer. In addition, we have provided a list of local mental health providers who are currently accepting telehealth appointments.

Summer also provides many fun opportunities to build social emotional skills! We've included several ideas for incorporating activities, books, TV, and movies this summer in ways that promote social emotional learning (SEL).

We have loved being a part of your children's lives this year, and we look forward to continuing to support them next school year.

Sincerely,

Ari Zlotnick "Ms. Z"  
School Counselor

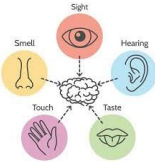


Karen Ferrer  
School Psychologist

Karen Cox  
Family Support Worker

We have many mental health providers in our area who are currently offering telehealth services. These services range from individual counseling for children, teens, and families to case management and crisis services. Anyone in the community is eligible for these services. Following is a list of easily accessible services to support student and family mental health needs. Please note that these providers are not specifically being endorsed by RHES Counseling staff.

- **Ready Kids:** 24 hour teen crisis hotline number 434-972-7233
- **UVA Psychiatry:**  
<https://uvahealth.com/locations/profile/child-and-family-psychiatry>  
434-243-6950
- **South Central Counseling:** [www.southcentralcounselinggroup.com](http://www.southcentralcounselinggroup.com)
- **Region X:** [www.regionten.org](http://www.regionten.org) 434-972-1800
- **National Counseling Group:** <https://www.ncgcommunity.com/>  
833-698-4357

## Social Emotional Activity Choice Board

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Grounding</b></p> <p>Use your 5 Senses to find 5 things that you see, 4 things that you hear, 3 things that you feel, 2 things that you smell, and 1 thing that you taste.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exercise</b></p> <p>Try some Yoga poses Go for a walk with your family Ride a bike Play a sport Make your own obstacle course Jump rope Find something fun to do!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Practice Gratitude</b></p> <p>Take some time to pause and think about what you are grateful for. It can be something big or something small. Write down and draw a picture of 5 things you are grateful for. When you wake up in the morning or before you go to bed, name at least one thing that you are grateful for.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Deep Breathing</b></p> <p>Lazy 8 Breathing -Draw an 8 on a piece of paper and trace it with your finger. As you trace the 8 breathe in and breath out Mindful Breathing- Take a deep breath in while counting to 3. Slowly breathe out while counting to 5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Journaling</b></p> <p>Journaling is a great way to share your feelings and thoughts. Each day take 10 to 15 minutes to write in a journal. You can write about your day, your feelings, write about your 5 senses, friends, family, dreams, etc. It is your time to create and write about what you want to, Enjoy!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Coloring</b></p> <p>Grab a coloring book and begin coloring. Or draw your own picture and color it in!</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Do A Puzzle</b></p> <p>If you have a puzzle at home, take it out and work on it by yourself or with your family. If you don't have a puzzle at home- draw a picture, cut it up, and make your own!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Create a calming area in your house</b></p> <p>Find a spot in your house that makes you happy. Add a comfy pillow, stuffed animals, fun activities, coloring sheets, music, etc. This can be an area you can relax in when you feel you need some time to yourself. Maybe you and your family can work together to add items that will help.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Listen to Music</b></p> <p>Find a song that relaxes you, close your eyes, and listen. Or play your favorite song, sing along, and dance!</p> 



## Tips for Caregivers in Uncertain Times

- 1. Reassure your children that your family is your top priority.** Say something like “I’m your parent, it’s my job to keep you safe and we are doing everything we can.”
- 2. Maintain everyday family routines.** Keep to usual rising times, mealtimes, and bedtimes. Every family is different. Involve children in working out any new routine.
- 3. Involve children in planning activities.** Busy children are less likely to be bored and misbehave. With your child, help create a list of 20 activities that will keep them busy (other than screen time).
- 4. Take notice of behavior you like.** Think about the values, skills, and behaviors you wish to encourage in your children at this very difficult time. There are many opportunities to teach your children important life skills (e.g., being caring, helpful, cooperative, getting along with siblings, taking turns). Use plenty of praise and positive attention to encourage behavior you like. Let them know you are pleased by telling them what they have just done (“That’s a lovely card you have written to your grandmother. That’s so kind. She will really appreciate that.”)
- 5. Make sure your child knows you are ready to talk.** Children need to be able to talk to parents about their concerns and have their questions answered. When a child wants to talk about their feelings, stop what you are doing and listen carefully. Avoid telling your child how they should feel (“That’s silly. You shouldn’t be scared about that.”) Let children know it is OK to be worried. Talking or drawing can help children get in touch with their feelings and figure out what they are anxious about.
- 6. Be truthful in answering children’s questions.** Find out what they know about the issue before answering. Keep answers simple. Get information from trusted sources (e.g., official government websites) rather than social media.
- 7. Have a family plan of action.** Involve children in preparing the plan. As situations can change quickly (e.g., new travel restrictions, school closures), update the plan as needed.
- 8. Help children learn to tolerate more uncertainty.** The COVID-19 crisis creates uncertainty for everyone. Parents need to find a way to accept uncertainty and, through your actions and words show this acceptance to your children. It’s OK to say, “I don’t know; let’s find out what we can.” Big changes to children’s lives can be hard and are often scary. They can also create opportunities for learning new skills.
- 9. Take care of yourself the best you can.** Deal with your own distress by taking actions that give you a better sense of personal control. Stress management skills such as mindfulness and/or deep breathing can help reduce stress. . Avoid behavior that might increase your stress. For example, while it is helpful to keep informed about COVID-19, constant checking on your screens can increase stress.
- 10. Reach out and connect with loved ones.** Make greater use of phones, online communication tools and social media to keep in touch with family, friends, and neighbors. Help others in need who are going through a tough time and are more vulnerable (e.g., parents/caregivers with disabilities, older people).

# Developing SEL Skills Through Media and Literature

Adapted from The Responsive Counselor and ASCA

## TV Shows and Movies that Encourage SEL

*Sesame Street, Daniel Tiger, Arthur, Llama Llama, Inside Out, Zootopia, Ralph Breaks the Internet, Frozen 2*

Questions to ask during and after viewing:

- What were some of the choices the characters made?
- How do the characters feel? How can you tell what their feelings are?
- Which characters were friends? How did they show friendship to each other?
- Did any of the characters get really upset? What did they do to take care of or cope with their feelings?
- What would you do differently if you were one of the characters?
- Did the characters change at all? How? Why do you think the change happened?

## Books About Feelings (Available at JMRL and/or Youtube)

The Color Monster by Anna Llenas, In My Heart by Jo Witek, Glad Monster, Sad Monster by Ed Emberley, My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Questions to ask during and after reading:

- Did you know that there are no bad feelings? It's true! As long as we have safe and respectful ways to handle all of our feelings, no feelings are bad feelings!
- When you feel sad/mad/angry/frustrated, what can you do to help your body feel better?
- How are you feeling now?
- What makes you feel sad/mad/happy/frustrated/excited/proud/angry/worried/brave/joyful/etc.?

## Books About Kindness (Available at JMRL and/or Youtube)

Be Kind by Pat Zietlow Miller, We're All Wonders by R.J. Palacio, Kindness is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler by Margery Cuyler, Have You Filled a Bucket Today? By Carol McCloud

Questions to ask during and after reading:

- What is a bucket filler? What is a bucket dipper?
- What can you do to fill someone's bucket at school? At home? At the grocery store? At the park? Right now?
- How do you feel when you fill someone's bucket? How do you feel when someone fills your bucket?
- What does kindness look like? Sound like? Feel like?
- Why is kindness important?
- Can you think of someone who is really kind? What stands out about their kindness?




## Resources Provided by the SJC

The UVA Sheila C. Johnson Center for Clinical Services (SJC) is offering a wide variety of educational and mental health assessments and interventions via tele-services for safety.

- **Enhanced parent training to address difficult homeschooling behaviors:** Time-tested and scientifically valid parenting techniques to help children focus, listen, and stay on task. For more information click above or contact Dr. Matthew Yoder directly: [msy7m@virginia.edu](mailto:msy7m@virginia.edu)
- **Targeted speech and language package to continue or bridge IEP-based treatment plans:** Licensed experts work with existing IEP goals to craft custom interventions and home practice. For more information contact Jaimee Traub, M.S., CCC-SLP: [jrt2t@virginia.edu](mailto:jrt2t@virginia.edu)
- **Literacy Intervention for Elementary and Middle Grade Students:** One-to-one literacy lessons, including phonemic awareness, phonics/spelling, reading fluency, and comprehension instruction. For more information contact Dr. Latisha Hayes: [hayes@virginia.edu](mailto:hayes@virginia.edu)
- **ASD Services: Parenting skills, social skills groups, and sibling groups:** Evidence-based and effective interventions delivered by ASD specialists. For more information contact Dr. Erica Rouch: [eif3u@virginia.edu](mailto:eif3u@virginia.edu)
- **Cognitive behavioral therapies (CBT) for children dealing with anxiety disorders:** OCD, School-, Test-, or Social Anxiety, and Stress, Adjustment, and Traumatic Stress Disorders. For more information contact Dr. Matthew Yoder: [msy7m@virginia.edu](mailto:msy7m@virginia.edu)
- **Child and Infant Hearing Assessments:** Comprehensive hearing tests including Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) and Otoacoustic Emission (OAE) tests. For more information contact Dr. Kristin Roush directly: [kcr9z@virginia.edu](mailto:kcr9z@virginia.edu)

For more information regarding all services or to request appointments, please visit the UVA SJC webpage: <https://curry.virginia.edu/services-outreach/sheila-c-johnson-center> or call (434) 924-7034.



For **Fun Summer Activities**, go to the following website:  
<http://www.covkids-20.com> This website was developed by an 8th grade student in Charlottesville in order to provide fun and educational activities when the world around us is chaotic. It has fun things to do, ideas for activities to bring joy to others, and lots of resources to keep you entertained throughout the summer!