

Webinar: Strategies for Districts to Support Self-Care for Educators During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Supporting children in grades k-12

A Publication From Regional Educational Laboratory West at IES

To access the RELs' evidence-based COVID-19 response resources, visit <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/covid-19>.



View Webinar

Primary Audience: School Leaders **Secondary Audiences:** Instructional Leaders and Parents

This webinar, hosted by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) West, the Region 15 Comprehensive Center, and the National Center to Improve Social & Emotional Learning and School Safety, offers practical information and guidance backed by research to help school staff cope with the stresses of school closures, service provision, and quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Presenters define self-care as well as discuss its importance for educators to address their own needs so they are better able to support students and their school community. Strategies address healthy mindsets; connectedness and belonging; and healthy, realistic boundaries and interactions.



Promising Strategies

How districts can support healthy mindsets and behaviors:

- Ask educators about their workloads.
- Set realistic expectations and support educators in meeting them.
- Model self-awareness and self-reflection in district communications.
- Acknowledge, support, and normalize different stress responses.
- Encourage educators to practice self-care and connect them to available resources.
- Provide forums for educators to share what is going well and make meaning together.
- Demonstrate flexibility in district policies, as appropriate and possible.

How districts can support identity, connectedness and belonging:

- Provide opportunities for educators to connect with each other.
- Host virtual “office hours” to allow educators direct communication with district staff.
- Host virtual check-ins for informal discussions among educators.
- Ensure district communications are clear, timely, and proactive.

How districts can support healthy boundaries and interactions:

- Provide various connection channels to meet different needs.

- Share communication norms for online meetings and interactions.
- Revise and/or create policies and procedures as needed.
- Provide two-way communication opportunities for educators, families, and students with district staff.
- Encourage the use of set working hours and scheduled breaks.
- Use district media channels to share positive stories and connect educators with students and families.
- Create fact sheets about relevant district benefits and employee assistance programs.

Questions to Consider



- What mindsets and strategies have supported you in the past when managing change and unexpected events?
 - In what ways might you/colleagues apply them during this “new normal”?
- How are you modeling self-care and encouraging others to do the same?
- How did you create a sense of belonging and connection before social distancing, when you were in person with others?
 - How might you adapt these strategies to develop and maintain healthy connections remotely?
- What boundaries do you need to be clear about and which ones can be flexible?
- How can you honor your boundaries while respecting the boundaries of colleagues?



Related Resources

- [National Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety at WestEd](#)
- WestEd Crisis Response Resource: [Self-Care Strategies for Educators During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)
- REL Pacific infographic: [How to Grow Teacher Wellbeing in Your Schools](#)
- REL West webinar archive: [Self and Collective Care of Youth-Serving Adults](#)

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences funds a network of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs). Each REL serves a designated region of the country and works in partnership with educators and policymakers with a mission of supporting a more evidence-based education system to improve outcomes for students. In response to the impact of COVID-19 on education systems, the RELs collaborated to produce evidence-based resources and guidance.

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