

# EMPLOYEE AWARENESS EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

## 2020~2021

### Safe, Healthy, and Supportive Schools Program

201 West Lee Street ~ Brooklet, Georgia 30415

912-842-5000 ~ [www.fdressa.org](http://www.fdressa.org)



### Self-Care is Important for All Staff

According to the Institute of Education Science, self-care refers to providing adequate attention to one's own physical and psychological health wellness. In order to better be able to support our students, we need to take care of ourselves. Self-care is important because it reduces the impact of stress and burnout, improves motivation, increases mental health and relationships, and supports student success and well-being. Listed below are some strategies from the West Regional Educational Laboratory:

- ◆ **Examine Thoughts & Feelings** ~ Be aware of and accept our own thoughts and feelings and adjust our actions accordingly.
- ◆ **Stay Calm & Focused** ~ Mindfulness practices can reduce emotional reactivity and support decision making. Walking, physical exercise, or talking with a good friend are good strategies.
- ◆ **Be Aware of Self-Storytelling** ~ Be aware of the stories you are telling yourself and question if your thoughts are realistic or fear-based. If you are feeling stressed, consider ways to reschedule or reconnect when your mind is feeling steadier and more stable.
- ◆ **Take a Solution-Focused Approach** ~ Focus on conversations on thinking through options, challenging previously held beliefs. Remind yourself, "where there is a problem there is a solution."
- ◆ **Shift from Pessimism to Optimism** ~ Look for opportunities within a challenge. Focus on what you can do. Instead of focusing on the negative ~ try focusing on the positive. "We're keeping each other safe."
- ◆ **Practice Gratitude** ~ take time to express appreciation and gratitude.
- ◆ **Demonstrate Compassion** ~ Show kindness by offering to help or with words of encouragement to others.

Go to: <https://bit.ly/2WSjStG> for an example of a Self-Care Plan.



### There are Four Domains that Impact School Climate

**Safety**: referring to the physical and emotional safety of students and the rules and procedures in place to ensure student safety

**Relationships**: student social support from educators and parents, the level of respect students have for others, school and community engagement, and student and parental leadership

**Teaching and Learning**: a positive and professional student-teacher-school relationship, social and emotional skills training, civic education, and positive support for learning

**Institutional Environment**: the physical environment of the school

*COVID 19 has impacted all four of these domains. As we reopen schools, we will continually deal with the impact COVID 19 will have on the FY21 School Year. It will be important for schools to provide safe, stable, positive environments for our students, families, and staff ~ no matter how instruction is delivered.*

### Create communication norms and expectations – for yourself, colleagues, students, and families

- ◆ **Provide clear and consistent messaging to students and families. Elicit feedback. Ensure communication is reciprocal.**
- ◆ **Be clear about when you are available and when you are not. We all need boundaries. Set official work hours. Set virtual travel hours.**
- ◆ **Create schedules for clarity and stability – for yourself and others.**
- ◆ **Create a workspace for yourself if you are working virtually.**

## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF

The Georgia Board of Education Rule #160-1-3-03 requires all schools to adopt routine procedures consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Universal Precautions for handling blood and bodily fluids. The Georgia BOE Rule # 160-1-3-03 on communicable diseases requires that, based on reasonable medical judgment, the school system shall allow an infected student or employee to remain in his or her educational or employment setting unless he/she currently presents a significant health risk of contagion. *Please see your local system's policy that addresses communicable diseases.*



### BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Research shows that the risk of getting a significant contagious disease in a school setting is extremely small. The primary concerns regarding bloodborne pathogens are Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. Following standard precautions can help prevent the spread of bloodborne pathogens and other diseases whenever there is a risk of exposure to blood or other body fluids. These "universal precautions" require that all blood and other body fluids be treated as if they are infectious. Precautions include maintaining personal hygiene and using protective equipment, workplace practice controls and proper equipment, cleaning and spill clean-up procedures.

### TAKE PRECAUTIONS

**WHENEVER BLOOD AND BODY FLUIDS ARE PRESENT:**

- ◆ USE A BARRIER (LATEX/RUBBER GLOVES, A THICK LAYER OF PAPER TOWELS OR CLOTH)
- ◆ SOILED CLOTHES OF THE INJURED PERSON MUST BE BAGGED TO BE SENT HOME
- ◆ PLACE WASTE IN PLASTIC BAG FOR DISPOSAL
- ◆ THOROUGHLY WASH HANDS WITH SOAP & WATER.

### GIVE HEALTH A HAND



Nearly 23 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold. Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

### HOW? ~ HAND WASHING

**WET** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

**LATHER** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

**SCRUB** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

**RINSE** your hands well under clean, running water.

**DRY** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

*If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Hand sanitizers do not eliminate all types of germs.*

Visit the CDC for the Handwashing Song



<https://bit.ly/2XdPmcG>

## COVID-19 Resource Links

Responding to the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak through PBIS

<https://bit.ly/2TiRH4X>

Getting Back to School after Disruptions

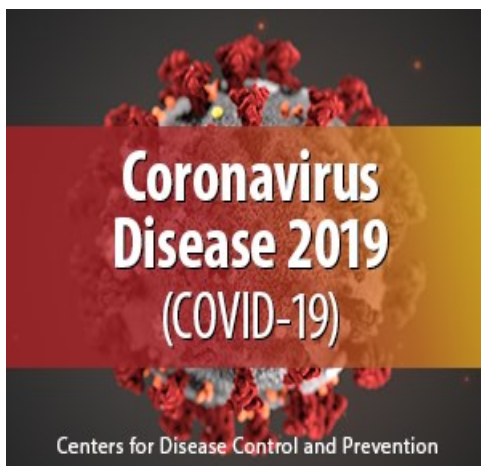
<https://bit.ly/2XdXkm1>

Social Distancing ~ Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

<https://bit.ly/2zfo39U>

Checklist for Teachers ~ Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

<https://bit.ly/2Xjd2aG>





Having a drug free workplace sends a clear message that use of alcohol and drugs in the workplace is prohibited. Drug free workplace policies help protect the health and safety of all employees, stakeholders, and the public. Substance abuse also affects the bottom line: it costs you money. Drug users at a minimum consume almost twice the benefits as nonusers, are absent 1.5 times as often, and make more than twice as many workers' compensation claims. Alcohol and other drugs create a poor work environment because drugs keep you from doing your best on the job. The effects can be dangerous to others as well.

The Safe & Drug Free Schools & Communities Act (**SDFSCA**), **20 U.S.3171**, requires all school systems to adopt and implement a program to "prevent the use of illicit drugs and alcohol by students or employees." The federal **Drug Free Workplace Act**, **41 U.S.C. Section 702**, requires employees to notify their employer within five days of a conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace. However, the **Georgia Drug Free Public Work Force Act**, **O.C.G.A. 45-23-1**, requires public employers to suspend an employee for a second offense regardless of where it occurs.

### GEORGIA DRUG FREE PUBLIC WORK FORCE ACT

Obviously having a drug free workplace is important for legal reasons. There are many anti-drug laws that have been passed by the Georgia General Assembly that provide additional reasons to avoid drug abuse. It is possible that you could lose your professional license, your driver's license, your job, and/or your worker's compensation benefits. In an effort to encourage employees to get help for drug abuse problems, the **Georgia Drug Free Public Work Force Act** allows an employee to retain employment while receiving drug abuse treatment according to **specific conditions**. **PRIOR** to an arrest for a drug offense, an employee may notify the Board of Education or superintendent that he/she uses illegal drugs and wants to receive treatment at his/her own expense. The employee is then entitled to maintain employment for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan prescribed by the treatment provider. *(Please see your own local policy for additional provisions or restrictions.)*

Employees with CDL's who drive school buses have additional workplace regulations that must be followed. Bus drivers must adhere to the U.S. Department of Transportation Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations.

**PLEASE REMEMBER:** It is unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use a controlled substance or alcohol in the workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty. It is the responsibility of each staff member to become familiar with the contents of and to read and abide by his/her system Drug Free Workplace policies and proce-

### HELPLINES FOR EMPLOYEES



*The following organizations and resources provide free, confidential assistance to individuals. You may also use your local directories to locate additional local mental health and addictive diseases organizations for assistance.*

#### **SAMHSA's NATIONAL TREATMENT HELPLINE**

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

[www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline)

#### **SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE**

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

#### **DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE**

1-800-985-5990

[www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline)

#### **GEORGIA CRISIS & ACCESS LINE**

1-800-715-4225

#### **ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

1-212-870-3400

[www.aa.org/](http://www.aa.org/)

#### **GEORGIA TOBACCO QUIT LINE**

1-877-270-7867

#### **NAR-ANON**

1-800-477-6291

[www.nar-anon.org](http://www.nar-anon.org)



#### **EDUCATION PREVENTION**

"Red Ribbon Week 2020 ~ <https://bit.ly/2M0FPQV>

"It's Not What the Doctor Ordered" ~ [www.fдресa.org](http://www.fдресa.org)

#### **PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION**

<https://stoprxabuseinga.org>

#### **GEORGIA SCHOOL SAFETY HOTLINE**

1-877-SAY-STOP

#### **SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER**

[www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)

#### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE INFORMATION**

1-888-373-7888

#### **GEORGIA NATIONAL ALLIANCE MENTAL ILLNESS**

1-770-234-0855

<https://namiga.org>

#### **NATIONAL TRAUMATIC STRESS NETWORK**

<https://www.nctsn.org>

#### **GEORGIA DRUG DETOX**

1-678-929-1294

## Search Institute ~ The Developmental Relationships Framework

As mentioned on the front page, “Relationships” is one of the four domains for School Climate. Many years ago, Dr. Peter Benson developed the original asset building framework. **As the late Peter Benson has said, “Nothing—nothing—has more impact in the life of a child than positive relationships.”** Everyone seems to agree that relationships matter. “But what is it about relationships that make some transformative while others seem to have little, if any, impact? Search Institute’s newest research-to-practice initiative focuses on studying and strengthening the developmental relationships that help young people succeed.” In 2013 the Institute developed the Developmental Relationships Framework. The Institute has identified five elements with 20 specific actions that make relationships powerful in young peoples’ lives. The five elements are: Express Care, Challenge Growth, Provide Support, Share Power and Expand Possibilities. You can download a free copy of this framework at: <https://www.search-institute.org/dev-relationships-framework>



*Express Care: Show me that I matter to you.*

*Challenge Growth: Push me to keep getting better.*

*Provide Support: Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.*

*Share Power: Treat me with respect and give me a say.*

*Expand Possibilities: Connect me with the people and places that broaden my world.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CHECK OUT THE SEARCH INSTITUTE WEBSITE**

<https://www.search-institute.org/where-to-start/>

## Child Abuse and Neglect Reports & COVID-19

Children are specifically vulnerable to abuse during COVID-19. Research shows that *increased stress levels among parents* is often a major predictor of physical abuse and neglect of children. Stressed parents may be more likely to respond to their children’s anxious behaviors or demands in aggressive or abusive ways. The support systems that many at-risk parents rely on, such as extended family, child care and schools, religious groups and other community organizations, are no longer available in many areas due to the stay-at-home orders. CDC reports that at least 1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year. Child abuse and neglect can have a tremendous impact on lifelong health and well-being if left untreated. For example, exposure to violence in childhood increases the risks of injury, future violence victimization and perpetration, substance abuse, delayed brain development, lower educational attainment, and limited employment opportunities.

*Source: SAMHSA*



## Child Abuse Mandated Reporting

A report of alleged child abuse is made in Georgia every 14 minutes. **Section 19-7-5 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated**, relating to reporting of child abuse, designated several categories of individuals as mandated reporters. These individuals, “having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, shall report or cause reports of that abuse to be made.” All child service organization personnel are mandated reporters. Child service organization personnel means persons employed by or volunteering at a business or an organization, **whether public, private, for profit, not for profit, or voluntary, that provides care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, recreational programs or shelter to children (O.C.G.A. 19-7-5(b)(5).** There are four types of child abuse: Neglect, Emotional/Psychological, Physical Abuse, and Sexual Abuse. Mandated reporters only need “reasonable suspicion,” not direct evidence to report. When you suspect a child is being maltreated, report your concerns to the designated reporter in your school or to a supervisor. Follow up with your designated reporter to assure that a report is made to child protective services. Remember, in order to make a report or cause a report to be made, mandated reporters only need to have “reasonable suspicion,” not direct evidence to report. Reports must be made within 24 hours. **Any person or official required by Georgia law to report suspected cases of child maltreatment and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.**

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*Mandated reporters who report in “good faith” are protected by law, even if the report is not substantiated.*

