

# Trauma Support Information for Bloomfield Parents

## Created By:

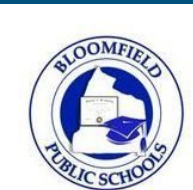
Shanai Chambers

Taij Howe

Melissa Sutton

Amanda Wiener

Ashley Williams



# Overview of Today's Discussion

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Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as well as societal changes, our daily lives look vastly different than they did months ago. The following presentation will discuss:

- Personal trauma due to COVID-19
- Changes within our society
- Trauma in children/adults
- How we will support your children at school
- How you can support your children at home
- Resources for you to use

# Personal Trauma Related to COVID-19

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- Loss of a loved one
- Loss of employment
- Financial Hardships
- Food and Housing Instability
- Interruption to Routine
- Illness/caring for an ill loved one
- Increased anxiety
- Fear of getting sick



# Societal Changes

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In addition to changes in our school day, there are also major changes happening in the world that impact our students and families. CNN said it best when they released this statement, ***“There are two major crises in this country tonight... Covid-19 and Racism.”***

As we move forward, we will not only acknowledge these societal issues, but discuss how they have been amplified as a result of the pandemic, and the impact on students.



# Societal Changes: Racial Injustice

- What has been going on?
  - Police brutality against Black men and women
  - Covert Racism
  - Mass Incarceration of Black Men
- How has this problem been amplified during pandemic
  - Police brutality and racism is being recorded, more people are becoming more aware
  - Incarcerated Individuals have contracted COVID 19 at an alarmingly high rate
- The impact on students and families
  - Students protesting for their own lives
  - Students watching lives being lost on a daily basis
  - Students losing incarcerated relatives

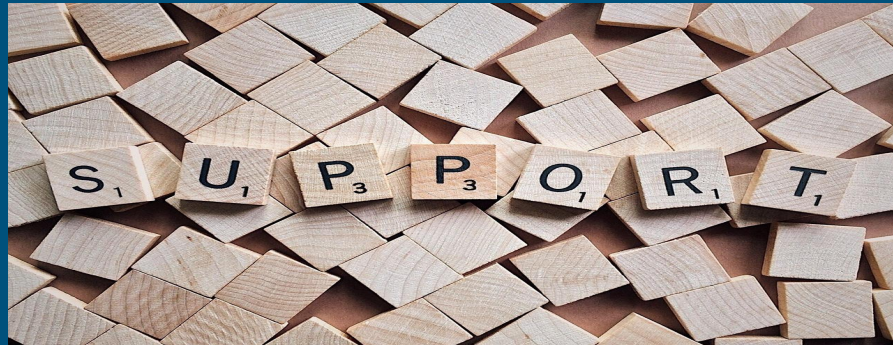




# Feelings about these changes

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We understand that the changes in our educational system, as well as the changes in society , may produce a variety of feelings/emotions. Some may feel excited about our new way of learning, while others may experience a sense of grief, and even trauma. All of these feelings are valid and deserve to be discussed. As we transition, please take the opportunity to tune into your body and assess whether you have experienced the following symptoms.



# Trauma in Children

## What is Trauma?

Trauma is a physical, emotional and/or psychological response to a stressful or disturbing event. It is important to note that trauma shows up differently in each individual.

Preschool Children	Elementary School Children	Middle and High School Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feel helpless and uncertain</li><li>• Fear of being separated from their parent/caregiver</li><li>• Cry and/or scream a lot</li><li>• Eat poorly and lose weight</li><li>• Return to bedwetting</li><li>• Return to using baby talk</li><li>• Develop new fears</li><li>• Have nightmares</li><li>• Recreate the trauma through play</li><li>• Are not developing to the next growth stage</li><li>• Have changes in behavior</li><li>• Ask questions about death</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Become anxious and fearful</li><li>• Worry about their own or others' safety</li><li>• Become clingy with a teacher or a parent</li><li>• Feel guilt or shame</li><li>• Tell others about the traumatic event again and again</li><li>• Become upset if they get a small bump or bruise</li><li>• Have a hard time concentrating</li><li>• Experience numbness</li><li>• Have fears that the event will happen again</li><li>• Have difficulties sleeping</li><li>• Show changes in school performance</li><li>• Become easily startled</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feel depressed and alone</li><li>• Discuss the traumatic events in detail</li><li>• Develop eating disorders and self-harming behaviors such as cutting</li><li>• Start using or abusing alcohol or drugs</li><li>• Become sexually active</li><li>• Feel like they're going crazy</li><li>• Feel different from everyone else</li><li>• Take too many risks</li><li>• Have sleep disturbances</li><li>• Don't want to go places that remind them of the event</li><li>• Say they have no feeling about the event</li><li>• Show changes in behavior</li></ul>



# Trauma in Parents

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While trauma may present itself in different ways, the following list contains common signs in adults :

- Difficulty sleeping
- Lack of Appetite
- Irritability
- Hypervigilant
- Detached from family and friends
- “Replaying the tape”
- Sadness
- Avoidance of places/people



# Coping Skills

## HELPING CHILDREN COPE

Your children may respond differently to an outbreak depending on their age. Below are some reactions according to age group and the best ways you can respond:

AGE GROUP	REACTIONS	HOW TO HELP
PRESCHOOL	Fear of being alone, bad dreams	Patience and tolerance
	Speech difficulties	Provide reassurance (verbal and physical)
	Loss of bladder/bowel control, constipation, bed-wetting	Encourage expression through play, reenactment, story-telling
	Change in appetite	Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements
	Increased temper tantrums, whining, or clinging behaviors	Plan calming, comforting activities before bedtime
		Maintain regular family routines
		Avoid media exposure

## COPING SKILLS

A COPING SKILL IS THE WAY THAT YOU HANDLE YOUR ANGER, STRESS, ANXIETY, FEAR OR ANY OTHER FEELING!

- A **good** coping skill is one that helps you feel better in the moment without hurting yourself or anyone else. It is also one that doesn't get you into any trouble now or later.
- A **poor** coping skill is one that might feel good when you use it, but it ends up hurting you or other people. Using a poor coping skill for a long time can be harmful.

### GOOD

Using positive self-talk  
 Deep breathing  
 Taking a shower  
 Going for a walk  
 Doing something creative  
 Exercising  
 Talking to a friend  
 Playing a sport or game  
 Hanging out with friends  
 Taking a time out  
 Using an I-Feel message  
 Counting to 10



### POOR

Name-calling or insulting  
 Becoming violent  
 Spreading rumors  
 Yelling and screaming  
 Hurting yourself  
 Threatening  
 Doing something dangerous  
 Shutting down  
 Pretending like you don't care  
 Blaming other people  
 Negative self-talk  
 Avoiding family and friends

WHAT ARE OTHER GOOD COPING SKILLS YOU CAN THINK OF THAT HELP YOU FEEL BETTER?

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# Coping Skills continued...

<p><b>SCHOOL-AGE</b> (ages 6-12)</p>	<p>Irritability, whining, aggressive behavior</p> <p>Clinging, nightmares</p> <p>Sleep/appetite disturbance</p> <p>Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches)</p> <p>Withdrawal from peers, loss of interest</p> <p>Competition for parents' attention</p> <p>Forgetfulness about chores and new information learned at school</p>	<p>Patience, tolerance, and reassurance</p> <p>Play sessions and staying in touch with friends through telephone and Internet</p> <p>Regular exercise and stretching</p> <p>Engage in educational activities (workbooks, educational games)</p> <p>Participate in structured household chores</p> <p>Set gentle but firm limits</p> <p>Discuss the current outbreak and encourage questions. Include what is being done in the family and community</p> <p>Encourage expression through play and conversation</p> <p>Help family create ideas for enhancing health promotion behaviors and maintaining family routines</p> <p>Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school</p> <p>Address any stigma or discrimination occurring and clarify misinformation</p>
<p><b>ADOLESCENT</b> (ages 13-18)</p>	<p>Physical symptoms (headaches, rashes, etc.)</p> <p>Sleep/appetite disturbance</p> <p>Agitation or decrease in energy, apathy</p> <p>Ignoring health promotion behaviors</p> <p>Isolating from peers and loved ones</p> <p>Concerns about stigma and injustices</p> <p>Avoiding/cutting school</p>	<p>Patience, tolerance, and reassurance</p> <p>Encourage continuation of routines</p> <p>Encourage discussion of outbreak experience with peers, family (but do not force)</p> <p>Stay in touch with friends through telephone, Internet, video games</p> <p>Participate in family routines, including chores, supporting younger siblings, and planning strategies to enhance health promotion behaviors</p> <p>Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school</p> <p>Discuss and address stigma, prejudice and potential injustices occurring during outbreak</p>

## COPING TOOLS: What Helps Me

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Read A Book or Magazine 
 Hug or Climb a Tree 
 Journal or Write a Letter 
 Use Kind & Compassionate Self-Talk 
 Make a Collage or Scrapbook 
 Rest, Nap or Take a Break 
 Go on a Hike, Walk or Run 
 Take Good Care of the Earth 
 Drink Water 
 Play a Board Game 
 Do Something Kind 
 Make and Play with Slime 
 Discover Treasures in Nature 
 Take a Shower or Bath 
 Exercise 
 Drink a Warm Cup of Tea 
 Forgive, Let Go, Move On 
 Practice Yoga 
 Garden or Do Yardwork 
 Jump on a Trampoline 
 Cuddle or Play with Your Pet 
 Practice Gratitude 
 Do a Puzzle 
 Blow Bubbles 
 Smile and Laugh 

Ride a Bike or Skateboard 
 Create Origami 
 Cook or Bake 
 Ask for Help 
 Talk to Someone You Trust 
 Weave, Knit or Crochet 
 Build Something 
 Get a Hug 
 Visualize a Peaceful Place 
 Stretch 
 Make Art 
 Use Positive Affirmations 
 Take Slow, Mindful Breaths 
 Clean, Declutter or Organize 
 Use Aromatherapy 
 Cry 
 Try or Learn Something New 
 Listen to Music 
 Use a Stress Ball or Other Fidget 
 Get Plenty of Sleep 
 Kick, Bounce or Throw a Ball 
 Take or Look at Photographs 
 Eat Healthy 
 Play Outside 
 Sing and/or Dance 

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# Supporting Your Child In School

Because the pandemic is ongoing and news changes daily, it is difficult to say what each school day will exactly look like. However, support from staff will be consistent. Here's how we will be helping your child whether in the building or during distance learning:

- **Constant conversations**
  - COVID-19, Societal Changes, New Ways of Learning
- **Providing resources**
  - Resources for academic, emotional, and social assistance
- **Teaching and modeling coping skills**
  - Tied into the SEL curriculum, we will be teaching them many different coping skills that can be used to help your child in managing any stressful situation
- **Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum**
  - Teachers, Social Workers and School Counselors within each building will continue to provide students with frequent SEL lessons that will cover topics like emotion regulation, social awareness, and mindfulness. How to cope with the global pandemic and societal changes will also be a focal point in these lessons.

## Social-Emotional Learning

Self-Awareness

Self-Management

Social Awareness

Relationship Skills

Responsible Decision-Making

Future Self



# Supporting Your Child At Home: COVID-19



## Communication

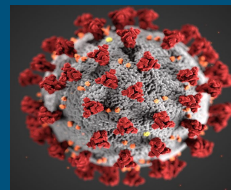
- **Stay updated**, but limit social media exposure. Too much can cause fear/panic.
- **Check in regularly** with your child.
- **Just talk!** Encourage conversations and questions with your child. Talk about their feelings and help them express them, clarify any misinformation, and be patient and comforting.

## Scheduling & Activities

- **Keep consistent** with bedtimes, meals, and movement/exercise.
- Make a **distance learning schedule** and set a **designated learning area**.
- **Make time to do things together**: reading, watching a movie, playing games, etc.
- **Recognize their feelings are normal reactions** to stressful situations.

## Hygiene & Medical Care

- Think of **creative ways to encourage proper hygiene**:
  - Write down the routine
  - Sing songs like the ABC's or Happy Birthday while hand washing
- **Reassure them** every cough or sneeze doesn't mean they or others have COVID-19.



## Self-Care & Coping

- Focus on what you **CAN** do and meet current realities
- **Focus priorities** on what gives you and your child meaning, purpose, and fulfillment.
- **Set small breaks** for you and your child.
- **Replace negative self-thoughts** with positive, helpful thoughts ([Helpful resource here](#)).
- **Model coping skills** and how to positively handle stress.

# Supporting Your Child At Home: Conversations about Societal Changes



## Prepare yourself before the conversation

Be mindful of your own beliefs, biases, and experiences. Educate yourself on Black history and racism to provide accurate info to your child or clarify misinformation.

## Limit exposure to graphic media and adult conversations

Too much exposure can cause significant stress and can trigger trauma in adults and children.

## Be age appropriate

Use terms and language that your child will understand.

## Listen to your child and validate their feelings

Let them know it's okay to feel and that they're not alone. Encourage and ask questions: what do they know, how can they manage related feelings, how can we effectively work against discrimination and injustice, etc.

## Give reassurance and care

Tell them there are people (families, teachers, etc.) in their lives working hard to keep them safe, maintain routines, and check in regularly to see how they feel and address their feelings.

## Be a role model

Treat all people fairly, talk about the benefits of diversity, and continue to seek learning opportunities about racial injustice to show your child how you are actively working against racism.

## Focus on hope, positivity, and taking an active role in making the world a better place

Read stories that promote racial pride, triumph in adversity, the [contribution the Black community has made in our nation's growth and history](#), and help your child in making personal commitments to always be educated on race and racism and treat others fairly.

# Supporting Your Child At Home: Conversations about Societal Changes

It is important to focus the conversation with your child on **resilience** and **empowerment**. Not only will this promote positive racial identity and comfort in who they are, this will help your child develop a healthy self-esteem. Continued discussions are essential for all races and ethnicities to develop racial awareness, identity, attitudes, and beliefs that are positive and healthy.

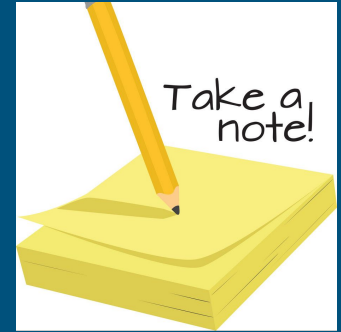
***Make the conversation effective, not harmful!***



# Resources for Parents

There are TONS!!! of LOCAL and TELEHEALTH resources available.  
See some of the resources below!

- <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/COVID-19-Resources-for-Families-and-Educators>
- <http://cea.org/>
- <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/coronavirus/>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR0I30rS27K-SzYftLgsVOUTJwSZEVOZPL6m2mmSbrMQB1EFathHMCK8OW8>
- [https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/parent\\_caregiver\\_guide\\_to\\_helping\\_families\\_cope\\_with\\_the\\_coronavirus\\_disease\\_2019\\_covid-19.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/parent_caregiver_guide_to_helping_families_cope_with_the_coronavirus_disease_2019_covid-19.pdf)
- <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Helping-Your-Family-Cope-with-COVID-Resources.pdf>
- [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/PSSF/040720\\_Social-Emotional-Family-Resources.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/PSSF/040720_Social-Emotional-Family-Resources.pdf?la=en)
- <https://instituteofliving.org/programs-services/child-adolescent-services>
- <https://www.megfoundationforpain.org/survival-parenting>





# Resources continued...

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- <https://thevillage.org/covid-19-resources/>
- <https://nyulangone.org/news/trauma-children-during-covid-19-pandemic>
- <https://cca-ct.org/covid19-resource-fact-sheet/>
- <http://www.accessmhct.com/>
- <https://gozen.com/coronavirus-anxiety/>
- <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/March-2020/How-to-Ease-Children-s-Anxiety-About-COVID-19>
- <https://neaedjustice.org/black-lives-matter-school-resources/>
- <https://teachingkidsnews.com/>
- <https://www.pbs.org/parents/talking-about-racism>
- <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/talking-to-your-kids-about-racism>
- <https://www.thehelpfulcounselor.com/18-coping-skills-strategies-for-children-and-teens/>
- <https://arfamiliesfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cognitive-Distortions.pdf>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/child-trauma/recognizing-and-treating-child-traumatic-stress>
- <https://childmind.org/>
- <http://cctasi.northwestern.edu/family/child-trauma/>
- [Recognizing and Treating Child Traumatic Stress](#)
- <https://childmind.org/article/signs-trauma-children/>

# Q&A

