FASP
Florida Association of School Psychologists

COVID-19 Re-Entry Plan

Florida Association of School Psychologists
Mental Health Service Delivery Guidelines for Educators

Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funds for K-12 Schools

Congress passed the authorization of relief funds, specifically for elementary and secondary schools, as an effort to stabilize programming for State Education Agencies (SEAs). The K-12 funding is designated as the Elementary and Secondary Economic Relief (ESSER) grant. There are 12 specified activities that are covered as eligible for ESSER funding, including **mental health services and supports.**

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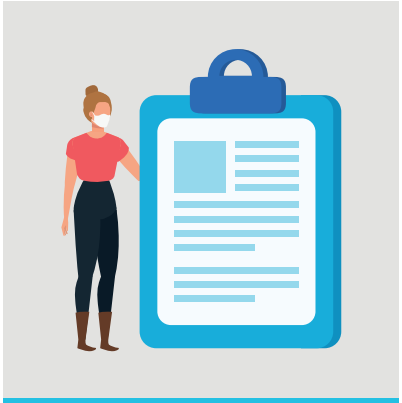
Visit the FASP Crisis Resources Webpage for More Information

Introduction

By the FASP Mental Health Re-entry Task Force



Crisis Preparedness

Prevent and Prepare
Reaffirm
Evaluate Psychological Trauma
Provide Interventions
and
Respond to Mental Health Needs
Examine Effectiveness
Pg 6-11

Equity for Vulnerable Populations

Visit page 16 to learn more about best practices in diversity and inclusion during the pandemic.

"Today, we must meet the social, emotional, and mental health needs of our students, while taking into account all the ways the pandemic may have impacted our school communities."

COVID-19 created a unique challenge for school districts to overcome. Today, we must meet the social, emotional, and mental health needs of our students, while taking into account all the ways the pandemic may have impacted our school communities. Our collective sense of safety, changes in the ways we connect socially, and disruptions to our financial security will take precendent over day to day school operations. Students may be returning to schools after experiencing extended physical isolation, inconsistent routines, loss of extracurricular activities, and possible personal impacts including grief or chronic stress.

Mental Health is an Essential Service

It is essential to take a position that prioritizes the mental health needs of students and district staff when preparing for school re-entry. As the executive order of shelter-in-place steadily gets lifted, school-based post-impact transition plans are paramount. The FASP COVID-19 Mental Health Support Guidelines aim to provide guidance for school districts as they welcome students and staff back in the 20-21 school year.

The Purpose of the Guidelines

The purpose of this resource is to illustrate steps to support teachers, students, and other district staff in alignment with NASP's PREPaRE framework (Brock et al., 2009). We recognize that schooling may not look the same as it was before, but we can return to fostering safe and supportive learning environments for children and families as we always have.

How to Prepare for the Phases

1) Review the guidelines within the scope of your local county health department's protocol.

2) Train personnel in crisis preparedness and / or review district protocol for crisis response.

3) Incorporate the guidelines into other stakeholders' (i.e. related service directors, excrptional student education directors, etc.) plans for returning to school.

Preparing for re-entry can be a fluid, ever changing process, so we encourage measuring outcomes of effectiveness to yield an optimal standard of service delivery.

Promoting Equity for Vulnerable Populations is Paramount

Vulnerable student populations are in critical need of allies and support systems that can eliminate barriers to academic progress. Create strategic opportunities for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse populations to recover from loses upon their return to school.

Additional Services and Tools

Ongoing training and professional development resources are available at the end of the guideline to assist with expanding your district's re-entry toolkit.

Three Phase Re-Entry

Local Education Agencies can prepare to re-open the school year in a similar manner to the community at large- that is, in phases!

Phase 1: Pre-Planning

Involves creating a team, assessing staff needs, planning for family-school enagement, and preparing to deliver support.

Phase 2: Students Return

An intentional focus on facilitating a safe, welcoming return during the initial weeks of school.

Phase 3: Ongoing Monitoring/Training

Steps for sustaining Phase 1 and Phase 2 actions by implementing continuous mental health resources within a multi-tiered approach.

Phase 1: Pre-planning

Promote a prepared performance by planning your staff's response to re-entry.

STEP 1

1. School Psychologists
2. School Social Workers
3. Licensed Professional Counselors

KEY TEAM MEMBERS

CREATE A TEAM

- A school-based transition team including certified and/or licensed mental health professionals such as; school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, and/or licensed mental health counselors should be identified to address the social, emotional, and mental health impact of COVID-19 on students and staff.
- Prior to the return of personnel, schools may wish to consider hosting virtual staff meetings to address emotional needs and safety concerns. Virtual meetings can include tips on all aspects of self-care and provide stress management training. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) information as well as any additional Self-Care training opportunities, if available, can be shared at this time.

STEP 2

1. Universal questionnaire to measure trauma proximity
2. Faculty meetings and ongoing briefings
3. Plan needs-based professional development

CAPACITY BUILDING

PREVENT STAFF BURNOUT

- Provide opportunities for school personnel to complete a voluntary Universal Questionnaire. Principals can review and determine a need for confidential meetings that offer assistance.
- Coordinate ongoing emotional support for school personnel and memorials as needed. Districts should have standard procedures for memorial events if requested.
- Establish plans to hold faculty meetings to disseminate district information, CDC updates, and other pertinent information and finalize action items with staff.
- Plan briefings and COVID-19 updates to dispel rumors and relieve apprehensions at least monthly, or as needed.

Work to Empower Families- Ensure that the district has support available for families to allow for equitable access to education. Surveys may be useful to identify barriers.

Districts will benefit from prioritizing professional development for teachers and school staff that focus on Trauma-Informed Practices and Educator Self-Care.

Topics for Workshops

Workshop Objectives:

- Identifying common signs of traumatic responses and supportive responses (Mental Health First Aid)
- Focusing on teaching and modeling the skill of self-regulation
- Explicit teaching of coping skills and resilience in the classroom
- Focusing on relationship building
- Caring for the caregiver: Self-care strategies for educators

STEP 3

1. Develop referral procedures
2. Facilitate orientation workshops for parents
3. Focus on the emotional impact

FAMILY-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

PLAN FOR OUTREACH

- Develop referral procedures for students identified as needing additional support.
- Assign mental health personel to deliver parent workshops or host meetings.
- Informational meetings with parents should be held either in small groups or virtually.
- Provide district plans for student safety, outline possible rolling school closures, and address signs that their child may be feeling stressed or grieving.

STEP 4

1. Universal screening procedures
2. Plan to target at-risk populations
3. Prepare interventions

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

PREPARE TO DELIVER SUPPORT

- Determine systematic ways to identify students who were at-risk prior to COVID-19 and prepare plans to monitor and/or provide appropriate interventions.
- Create a system for universal screening to identify students in need of intervention or referral to a school or community based mental health professional.
- Provide a notice of universal screening instruments that may be used by the school to triage crisis support. Or, collect universal screening data with a parent-friendly post COVID-19 questionnaire.
- Prepare a list of school and community resources for parents and establish a memorandum of understanding with community agencies if available.
- Plan celebrations for students returning.

Prevent and Prepare

Phase 2: Students Return

Prioritize the physical health & welfare, and perceptions of safety and security for all students.

STEP 1

1. Social re-engagement
2. Facilitate a sense of belonging
3. Celebrate connections

REAFFIRM WELFARE

STUDENT AND STAFF ORIENTATIONS

- Implement student and staff celebrations with a high focus on social re-engagement.
- Establish social and emotional learning opportunities throughout the school day to build resilience and coping skills in the classroom.
- Facilitate a sense of belonging for students. This is especially important for the psychological needs of vulnerable student populations.

STEP 2

1. Reinforce social emotional learning practices
2. Build student and staff morale
3. Protect vulnerable student populations

SCHOOL-WIDE RESILIENCE

CULTIVATE A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Reward student behavior that demonstrates social emotional skill building. Positively reinforce classrooms and rally grade-level teams for adaptability.
- Cultivate a positive school climate with ongoing positive behavior support.
- Prime staff to be alert for signs of bullying, particularly with regards to ethnicities associated with the origin of the virus.
- Centralize school value systems and communicate strong messages that discourage discrimination of marginalized groups.

Social Emotional Strategies Will Be an Instructional Necessity- As students return to school, they will need to relearn expectations. Focusing on self- management and self awareness will...

Tip: Research standardized, norm-referenced trauma symptom rating scales and evaluate the appropriateness of facilitating the assessment(s) at the universal level.

Evaluation Tools

Universal Questionnaire is Available for Reference on Page 11

Evaluate parent, student, and staff needs with a universal questionnaire, created by the Mental Health Re-entry Task Force, that measures proximity of impact.

STEP 3

1. Collect parent and teacher responses
2. Assemble mental health team for review
3. Rank level of need

EVALUATE TRAUMA

ASSESS UNIVERSAL SCREENING DATA

- See Page 11 to adopt recommended universal questionnaire
- Be mindful of emotionally sensitive data and protect confidentiality of responders.
- Compile parent and teacher responses for review by trained professional team.
- Use rating system outlined on questionnaire to rank level of trauma exposure.
- Review results with mental health team and plan to address needs accordingly.

STEP 4

1. Coordinate and assign personnel responsibile
2. Monitor response to referrals
3. Prevent school refusal

TRIAGE SUPPORT

INTERVENE AND MONITOR

- Use school-wide data to coordinate interventions and assign personnel responsible.
- Monitor personnel response to referrals to prevent delays in service delivery for at-risk students.
- Attempt to locate non-returning students to ensure that they are safe and receiving appropriate services.
- Create metrics for effectiveness by designing short range and long range goals for crisis implementation.

Social Emotional Strategies Continued...will be key. Educators must be allowed and encouraged to spend time building community in the classroom.

Reaffirm, Evaluate, and Respond

Phase 3: Ongoing Monitoring

Monitoring specific, measureable, attainable, and realistic goals can guide mental health teams in the direction of effective crisis response.

STEP 1

1. Monitor short range and long range goals
2. Monitor supports
3. Continue building capacity

EFFECTIVE RESOUREFULNESS

EXAMINE EFFECTIVENESS

- Monitor effectiveness by examining student and staff progress towards goals.
- Attain school-wide goals by creating surveys of student, staff, and parent perceptions of well-being and safety.
- Continue to monitor and refer students needing mental health support (i.e. weekly meetings).
- Provide opportunities for faculty and staff to check-in with school-based, district and EAP mental health professionals to address concerns for students, families and self.

STEP 2

1. Disseminate follow-up surveys
2. Develop Trainings
3. Deliver needs-based support

SUSTAINABLE PREPAREDNESS

DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

- Follow-up surveys can assist with evaluating crisis response outcomes. Questions should also address areas of need for professional development, training, or additional supports.
- Districts should develop trainings based upon needs-assessment data and target the social-emotional and mental health of the school community.
- Schedule, announce, and promote training opportunities.
- Evaluate effectiveness of trainings by collecting surveys of learning outcomes.

Measuring Psychological Risk of Trauma

Attain school-wide goals by strategically evaluating student, staff, and parent perceptions of well-being and safety. The following universal questionnaire can be used to prepare for psychological triage:

COVID-19 UNIVERSAL QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to plan for the support of faculty, staff and students following COVID-19, please check all that apply.

Faculty ___ Staff___ Student___ Name_____

	Self	Spouse	Parent/Guardian	Child	Sibling	Family Member	Friend
Diagnosed with COVID-19:							
Hospitalized as a result of COVID-19:							
Economic hardships due to COVID-19:							
Death resulting from COVID19:							
Comments:							

Rate Stress Level Due to COVID-19

Not Stressed ___1 ___2 Moderately Stressful ___3 ___4 Very Stressful ___5

Get Creative!

Secure, remote survey collection can increase response rates.

Screening cards are a critical component of re-entry.

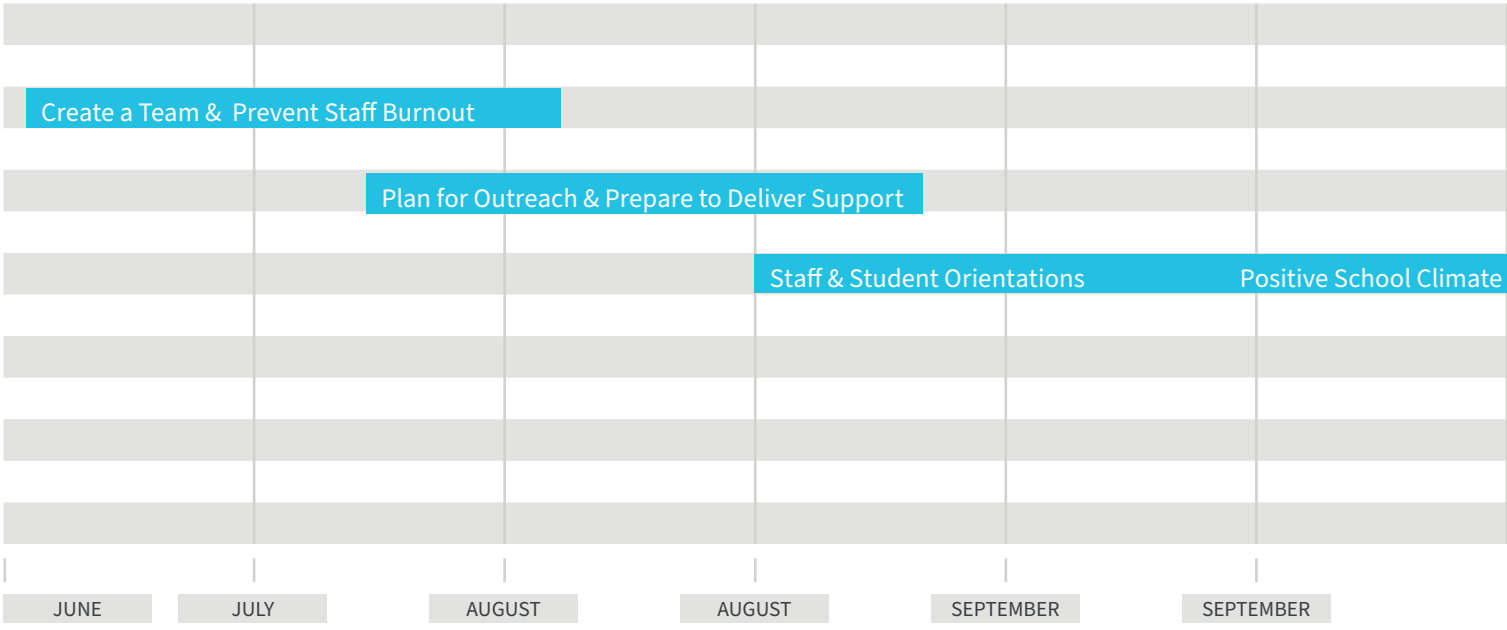
Access the questionnaire as a Google Drive link here: COVID-19 Proximity

Three Phase Timeline

Implementation of the Three Phase Re-entry Plan will require strategic monthly planning to maintain a best standard of care crisis response. This timeline is a projection for school teams and can be modified to fit your district's calendar of operations.

Wondering how to determine if your policies and procedures align with the Practice Model?

Policies and procedures that involve school psychological services can be examined with program evaluation in mind. Review NASP's fundamental considerations here for assistance in designating indicators of impact.



SUMMER PLANNING

Preparing for re-entry with available resources and active personnel.

NASP Domains 1 & 2: Summer planning may involve virtual meetings and remote collaborations amongst your team.

PRE-PLANNING

Collaborative practices before the school year officially begins.

NASP Domains 2 & 7: Staff collaboration and family engagement from the leadership of school psychologists.

STUDENTS RETURN

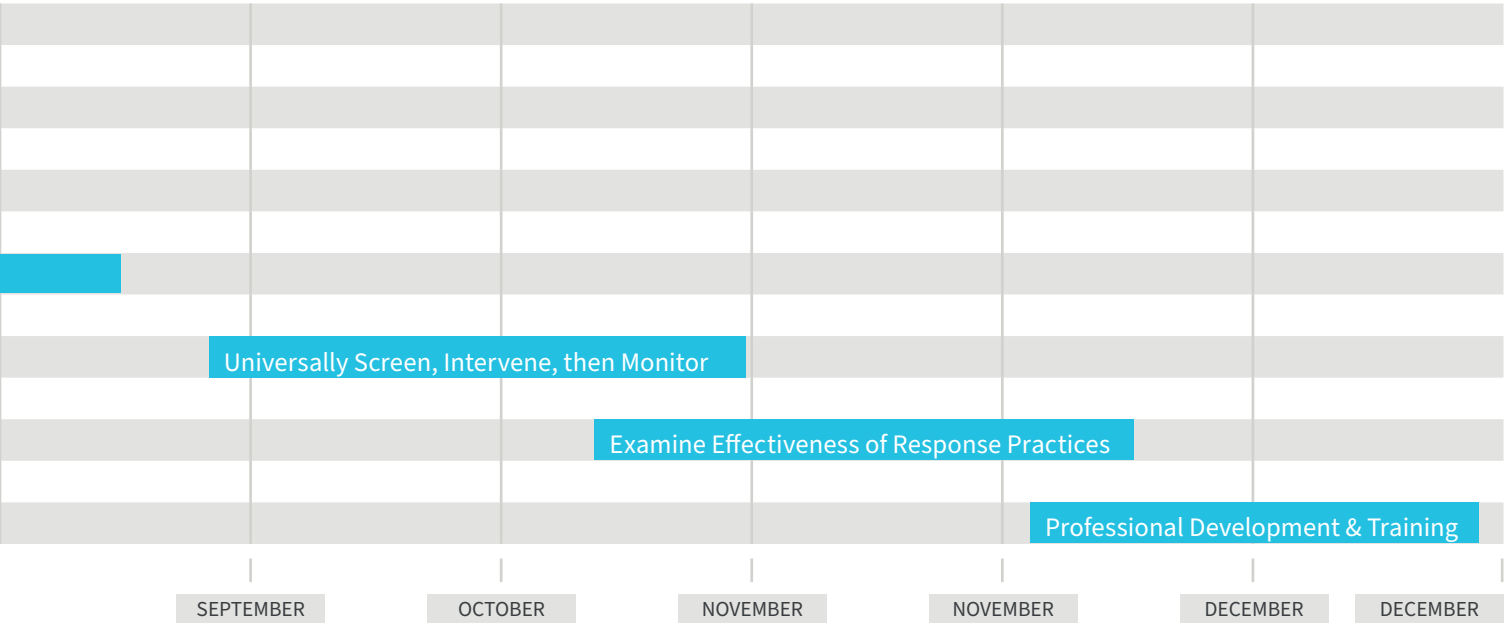
A school-wide re-entry celebration.

NASP Domains 5 & 6: Pre-planning effots will maximize staff morale and promote school safety.

NASP Practice Model

Comprehensive Service Delivery

The Three Phase Timeline is best implemented within the scope of the NASP practice model.



STUDENTS ADJUST

A focus on muti-tiered systems of support for students and staff.

NASP Domains 3, 4, 5 & 6: An emphasis on universal interventions within the PREPaRE framework.

RESPOND TO CRISES

Data-based prevention and intervention practices.

NASP Domains 1 & 6: Preventative messaging may be incorportated within School Psychology Awareness Week.

EVALUATE NEEDS

Evidenced-based practices informed by program evaluation.

NASP Domains 6, 9, & 10: Crisis response workshops, coupled with measuring outcomes of effectiveness.

NASP COVID-19 Resource Center

The National Association of School Psychologists immediately developed guidance and supports in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Here are the highlights:

"Together We Thrive"
-NASP

Updated Virtual Service Delivery Recommendations

The Ask the Experts Webinar Series addresses high demand topics related to remote services. Click the laptop to visit NASP's digital catalog.

Navigate Mental Health Re-entry with NASP's COVID-19 School Adjustment Risk Matrix (C-SARM)

The COVID-19 School Adjustment Risk Matrix (C-SARM) outlines variables for student support services decision-making. The handout captures the following circumstances:

1. Pre COVID-19 exposure experiences at school
2. COVID-19 environment while complying with shelter-in-place.

Inclusion of the matrix into the phases of re-entry is endorsed by the FASP Mental Health Re-entry Task Force.

Discover the NASP handout here.

U.S. Office of Civil Rights Outlines the Facts

An Expansion of Guidance for Educators from FASP

FASP published a live document online with links and resources that are available for educators, students, and families. Click the link above for reference to the following topic areas:

- **Federal & State Guidance**
- **Resources for Virtual Service Delivery**
- **Advocacy**
- **Resources for Parents and Families**
- **Professional Development**
- **Social Emotional and Mental Health Support**

School Officials Are Expected to Avoid Discrimination During School Closures

Students remain protected under Section 504, Title II, and IDEA laws. Learn more here.

4,178

Approximate # of Closed FL Public Schools

2,816,918

Estimated # of Students Ordered to Stay at Home

Strategies for Supporting Vulnerable Populations

As students are welcomed back into school physically, it is important to remember that certain populations may be more vulnerable to the stressors experienced during the COVID crisis. These populations include:

- Anyone who has experienced death or loss
- Anyone who has recovered or has family who has recovered from COVID 19
- Families who have experienced job loss or a disruption to lifestyle
- Families who are food insecure, financially impacted, or experiencing housing instability
- Students whose ethnicity is associated with the origin of the virus
- Students with a history of chronic stress or educational disruptions. In Florida, our students who recently relocated due to Hurricane Irma may be more at risk.

FASP is committed to equitable practices, including equitable discipline and proportionate identification of children with special needs. The following tips can assist district planning in supporting children upon school return:

- **Consider universal screening** - Research indicates that parents will underreport the stress reactions of their children following traumatic events. Often children attempt to hide symptoms or feelings in an attempt to avoid burdening their parents. Universal screening will identify children most at risk and allow for more timely intervention.
- **Be trauma informed**- Some common impacts of trauma include difficulties in concentration, memory issues, organizational issues, impacted social relationships, grief, fear, anger, and reactivity, including aggression. Districts must be prepared with interventions that will support the whole child without pathologizing the behavior.
- **Be prepared to address academic inequities**- In some cases, lack of access will result in students who are months behind expectations. These gaps will become most evident as schools begin to introduce new content. Districts must be prepared with research-based, systematic, and explicit instruction informed by students' rates of improvement.
- **Review discipline policies**- Disproportionate discipline is prevalent in educational systems. Reviewing discipline policies to ensure that prevention strategies, such as PBIS, conscious discipline, and restorative justice are system wide expectations prior to student return is crucial to prevent additional educational loss due to suspensions.

Actively counter stigma and racism

Review policies and actively teach conflict resolution. Ensure that students feel empowered to report any racial harassment or bullying behavior.

Additional Services and Tools

01 SEL Considerations for School Re-Entry

Source: ASCA-NASP | Link: SEL Amidst COVID-19

NASP and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) developed guidelines for implementing social emotional learning and mental health supports upon re-entry.

02 Helping Children Cope with Anxiety

Source: Child Mind Institute | Link: Stay Mindful

Editorial director, Caroline Miller, published a thorough message to help parents and educators respond when children show anxious symptoms.

03 Helping Children Cope with Grief and Fear

Source: DCPS Video | Link: Coping With Crisis

Heather Lawson, M.S., NCSP, Crisis Hotline Advisor of Duval Public County Schools published a video on 3-20-2020 to communicate messages that help parents understand signs of loss, grief, and fear.

04 COVID-19 Return to School

Source: NASP Articles | Link: Academic Considerations

The landscape of instruction upon returning to school will require an intensive focus on closing learning gaps. This NASP webpage highlights special considerations in screening, assessment, and interventions.

References

Florida Department of Education (FDOE)

Oliva, J. (2020). Mental and Behavioral Health and Telehealth Services for Florida Students. Florida Department of Education Memorandum. http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19887/urlt/050520-mbhtsfs.pdf

Florida Department of Education. Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act: Closing Achievement Gaps and Creating Safe Spaces for Learning. Powerpoint presentation. http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/FLDOEReopeningCARESAct.pdf

Florida Department of Education. Coronovirus response resources. Webpage. http://www.fldoe.org/em-response/index.stml

Florida Department of Education. Summer Free Resources for Families & Teachers: http://www.fldoe.org/em-response/resources-families.stml

Florida Department of Education. Best Practices for Distance Learning. http://www.fldoe.org/em-response/distance-learning.stml

Introduction/Three Phases

Brock, S. E., Nickerson, A. B., Reeves, M. A., Jimerson, S. R., Lieberman, R. A., & Feinburg, T. A. (2009). School crisis prevention and intervention: The PREPaRE model. Bethesda, MD: NASP Publications.

National Association of School Psychologists. PREPaRE Training. https://www.nasponline.org/professional-development/prepare-training-curriculum/about-prepare

Principles of Working with Traumatized Children. https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/principles-working-traumatized-children/

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Schools. https://www.nais.org/articles/pages/additional-covid-19-guidance-for-schools/#onlineprotocols

Psychological First Aid (PFA). https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/behavioral/pfa.html

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

NASP Practice Model. https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model

NASP Program Evaluation Part 1: Individual Level

NASP Program Evaluation Part 2: Systems-Level

Telehealth Service Delivery Updated Recommendations. https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center/special-education-resources/telehealth-virtual-service-delivery-updated-recommendations

Countering COVID-19 Stigma and Racism. https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/countering-covid-19-(coronavirus)-stigma-and-racism-tips-for-parents-and-caregivers

National Association of School Psychologists. (2020). Returning to School Following COVID-19 Related School Closures: The COVID-19 School Adjustment Risk Matrix (C-SARM) [handout]. Author. https://bit.ly/32ibBCn

Additional and Miscellaneous Resources

NASP Ask the Expert Webinar Series. https://www.nasponline.org/covid-19-webinar-series

Coronavirus and School Closures (2020, March 6). Education Week. Retrieved June 15, 2020 from Edweek.

USF Student Services Project: MTSS and COVID-19 Resources

USDOE OCR Fact Sheet. https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocr-coronavirus-fact-sheet

Disaster Relief Line: 1-800-985-5990 or Text "TalkWithUs" to 66746
Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255
Crisis Hotline: Text "HOME" to 741741

"The mission of FASP is to advocate for the mental health and educational development of Florida's children, youth, and families and to advance the profession of school psychology."

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