

PROMOTING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS
(Guidelines for Students at Elementary and Higher Stages)

A. SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. Mental well-being Activities for Elementary Stage Students

Students may:

- a. Share their feelings and emotions with parents, teachers and other family members, respecting others' emotions
- b. Engage in activities that help to feel positive
- c. Communicate with teachers and friends
- d. Spend time with parents, siblings and other family members by involving in activities like indoor games, antakshari, reading stories together, solving puzzles and crosswords, dancing etc.

2. Activities for Coping with Stress and Anxiety: Strategies for Students at Secondary Stage

- a. **Acknowledge feelings:** It is important to recognize one's feelings and acknowledge that it is okay to have such feelings.
- b. **Reflection:** Give time to self to reflect on what one has been doing during the phase of lockdown for self and for others, which aspects one would like to change, what kind of effort/thinking/action it would require to bring that desired change. Becoming aware of one's sensations and expressions may help to understand one's feelings.
- c. **Positive thinking:** The key to avoid, manage, and reduce stress is a positive mindset and a positive attitude. Never lose hope, begin from yourself and pass it around to all. Be persistent in keeping positive thoughts.
- d. **Schedule your routine and manage time:** Scheduling a routine helps to create discipline and can have a positive effect on one's thoughts and feelings. Students may modify their time table by reducing the time spent on daily activities that they were engaging in during the lockdown. This will help to transit to normalcy.
- e. **Take care of your mind and body:** Make sure to eat a healthy and well-balanced diet, practice meditation, yoga, or breathing exercises after school hours to calm the mind and for building better mental and physical health. Also, get enough sleep every day.
- f. **Become aware** of your thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- g. **Maintain a diary.** Every day write down how you could follow your plan of action. Note down changes in your feelings every day and share with your best friend.

B. GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS FOR PROMOTING EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF THEIR STUDENTS

- a. **Initiate conversational activities in the classroom:** It is important to focus on bringing back the normalcy in the classroom environment again. Teachers may start a conversation with the students on what they did during the Lockdown period to engage themselves in interactive sessions.
 - b. **Indoor individual games:** Mental maths games, word antakshari, make words, etc. and music and dance activities may be conducted in the classroom linking these with subject areas under proper guidance. This will help in keeping children happy and stress-free besides being healthy.
 - c. **Make students feel safe:** Teachers need to make their students feel safe and be able to share anything and everything with them. They may emphasize the fact that child fatalities due to Covid-19 are negligible but children can get it and transmit it if they behave unsafely.
2. **Help students to engage in collaborative activities in the classroom:** Conduct and encourage students to participate in various deep breathing exercises, activities that will help the students to be mindful. Teachers have to create an environment of emotional togetherness among students by
 - i. precluding of social out casting of anybody recovered from COVID-19
 - ii. Encouraging students to make small gifts for their friends as a token of love and appreciation.
 - iii. Assigning caring activities to students like keeping water for birds, helping to keep the premises clean etc., to build positive feelings of sharing and being responsible.
 3. **Acknowledge the change and offer help:** Accept and help the students to accept that the present times are difficult. Make sure that the students know that you are there for them if they require any assistance or have any concerns to share.
 4. **Conduct reflective activities in the classroom:** Reflective activities have huge benefits in increasing self-awareness in an individual and in developing a better understanding of others as well. Reflective practice can also help us to develop creative thinking skills and encourages active engagement in the classroom.
 5. **Tell Life stories:** This activity will help the students get to know something significant about each other in a very short time. Students rarely get a chance to talk about themselves without interruption, (and without advice or judgment). Each student may speak without interruption for 5 minutes about his/her experiences during lockdown that has shaped her/him in significant ways.
 6. **Three-Minute Pause:** The Three-Minute Pause activity can be used in the classroom at the end of the day. It provides a chance for students to stop, reflect on the concepts

and ideas that they have learned, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification. Students have to ask themselves: 'I empathized with...'; 'I changed my attitude about...'; 'I am more aware of ...'; 'I was surprised about...'; 'I felt...etc'.

C. GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS FOR PROMOTING EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF THEIR CHILDREN

1. **Get the child mentally ready for a new routine:** Point out the positive aspects of starting school. Reassure children that if any problems arise at school, parents will be there to help resolve them.
2. **Be patient:** Exercise patience and refrain from using punishment as transitioning once again from home to school may be challenging for the students.
3. **Encourage children to extend Positive offerings:** Children may be asked to draw and colour cards for their friends, teachers, and also family members as preparation for school reopening thus setting a positive tone and hope.
4. **Collect Motivational resources:** Students can be asked to collate good audio(podcasts) songs developed for and during the Covid-19 that they find motivating for sharing with school mates
5. **Ensure their emotional safety:** Parents need to make children feel safe and wanted by giving them the feeling that they can share anything and everything with them as they prepare to go to school as well their concerns while they are in school.
6. **Acknowledge their emotions:** Stay calm especially when the children are anxious. Pay attention to their feelings and give them space to share their fears, if any. Ensure that there is adequate time for sitting together and talking freely at different times.
7. **Encouragement:** Parents also need to encourage and guide their children to plan their daily schedule for school, studies at home, play, sleep, activities to maintain good health and hygiene, etc.
8. **Appreciate your child:** Recognize and praise even small accomplishments and efforts made by children. This not only develops confidence and self-esteem but will lead to the formation of good habits and better performance in different tasks. □
9. **Set a good example:** Before expecting children to be disciplined, empathetic, healthy, and hygienic, parents need to practice such things. Parents need to manage their stress by getting good sleep, exercise, healthy diet, connected with friends and family.
10. **Acknowledge your feelings:** Understanding and recognizing one's own emotions is vital for one's well-being. As a parent one can help himself/herself and their children to navigate each one of their emotions and responses.

11. **Focus on the things that can be controlled:** Focusing on things that are out of one's control can make one feel drained, overwhelmed, and anxious. So, focus on what can be controlled.
12. **Taking care of the self:** Make sure to indulge in physical exercises like yoga. Have a healthy diet and take care of your body.

D. SUGGESTIVE ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

1. **Maintain a reflective diary:** Make a habit of writing your experiences every day before going to bed.
2. Take time to engage in observing your surroundings by identifying the smells, textures, and visuals.
3. Perform any activity which helps you to connect with your own self - meditation, yoga, walking, reading, etc.
4. Think of the small changes which you can bring in your life.
5. Make sure to take care of your physical health as well by sticking to regular meals with the correct nutritional variety, maintain healthy sleep habits, and engage in pleasant and relaxing activities.
6. Engage yourself in such activities which challenge your creativity and make you feel productive like writing, drawing, or something else of your interest.
7. Attend such online courses which enhance your professional abilities.
8. Ask for help from a colleague or expert when needed.

In order to promote the mental health of students and teachers, the schools can develop well-being policy or plan with a specific focus on promoting resilience among them. Students, teachers and schools may also be encouraged to visit the website <https://mhrd.gov.in/covid-19> of MHRD and avail of the tele-counselling services to be provided on National Toll-free helpline 8448440632 under the MANODARPAN initiative of MHRD to provide psychosocial support for mental health and emotional wellbeing of students, teachers and families during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

I. State Education Department

II. School Heads

1. The Head of the Institution needs to create a preparedness plan for reopening of the school including physical/social distancing, health and hygiene, and teaching-learning based on the guidelines issued at the National and State levels. This detailed plan should be worked out with SMC members, local health authorities, and community leaders and depending on the availability of space, weather and Teacher Pupil ratio, etc. The plan may include the following:
 - a. The comprehensive academic calendar for conducting classes in the school as well at home.
 - b. Assessment and Examination plan for all the classes and subject areas.
 - c. A detailed plan for safe operation and safe stay of students and teachers in the school.
 - d. Sharing of this plan through Whatsapp or email or sanitized hard copy with teachers before reopening of school. Their feedback should also be sought.
 - e. Making a duty chart for every teacher besides their routine teaching-learning activities as follows:
 - One teacher can be assigned duty at the entry point of the school in the morning.
 - One teacher can stay at the exit point of the school during the closing of the school.
 - One teacher along with some selected senior class students on rotation can take continuous rounds for observing physical distance among children, their health, their sanitization, etc.
 - One teacher to observe mid-day meal cooking and distribution.
 - One teacher to talk to students on their queries on corona and to keep an eye on their mental health likewise- other teachers need also to be given other duties as per school requirement.
2. Calling every teacher on the mobile phone asking them, to prepare a new timetable based on the guidelines – for the execution of an alternative comprehensive calendar mentioned in an earlier section.
3. Collecting all the essential emergency contacts.

4. In case of most marginalized children having no technological tool at home for connecting to school, school heads can plan some innovative way to reach out to them to reduce the gap in their education with those who are using technological tools and can come to school.
5. Schools can create a dedicated task team and ensure adequate manpower is deployed for managing COVID related issues with teachers, members of the SMC, volunteers from the community for the implementation of a comprehensive plan for the reopening of the school.
6. Before reopening the school, the head needs to work with local health officials to execute the plan including actions for prevention and control of COVID 19.
7. All teachers and school heads must be made aware and sensitized of all aspects mentioned above through briefing, visuals, and ICT resources.
8. Maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in school premises and in school transport facility. Sarpanch (in rural areas) and NGOs or some corporate houses (in urban areas) can be roped into this endeavour.
9. It is advised that schools have greater collaboration with parents and enhance communication to obtain their support

III. TEACHERS

Teacher may take the following steps:

1. Before reopening of the school

- a. Prepare a comprehensive plan for subjects and classes he/she teaches and time-table as well as interesting activities for the execution of this plan. While preparing this plan, teachers need to keep in mind the arrangement being made by schools related to physical/social distancing and maintaining health and hygiene, as these need to be linked with the syllabus and learning outcomes.
- b. Prepare posters on precautions related to COVID-19, on physical/social distancing, about COVID-19, etc.
- c. Survey availability of technological tools (smartphone with the internet, television, radio, laptop, tablets, etc.) at the home of the students and their accessibility to students; parents'/guardian's or sibling's educational details, etc., and make a database of the same for the students of every class (this will help them make a plan of their study at school and home).
- d. Develop flexible attendance and sick leave policies; discourage awards for perfect attendance.

2. On re-opening of schools:

- a. Allow children to attend school with written consent of their parents.

- b. Advise, instruct, suggest, explain about the COVID-19, precautions to be taken, safe stay at home, commuting, etc., repeatedly by conducting fun activities involving students and focusing on learning outcomes even if they are awareness activities.
- c. Study alternative academic calendar by NCERT/SCERT for making classroom plans and also giving home tasks.
- d. In case of availability of technological equipment in the school, utilize the following resources:
 - e-contents and e-textbooks for students learning and for the professional development of teachers link: <https://ciet.nic.in/ict-initiatives.php?&ln=en>
 - Energized Textbooks and e-content through Diksha app and portal
 - DTH - TV channel of NCERT #31 Kishore Manch under SWAYAMPrabha network telecast video programmes based on Alternative Academic Calendar (AAC)
 - Local Radio and TV stations for the development and delivery of e-contents and sensitizing stakeholders on prevention of COVID-19.

Capacity building of teachers on use of these resources should be done through online modes like MOOCs, TV Channels, Web portals, and Apps.

- e. Make use of Flipped learning pedagogy where students have access to TV at home. The upcoming dedicated class wise TV channels can be used for that wherein students attend the TV programs at home and only discussions and formative assessment happens in class.
- f. Observe every child in the class continuously for physical health and mental health issues. In case of any symptom of this kind, parents may be informed and seek medical help for the child.
- g. Prepare and disseminate posters, banners, brochures, infographics, etc., on cyber safety and security to keep students safe in cyberspace. Cyber safety is an international concern.
- h. Maintain students' medical record including a history of infection of the disease in the family/community.

IV. PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Parents /guardians may take the following steps:

1. Provide written consent for their children to attend school if they wish to send to school.
2. Ensure that their ward goes to school wearing a mask and sensitise them not to exchange masks with others. Masks can be made at home also. Face masks made of cloth may be reused after thorough washing with soap. Disposal face masks are to be disposed safely.

3. Encourage their ward to wear full-sleeved clothes to minimize the interaction with any public surface.
4. Parents may take care not to send their ward to school if the child is not feeling well.
5. Drop and pick children from school, as far as possible. If sent by school bus then maintain physical/social distancing and ensure that everyone is wearing a mask.
6. Ask their ward to practice physical/social distancing at all times once she/he leaves home.
7. Clean and sanitize their ward's uniform and other belongings daily.
8. Ensure that their ward maintains personal hygiene such as bathing, brushing teeth properly twice a day (in the morning and before sleeping) and trimming of nails.
9. Provide two clean small napkins/clean cloth daily with their ward for wiping hands.
10. Give healthy food, fresh fruits, and clean water in their lunch box or send a tiffin box for mid-day meal and advise their ward not to share their tiffin and water bottle with others.
11. It is advisable that parents/guardians download the AAROGYASETU APP and let their ward commute only when the App shows safe and low-risk status.

CHECKLIST FOR SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. Checklist for School Administrators, Teachers and other Staff

S. No.	Task	Yes/No
A	Healthy Hygiene Practices are promoted and ensured	
1	Students and Staff have been sensitized on good personal hygiene practices and proper hand washing technique (minimum 40 seconds)	
2	Signages on Healthy Hygiene Practices have been displayed at prominent places in the school like classrooms, corridors, washrooms, reception area, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop handshaking – use other noncontact methods of greeting • Wash hands at regular intervals (wash for at least 40 seconds) • Avoid touching face cover coughs and sneezes 	
3	Adequate, clean and separate toilets for girls and boys	
4	Soap and safe water are available at age appropriate hand washing stations	
5	Key supplies like thermometers (calibrated contact-less infrared digital thermometer), disinfectants, soaps, hand sanitizers, masks, etc., are available in adequate quantity in the school	
6	Health and hygiene lessons are integrated in every day teaching	
7	School building, classrooms, kitchen, water and sanitation facilities, school transport facilities, surfaces that are touched by many people (desks, railings, door handles, switches, lunch tables, sports equipment, window handles, toys, teaching learning material etc. are cleaned and disinfected at least once a day	
8	Adequate cleaning staff is available in the school	
9	There is enough air flow and ventilation in the school premises	
10	Regular health screening of all staff and students in the school	
11	Trash is removed daily and disposed of safely	
12	There is full time nurse or doctor and counsellor available in the school.	
13	The school has tie up with the nearby hospital for dealing with emergency.	

B	Physical / Social distancing Measures have been implemented	
1	School arrangements have been adjusted to avoid crowded conditions.	
2	Enough space has been created between the desks of the students.	

2. Checklist for Parents

S. No.	Task	Yes/No
1	Regular monitoring of child's health.	
2	Keeping of child at home if s/he is ill or has any specific medical condition that may make them more at risk.	
3	Teach and model good hygiene practices at home. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands with soap and water frequently or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol • Ensure availability of safe drinking water • Ensure clean and safe toilets at home • Ensure safe collection, storage and disposal of waste • Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose 	
4	Ensure emotional safety of your child through different means.	
5	Prevent stigma by using facts and teach your children to be considerate of one another.	
6	Coordinate with school to receive information.	
7	Offer support to the school to strengthen school safety efforts.	

3. Checklist for Students

S. No.	Task	Yes/No
1	You avoid stressful situation by talking and sharing with others and help keep yourself and your school safe and healthy.	
2	You protect yourself and others by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing hands frequently, always with soap and safe water for at least 40 seconds 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not touching face • Not sharing cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others 	
3	<p>You act as a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing what you have learnt about preventing disease with your family and friends, especially with younger children • Model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members. 	
4	You don't stigmatize your peers or tease anyone about being sick.	
5	You tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver, if you feel sick, and ask to stay home.	

REFERENCES:

1. https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/MHAOrderDt_30092020.pdf
2. <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/ImmunityBoostingAYUSHAdvisory.pdf>
3. <https://nroer.gov.in/welcome>
4. <http://eathshala.nic.in/https://diksha.gov.in/>
5. <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/fight-against-covid-19https://www.mygov.in/>
6. <http://ncert.nic.in/aac.html>
7. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUgLcpnv1YieVe-Epsww-engrBFIntgBh>
