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Dear Nevada Families:

We know that school closures and the stress of COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus, affects parents, guardians, and students. This document was created to share tips and resources for Nevada's families to support working together to keep our communities safe and healthy during this challenging time.

To reiterate the message Governor Steve Sisolak shared with students on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, the temporary school closures should *not* be considered an extended spring break. We need your assistance in sharing this message with children and neighbors – at the instruction of Nevada's health officers, students are being asked to refrain from large gatherings and "carrying on as normal." Though you may have heard that young people are at low risk of suffering from symptoms of COVID-19, children can still be exposed to COVID-19 and pass it on to others. The decisions students and families make while schools are closed will have a direct impact on the health of their parents, grandparents, and neighbors.

Please speak with your children honestly about what our communities are facing and invite them to be part of the solution by taking the steps below:

- 1) Limit social interactions. Families need to take social distancing seriously or it defeats the purpose of school closures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
  - Do not have play dates, gatherings, etc.
  - Limit outings to necessities like retrieving medicine and food.
  - Maintain a safe social distance of six feet from others if you must go out in public.
- 2) Practice responsible personal hygiene:
  - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;
  - Avoid contact with people who are sick;
  - Stay home while sick and avoid close contact with others; and
  - Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands.
- 3) Continue learning. It is very important that students keep up with any schoolwork that has been assigned, either online through email or software, or distributed on paper. It is recommended that you

set a specific time and location for your children to complete their schoolwork each day and minimize distractions during that time.

- 4) Model healthy coping skills. As a family, eat healthy, exercise together at home, play games together, drink lots of water, and find ways to practice positive behaviors. Talk on the phone with family and friends about how they are doing and make this a shared experience of everyone working together to keep their community safe.
- 5) Stay calm and communicate factual information frequently to your children.
  - Use the [Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource for guidance](#). Children will react to and follow your verbal and nonverbal reactions. What you say and do about COVID-19, current prevention efforts, and related events can either increase or decrease your children's anxiety. Let your children talk about their feelings. If you have young children, click here for ideas on [How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus](#)
  - Limit television viewing or access to information on the internet and through social media. Try to avoid watching or listening to information that might be upsetting when your children are present.
  - Talk to your children about factual information of this disease; this can help reduce anxiety. Constantly watching updates on the status of COVID-19 can increase anxiety, so avoid this. Speak to your children about how some stories about COVID-19 on the Internet may be based on rumors and inaccurate information.
- 6) Make yourself available. Children may need extra attention from you and may want to talk about their concerns, fears, and questions. It is important they know they have someone who will listen to them; make time for them. Tell them you love them and give them plenty of affection.
- 7) Make a schedule and stick to it. Setting routines and communicating daily expectations is also significant in reducing stress and anxiety for children. Changes in routine are often difficult for children.
- 8) Be aware that the mental impact of illness can be just as significant as the physical impact. If you are worried about a student you know, refer to these resources: [Children's Mobile Crisis Response Team](#).

**Below are some suggestions for keeping your children actively engaged in family activity:**

- Find ways to make learning fun and engaging by allowing your children to teach you a skill they have been learning at school or outside of school.
- Incorporate the activities they would normally do outside of schools such as dance, gymnastics, or martial arts into your daily routine at home.
- Look for games or hands-on activities to engage in throughout the day to break up the day.
- Encourage creative storytelling or writing.
- Involve your children in meal preparation and teach them cooking skills.

- Incorporate math by teaching measurements or by involving them in online shopping. An online resource for ideas is: [No Time for Flashcards](#)
- Find a new interest or hobby that can be learned together by doing research or watching “how-to videos” together on YouTube.
- Make phone or video calls to friends and family.
- Allow but limit and monitor online videogaming with friends and contact through social media. This will help keep kids connected to their friends.
- Check out your local library’s digital library by visiting them online to create a reading list and view their online resources (digital media). You may also want to check out resources such as Kindle (Amazon) or other sites that allow downloading of e-books, audiobooks, magazines, movies, and more.
- Consider outside activities such as hiking and walks, which can be done with family, but limit social interactions.
- Create obstacle courses and scavenger hunts in the backyard or inside the house.
- Teach gardening skills if the weather outside permits.
- Take virtual field trips:
  - [These 12 Famous Museums Offer Virtual Tours You Can Take on Your Couch \(Video\).](#)
  - [Experience the best museums from London to Seoul in the comfort of your own home.](#)

#### **Resources for Students and Families**

- Public Broadcasting System (PBS) [How to Talk To Your Kids About Coronavirus](#)
- NASP [Talking to Children About COVID-19: A Parent Resource](#)
- NASP [Countering COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) Stigma and Racism: Tips for Parents and Caregivers](#)
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) (English, Spanish, and Chinese versions available).
- Child Mind Institute [Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus](#)
- National Public Radio [Just for Kids: A Comic Exploring the New Coronavirus](#)
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [Talking to Children About Coronavirus](#)
- University of Maryland Center of Excellence for Early Childhood and Infant Mental Health [Coronavirus Kids Flyer](#)

#### **Resources and Updates on the Prevention and Containment of Covid-19**

- We have moved beyond containment into [mitigation](#). This means each person must implement the prevention strategies of social distancing (avoiding close contact & crowds or gatherings and telework if you are able to) and practice regular, thorough handwashing.
- Follow any mandates or guidelines from your state, district, school, or employer.
- With school closings, students may experience hunger, abuse, or lack of healthcare in their homes and with their families. Know local resources and be prepared to help.

- View the [CDC list of coronavirus symptoms](#) and what to do if you are sick, in addition to their [Share Facts About COVID-19](#) flier.
- Visit the Nevada Department of Public and Behavioral Health [website](#).
- [The World Health Organization](#) releases [regular international updates](#).
- The [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#) (CDC) releases [regular updates from the US](#).

### **School Support**

- CDC [Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools](#)
- Nevada Health Response [Guidance for Schools](#)
- Colorín Colorado [Coronavirus: Multilingual Resources for Schools](#)
- Child Trends [State Laws on How Schools Should Address Pandemics](#)
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) [Preparing for Infectious Disease Epidemics: Brief Tips for School Mental Health Professionals](#)
- NASP [Responding to COVID-19: Brief Action Steps for School Crisis Response Teams](#)
- NASP [Preparing for a Pandemic Illness: Guidelines for School Administrators and School Crisis Response Teams](#)
- NASP [Countering Coronavirus Stigma and Racism: Tips for Teachers and Other Educators](#)
- Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress [Coronavirus and Emerging Infectious Disease Outbreaks Response](#)

### **Mental Health Care**

- CDC [Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19](#)
- The Jed Foundation [Tips for Self-Care and Managing Stress](#)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health: Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation During an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#)
- SAMHSA [Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)