

# COVID-19 Guidance and Mental Health Resources for K-12 Schools

Thursday, January 20, 2022

SchoolSafety.gov



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



# Webinar Agenda

- Webinar Objectives
- Speaker Introductions
- CDC - COVID-19 Update
  - Prevention Strategies
    - Isolation
    - Quarantine
- MHTTC - Mental Health Resources
  - MHTTC Overview
    - Responding to COVID-19
    - Additional Resources
- SchoolSafety.gov Resources
- K-12 School Security Guide (Gen 3) Update
- Q & A



# Webinar Objectives

1. Inform school personnel of the **latest guidance regarding COVID-19**, focusing on isolation, updated quarantine rules, and mealtime in schools
2. Acknowledge the effect COVID-19 has had on mental health, and provide mental health resources **aimed at aiding students and school personnel** whose mental health has been impacted by COVID-19



# Featured Speakers



## Neha Cramer

Lead, Guidance and Technical Assistance  
School Support Section (S3)  
State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support Task Force  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Jessica Gonzalez

School Mental Health Coordinator  
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center  
(MHTTC) Network Coordinating Office  
Stanford University School of Medicine



## Ryan Streeter

Program Manager – Product Branch  
School Safety Task Force  
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency  
Department of Homeland Security



# Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools

**Neha Cramer, MPH**

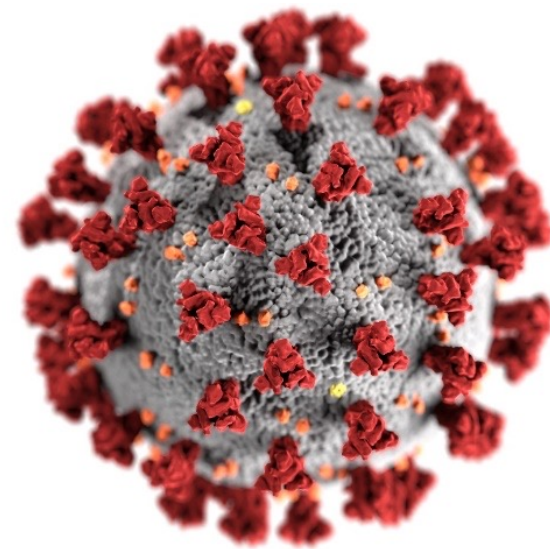
**Lead, Guidance and Technical Assistance**

**School Support Section (S3)**

**State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support Task Force**

[K-12 Guidance:](#)

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html)



**[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)**

# Prevention Strategies

**Getting vaccinated**

**Consistent and  
correct mask use**

**Physical distancing**

**Screening testing to  
promptly identify  
cases, clusters, and  
outbreaks**

**Improving  
ventilation**

**Handwashing and  
respiratory  
etiquette**

**Staying home when  
sick and getting  
tested**

**Contact tracing, in  
combination with  
isolation and  
quarantine**

**Cleaning and  
disinfection**

# Isolation

- Isolate when you are sick or if you tested positive for COVID-19, even if you don't have symptoms.
- Stay home and isolate away from other people for **at least 5 full days**.
- People who have symptoms can end isolation after 5 full days only if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication **and** if other symptoms have improved.
- Everyone should wear a well-fitting mask when around others at home and in public for an additional 5 days after ending their isolation.

# Who Does NOT Need to Quarantine in K-12 Schools (1/2)

- Students, teachers, and staff who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they:
  - Are up to date with COVID-19 vaccines OR
  - Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test).
- Schools may consider including students ages 12-17 years in this group if they completed their primary vaccine series but have not yet received all eligible boosters, as long as they do not have symptoms.





# Who Does NOT Need to Quarantine in K-12 Schools (2/2)

- Wear a [well-fitting mask](#) around others for 10 days from the date of your last close contact with someone with COVID-19 (the date of last close contact is considered day 0).
- [Get tested](#) at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19. If you test positive or develop COVID-19 symptoms, follow recommendations for isolation.
- If you tested positive for COVID-19 with a [viral test](#) within the previous 90 days and subsequently recovered and remain without COVID-19 symptoms, you do not need to quarantine or get tested after close contact.



# Who Should Quarantine in K-12 Schools (1/2)

- Students, teachers, and staff should quarantine for at least 5 days if they came into close contact with someone with COVID-19 (even if they don't have symptoms) if they:
  - Are not up to date with COVID-19 vaccines **OR**
  - Are not vaccinated



# Who Should Quarantine in K-12 Schools (2/2)

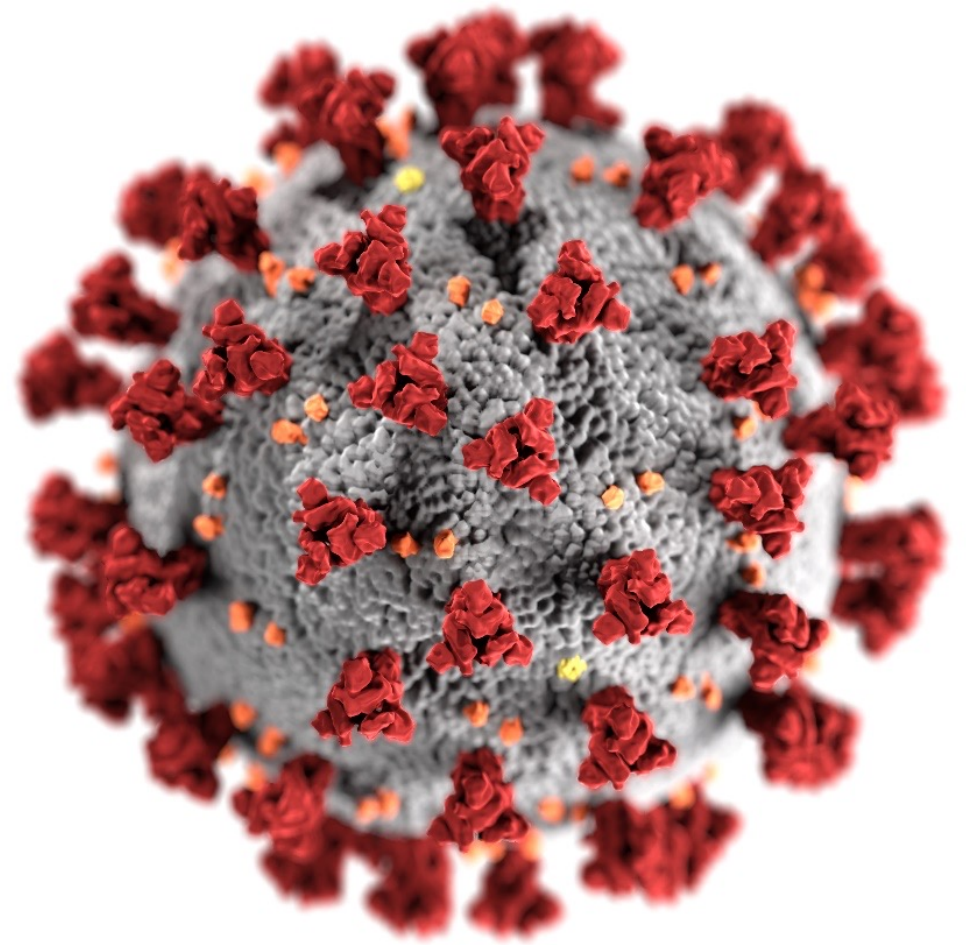
- Quarantine for a full 5 days after close contact.
- Wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days from the date of their last close contact.
- Get tested at least 5 days after having close contact with someone with COVID-19, unless they had confirmed COVID-19 in the last 90 days and subsequently recovered.
- For 10 days after their last exposure to someone with COVID-19, they should watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other COVID-19 symptoms.



# Mealtime During Days 6-10

- Schools should have a plan for students and staff to adequately distance from others and ensure they wear their well-fitting masks when not actively eating during days 6-10 of quarantine or isolation.
- What School Nutrition Professionals Need to Know About COVID-19:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/covid/school-nutrition-professionals.html>





For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# **The MHTTC Network and Response to COVID-19: School Mental Health Resources**

Jessica Gonzalez, MSW  
School Mental Health Coordinator  
MHTTC Network Coordinating Office

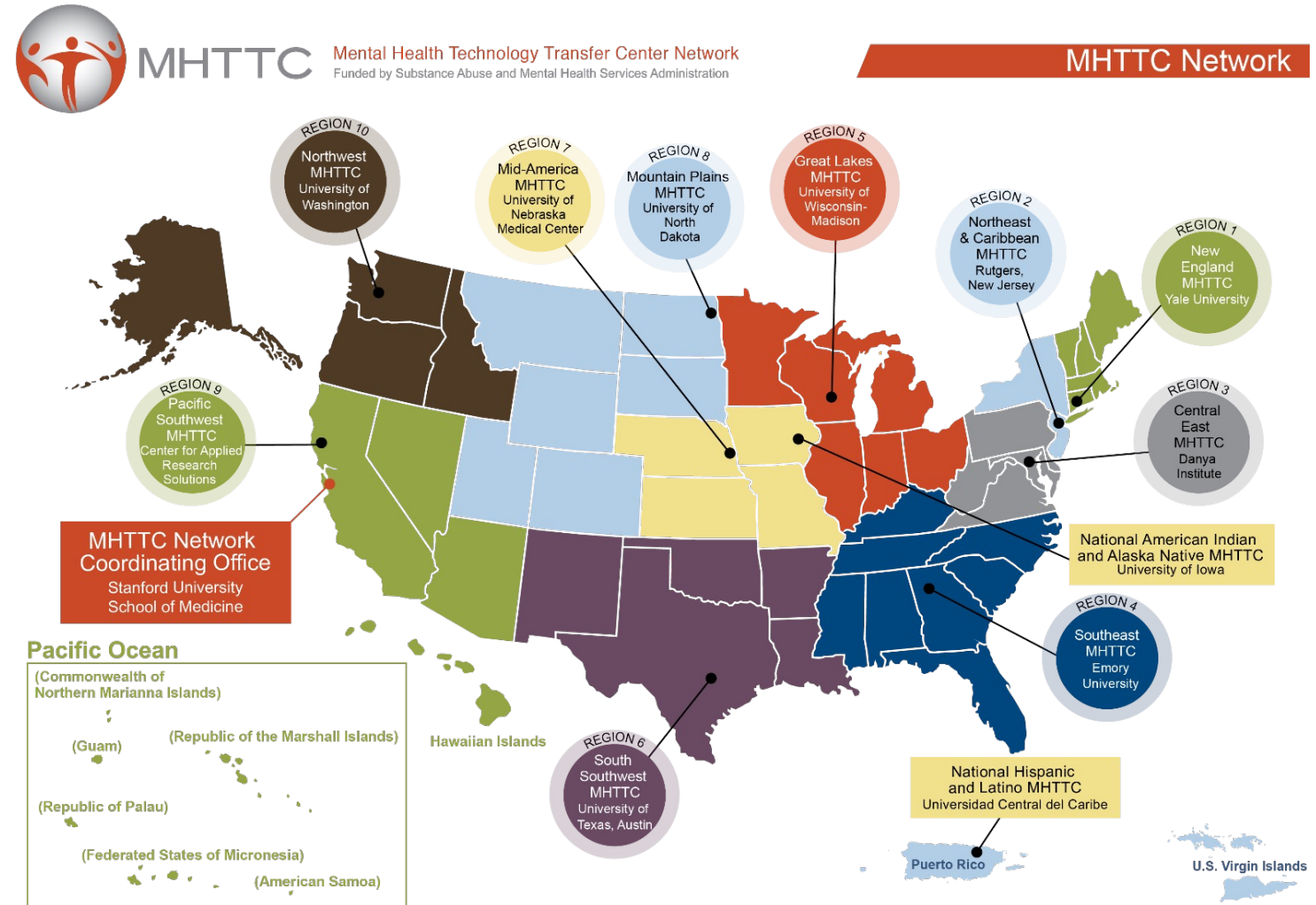
***SAMHSA***  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

# Overview of the MHTTC Network

# The Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) Network

The MHTTC Network accelerates the adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices for mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery through FREE technical assistance and training.

Visit the MHTTC website at  
<https://mhttcnetwork.org/>





# MHTTC School Mental Health Initiative

Supplemental funding to address implementation of mental health services in school systems.



## Communicating About School Mental Health - A Graphic Toolkit

Collaborating TTC: Southeast MHTTC  
Publication Date: November 12, 2021

 [VIEW RESOURCE](#)



## Mental Health Stigma Reduction in Rural Schools

Publication Date: November 10, 2021

Developed By: [Mountain Plains MHTTC](#)

 [DOWNLOAD](#)



[Special Topics in Mental Health Services](#)

[Wellness Matters: Self-Care for Mental Health Providers](#)

[View Description and Enroll](#)



## Treating Grief and Loss in Black Children and Youth

Collaborating TTC: Central East MHTTC  
Publication Date: October 28, 2021

 [VIEW RESOURCE](#)



# National School Mental Health Best Practices: Implementation Guidance Modules for States, Districts and Schools



- Educators and Student Instructional Support Personnel
- Collaboration and Teaming
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports
- Evidence-Informed Services and Supports
- Cultural Responsiveness and Equity
- Data-Driven Decision Making

Available on the MHTTC Website:

<http://bit.ly/implementation-guidance-modules>

# Responding to COVID-19

# COVID-19 and School Mental Health

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Children's Hospital Association declared that the pandemic-related decline in child and adolescent mental health has become a national emergency (APA, 2020)

Children are exhibiting increased irritability, clinginess, and fear, and issues with sleeping and poor appetite. Poor mental health outcomes resulting from the pandemic may disproportionately affect children of color (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2022)

We are seeing soaring rates of children and adolescents with depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness, and suicidality that will have lasting impact (APA, 2020)

53% of teachers say they are thinking of leaving the profession more now than they were before the pandemic (CDC Foundation, 2020)

Teachers who report more difficulty focusing on their work now as compared to before the pandemic were more than twice as likely to report mental health distress (CDC Foundation, 2020)

# Responding to COVID-19

- Pivoted in-person to virtual training and technical assistance
- Developed listening and support sessions to help states, districts, schools, educators and school mental health providers
- Gauged need for new clinical topics specific to COVID-19
- COVID-19 specific pages on the Network website with MHTTC events and products, and a curated list of resources

COVID-19 Impact  
on Student  
Mental Health

Grief, Loss, &  
Bereavement

IPV and Child  
Abuse

Mental Health  
Disparities

Educator  
Wellness

Telehealth Basics

School Mental  
Health Workforce  
Retention

Crisis Response

Back to School  
During COVID-19



# COVID-19 Related School Mental Health Resources

- Access COVID-19 related SMH resources on our website, including:
  - Upcoming MHTTC Webinars
  - MHTTC Products
  - Resources from other reputable SMH organizations

## Responding to COVID-19 School Mental Health

Public health emergencies such as COVID-19 have a significant impact on students and their families, educators and the school mental health workforce, as well as the school mental health system. Addressing the mental health impact on students, parents, teachers and school personnel has become more important and necessary than ever before. The MHTTC Network recognizes this, and we are available to assist the school mental health workforce by providing training and technical assistance to help during these trying times.

**Access a complete list of events & resources related to school mental health and COVID-19 [here](#).**



### COVID-Related MHTTC School Mental Health Products and Resources

[Back to School After COVID-19: Supporting Student and Staff Mental Health Toolkit | New England MHTTC](#)


This toolkit is designed to help guide conversations to include a trauma-informed, equitable, and compassionate lens to providing mental health supports to every member of the school community.

[Back to School: Opening up with Optimism and Connection | New England MHTTC](#)

As schools prepare to return to learning—in the classroom and virtually, they can help create a sense of safety that supports staff and student mental health by cultivating a culture of joy and forming positive connections in the school community. Three thought leaders share how their work in the fields of education, recovery-oriented care, and trauma recovery overlap to provide practical strategies to school staff and community members who care deeply about addressing the trauma that will be prevalent this fall.

**<https://bit.ly/mhttc-smh-covid-19>**

# COVID-19 & School Mental Health Resource Highlights

 Northeast and Caribbean (HHS Region 2)  
**MHTTC** Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

## Tools for Educators During a Public Health Crisis

*"It's the teacher that makes the difference, not the classroom."  
- Michael Morpurgo*

Educators have been asked to fill many roles during this public health crisis. They have had to adjust to new learning environments, provide emotional support to students, maintain communication with parents, take care of themselves and their families, among other responsibilities. At the same time, they are experiencing the anxiety and worry about the public health crisis along with the rest of the community. Here are some tools to help.


### TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

It's natural to feel stressed, worried, anxious, and overwhelmed during a public health emergency, but there are steps you can take to build your wellness.

1 BODY	2 MIND	3 EMOTIONS	4 SUPPORT
Be physically active or exercise regularly	Engage in activities or hobbies you enjoy	Notice and accept how you feel, try not to judge your feelings	Reach out to others by calling, texting, email, social media
Eat well, maintain a healthy diet, drink water	Try as much as possible to maintain a daily routine	Treat yourself with compassion and understanding	Use FaceTime, Skype, or other video tools to talk "face-to-face"
Get a good night's rest, keep a routine sleep schedule	Meditate or pray as a way to relax and find support	Talk about your feelings with someone you trust	Talk about the emergency, but also enjoy other conversation
Relax your body with breathing exercises and stretching	Take breaks throughout the day	Use calming self-talk ("I can handle this", "One day at a time")	Ask for help when needed from friends/family or professionals

### STAYING INFORMED WITHOUT STRESSING OUT

While it's important to stay up to date with the most current information regarding the public health emergency, you don't want to overwhelm yourself with news or media that causes you to feel anxious or distressed. What can you do?





- AVOID** excessive exposure to media coverage
- LIMIT** your media exposure to a single credible source
- CHECK** for information updates at a specific time only once or twice a day
- GATHER** information that allows you to take practical steps to protect yourself and your loved ones

Access Reliable Information: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) | [samhsa.gov/coronavirus](http://samhsa.gov/coronavirus)

[@NECMHTTC](#) [mhttcnetwork.org/centers/northeast-caribbean-mhttc](http://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/northeast-caribbean-mhttc) [@NECMHTTC](#)

## Tools for Educators During a Public Health Crisis


 New England (HHS Region 1)  
**MHTTC** Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



## Back to School After COVID-19: Supporting Student and Staff Mental Health


Childhood-Trauma Learning Collaborative Toolkit

Dana Asby, MA, MEd; Kaela Farrise, MA; Christine Mason, PhD;  
Ali Sumski, MA; John Crocker, MEd; Rachel Santa, EdD, and  
Martha Staeheli, PhD

 SAMHSA  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

## Back to School After COVID-19: Supporting Student and Staff Mental Health Toolkit

### How to Get Started with School-Based Mental Health Services via Telehealth

1 How to Navigate Privacy and Technology	2 How to Engage Your Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>► <b>Identify</b> whether your organization suggests a platform for tele-services</li><li> <a href="#">National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) COVID-19 Resources</a></li><li>► <b>Find</b> regulations that your school or agency may have for privacy<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At this time, HIPAA-compliant platforms are not federally required</li></ul></li><li>► <b>Determine</b> the platform that meets your service and student needs</li><li>► <b>Consider:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Is it safe and necessary to see one another?</i></li><li><i>Does the student have access to a cell phone or computer?</i></li><li><i>Are there other barriers to technology?</i></li></ul></li><li>► <b>Pick a platform.</b> Use professional accounts (e.g. email/phone) to the greatest degree possible. Practice using the platform with colleagues to gain support</li><li>► <b>Determine</b> when you need to obtain <b>consent</b> from parents and keep them informed as best you can</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>► <b>Identify</b> relevant team members to contact (e.g. administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Consider</b> how you can partner with colleagues with telehealth experience, such as home-school providers</li></ul></li><li>► <b>Set</b> a weekly or biweekly virtual meeting time</li><li>► <b>Set</b> an agenda and send it out prior to meeting</li><li>► <b>Troubleshoot</b> how to use the telehealth platform, and consider:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Who is going to contact students and families?</i></li><li><i>Who can provide support to staff?</i></li><li><i>How can you share helpful tools and tips with each other on how to conduct telehealth?</i></li></ul></li><li>► <b>Talk</b> with team members about their current needs and perceived needs of students, families and school staff</li><li>► <b>Set</b> reasonable expectations for your team and divide tasks among members<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>► <b>Set</b> plan to monitor tasks and date/time for follow-up meeting</li></ul></li></ul>

## TELEHEALTH TOOLBOX

• for school personnel •

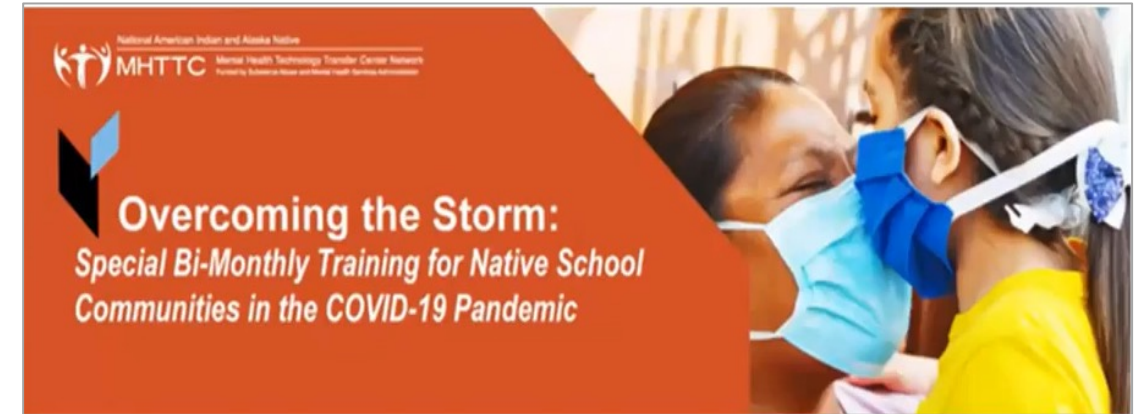
## Telehealth Toolbox for School Personnel



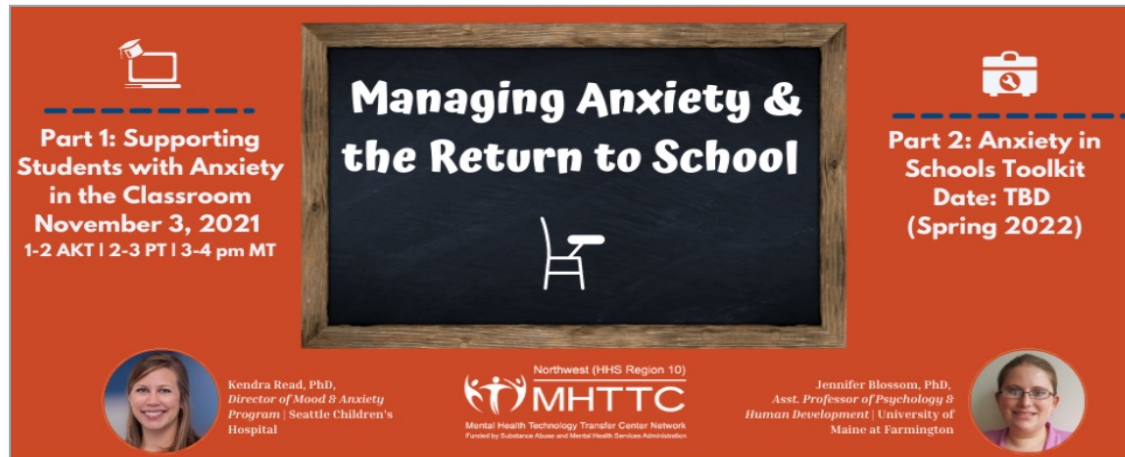
# COVID-19 & School Mental Health Resource Highlights



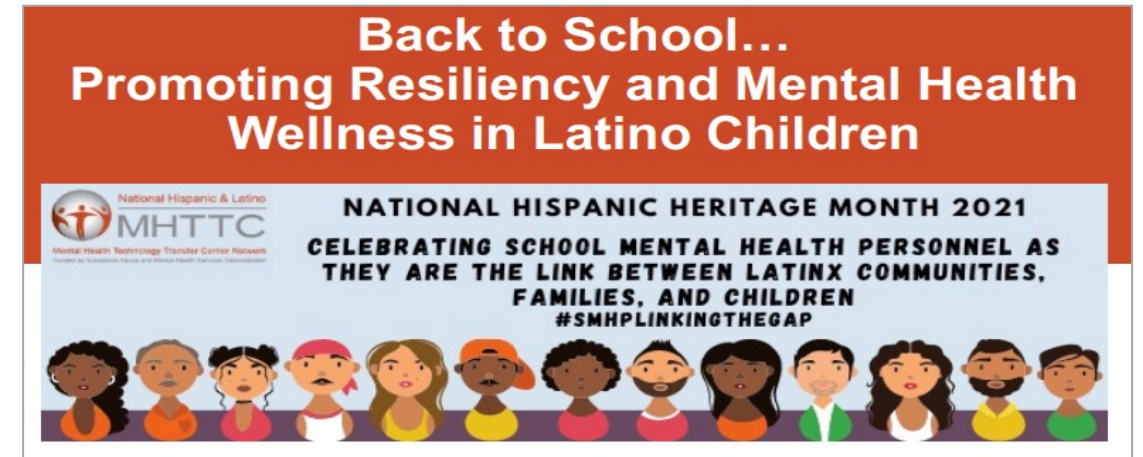
[Making a Good Connection: Engaging Students and Families in School Tele-Mental Health](#)



[Overcoming the Storm: Special Bi-Monthly Training for AI/AN School Communities in the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)



[Managing Anxiety & The Return To Schools](#)



[Back to School... Promoting Resiliency and Mental Health Wellness in Latino Children](#)



# Resources for Educator and School Mental Health Professional Well-Being



[Educator Wellness Series](#)



[Burnout Busters: The Podcast](#)



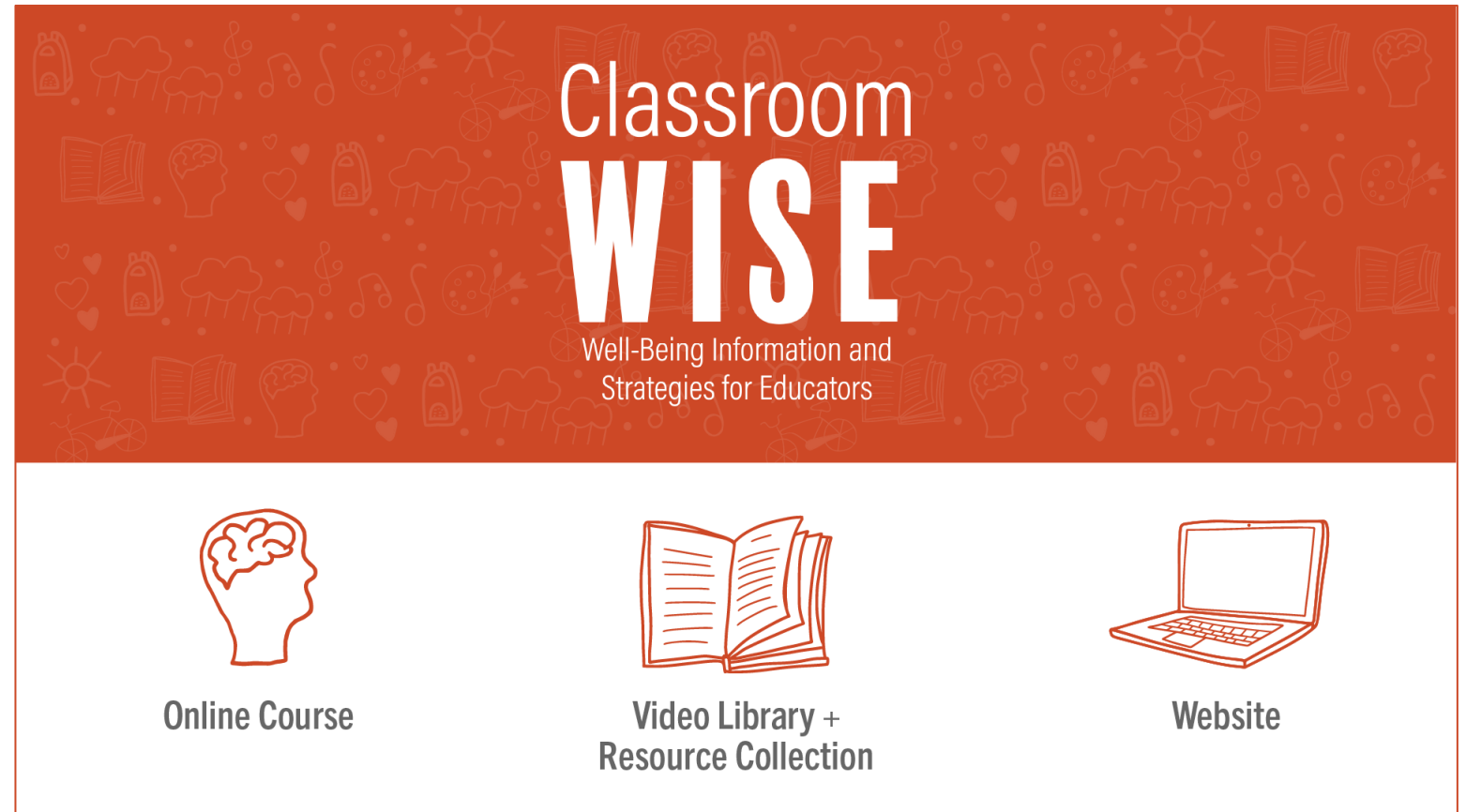
[Well-Being Wednesdays: Taking Care of Educators Who Take Care of Kids](#)



[Self-Care in Overwhelming Times](#)

# Classroom WISE: Well-being Information and Strategies for Educators

- FREE 3-part training package for K-12 educators and school personnel on mental health literacy
- Development process included input from educators, students, and school mental health leaders across the country
- Offers evidence-based strategies to promote student mental health and support students with mental health challenges



Available at [www.classroomwise.org](http://www.classroomwise.org)

# Additional MHTTC School Mental Health Resources

Access our Training and Events Calendar and Products and Resources Catalog on our MHTTC website: [www.MHTTCnetwork.org](http://www.MHTTCnetwork.org)

## Training and Events Calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS

ONGOING EVENTS

PAST EVENTS

Keyword Search

Filter by Event Type

Keyword Search

Filter by Type

Select Date Range

And

Start date


End date

Center


Any Center

Apply


OCT 14

 **Safe at Home: Domestic Violence Awareness Series Part 1**  
In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October, we are hosting this series to help

OCT 14

 **Assessment and Treatment Strategies for Mood and Anxiety Disorders**  
Assessment and Treatment Strategies for Mood and Anxiety Disorders October 14, 2020 1:00pm - 2:30pm

OCT 14

 **Clinical Application of Cultural Elements for the Hispanic and Latino Populations Module III and VI**  
FREE CEU TRAINING SPONSORED BY OPRE The State of New Mexico Office of Peer Recovery and Engagement

## Products & Resources Catalog

Search

Product Type

Search for text...

- Any -

Center

Target Audience


Any Center


- Any -


Keywords


- Any -


Apply


 **Guiding Principles: Resiliency and Recovery**  
The New England MHTTC has as its overarching aim to use evidence-based means to disseminate evidence-based practices, and promote resilience and



 **Children's Mental Health Initiative | Needs Assessment**  
In 2020, the New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (New England MHTTC) engaged stakeholders from across the region in



 **Great Lakes MHTTC Year 2 in Review**  
Great Lakes MHTTC Year 2 in Review provides an overview of the regional center's activities, accomplishments and challenges. Download the full



# Connect with us!



The screenshot shows the MHTTC website. The header is orange with the MHTTC logo and text: "MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "YOUR MHTTC", "TRAINING AND EVENTS", "RESOURCES", "PROJECTS", and "COMMUNICATION". The main content area has a section titled "Find Your Center" with a subtext: "To jump to a specific center, click the center's name. To save a center as your default center, select the center by clicking the photo, then click the Save button at the bottom of the page". Below this is a section titled "Centers Across The Network" with three cards: "National American Indian and Alaska Native MHTTC" (with a drum image), "National Hispanic and Latino MHTTC" (with a group photo), and "New England MHTTC" (with a fall foliage image and "HHS Region 1" label).

**MHTTC** Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

YOUR MHTTC ▾ TRAINING AND EVENTS ▾ RESOURCES ▾ PROJECTS ▾ COMMUNICATION ▾

## Find Your Center

To jump to a specific center, click the center's name. To save a center as your default center, select the center by clicking the photo, then click the Save button at the bottom of the page

### Centers Across The Network



National American Indian and Alaska Native MHTTC



National Hispanic and Latino MHTTC



HHS Region 1

New England MHTTC

- Follow us on social media

  @MHTTCNetwork

- Subscribe to our e-newsletter [\*MHTTC Pathways\*](#) for access to new COVID-19 school mental health related trainings and resources

Questions? Contact Jessica Gonzalez at [jegonzalez@stanford.edu](mailto:jegonzalez@stanford.edu).

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

# SCHOOLSAFETY.GOV RESOURCES



29

SchoolSafety.gov



**MHTTC**

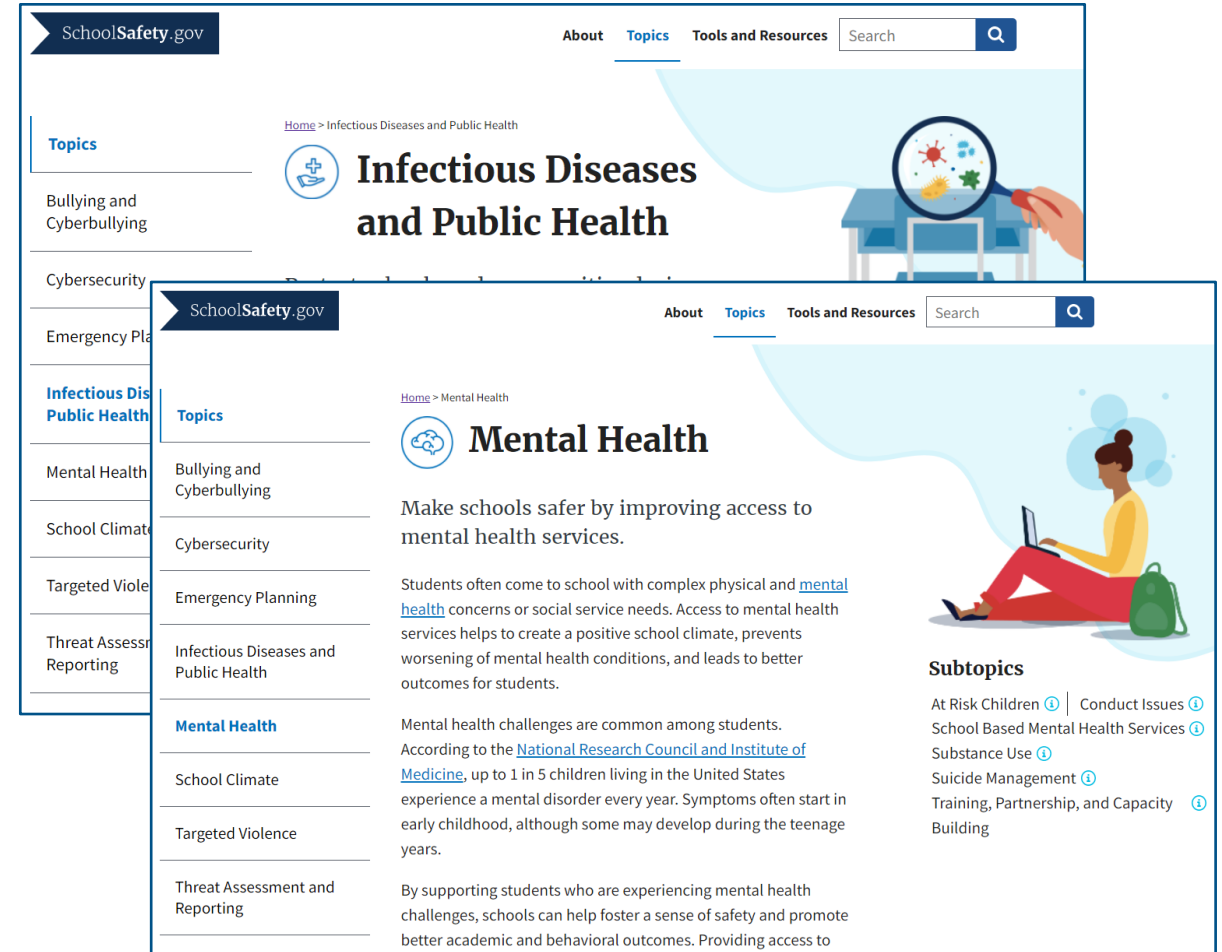
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



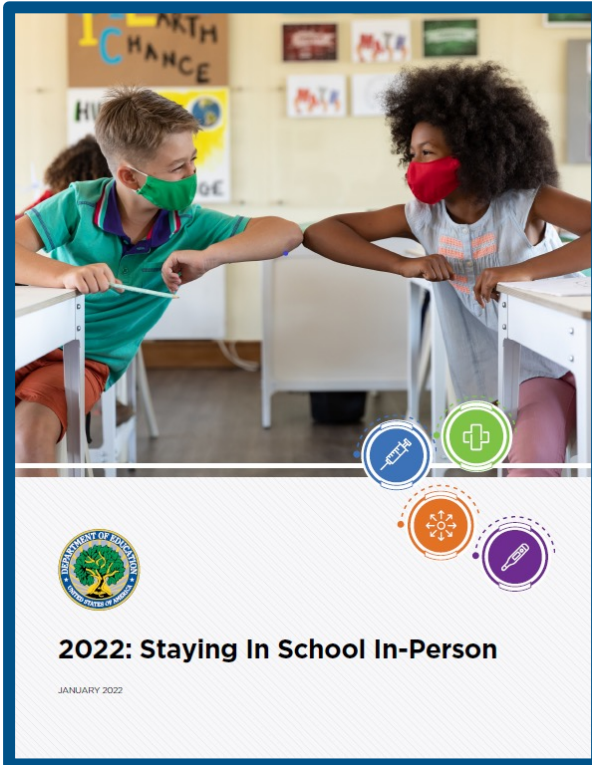
# Topic Pages | SchoolSafety.gov

Topic pages contain a definition along with accompanying information regarding the topic, **key strategies to consider, and featured resources** to support schools and districts.

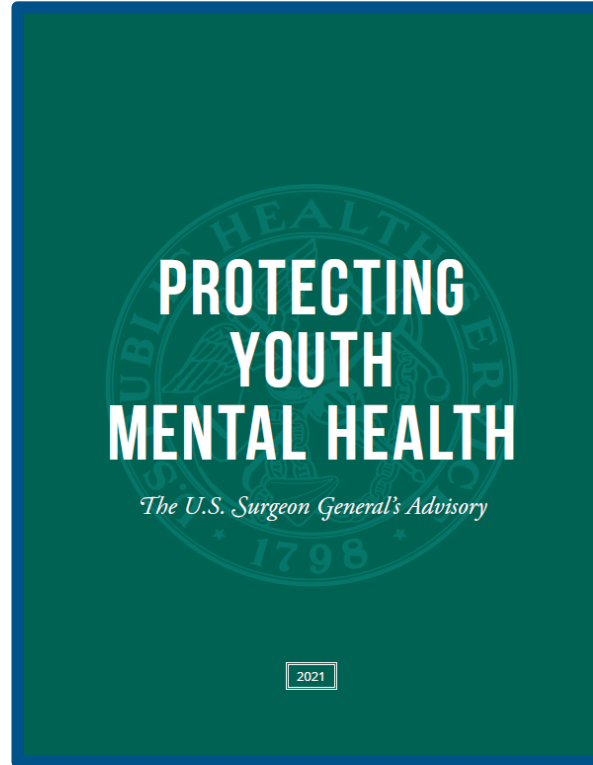
Resources tend to be **how-to or action-oriented guides** that inform users on how to implement strategies to address the topics.



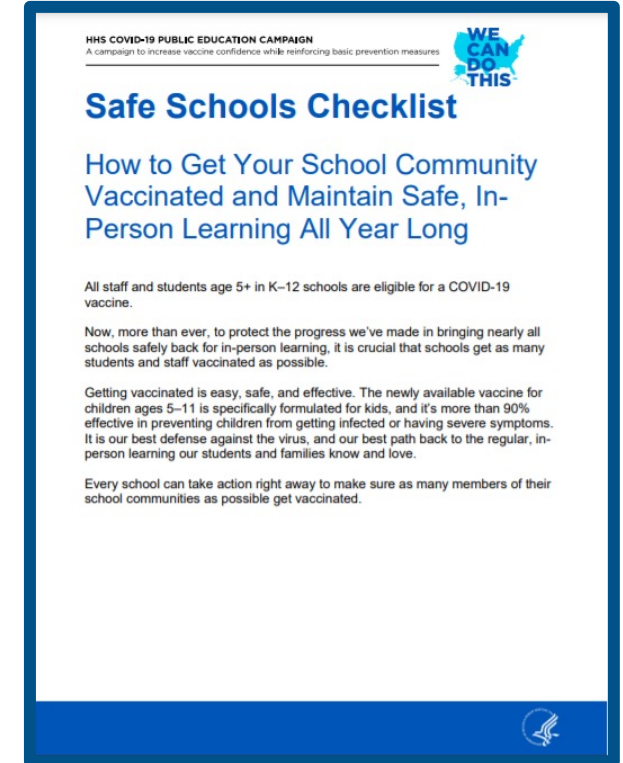
# Additional Resources



2022: Staying In School In-Person  
(Dept. of Education)



Protecting Youth Mental Health  
(Dept. of Health & Human Services)



Safe Schools Checklist  
(Dept. of Health & Human Services)

# Additional Resources

FEMA FACT SHEET – MAY 12, 2020

## Exercise Starter Kit for Workshop on Reconstituting Operations

FEMA has developed an Exercise Starter Kit with sample documents your organization can use to conduct your own planning workshop on returning to full operations. Suggested discussion questions build upon reconstruction planning principles and the White House [Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#).

### About the Exercise Starter Kit

FEMA maintains a series of Exercise Starter Kits as part of the [National Exercise Program](#) designed to help organizations facilitate their own exercises, such as workshops and tabletop exercises, to examine their readiness for a range of threats and hazards. This particular kit is designed to help organizations across the whole community facilitate their own conversations in a virtual workshop format around planning considerations for reconstituting operations during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Exercise Starter Kit includes a sample **facilitator guide** and sample **conduct slides**. These materials are designed to be adapted and customized for your own needs.

The workshop materials build upon relevant White House guidance for employers included in the [Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#) and a FEMA fact sheet, ["Planning Considerations for Organizations in Reconstituting Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic."](#)


This workshop, which is intended to be guided by a facilitator within your own organization, provides a framework to assess your current status and begin planning to reconstitute operations. Reconstitution is the process by which organizations resume full operations. However, each organization is unique and should establish its own criteria for successful reconstitution. Reconstituting operations following the COVID-19 pandemic will require a phased approach that results in restoration of full organization functionality but may leverage non-traditional and flexible work arrangements that can be adapted based on current public health guidance and local needs.

The suggested discussion questions focus on four discussion themes: **People, Facilities, Messaging & Communications**, and **Resource & Logistics**. The desired outcome from the workshop is a roadmap for a functional reconstitution plan tailored to your organization's unique needs.

### Using the Exercise Starter Kit Materials

#### Review Relevant Materials

1. Start by reviewing the White House [Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#).
2. Review the FEMA fact sheet, ["Planning Considerations for Organizations in Reconstituting Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic."](#)



May 2020 1 of 2

[Starter Kit for Workshop on Reconstituting Operations](#)  
(Dept. of Homeland Security - FEMA)

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN LIVING WITH GRIEF AND TRAUMA: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

*This training is designed for advocates who want to develop knowledge and skills to address the complicated issues that can arise when a child is exposed to a traumatic event resulting from a violent crime and provide appropriate services for children experiencing trauma and grief due to violence.*

Using a multidisciplinary team approach, victim service providers, mental health professionals, and law enforcement can improve existing services and create new opportunities to support children living with grief.

**OVC's Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) provides training to support professional development, enhance services to the community, and expand outreach to underserved victims of crime.**

**BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS 2-DAY TRAINING, YOU WILL:**

- Examine how children perceive death, how they process grief and trauma, and how you can recognize the signs in children and support their recovery.
- Identify risk predictors that contribute to trauma in children and discuss how risk factors influence behaviors over time.
- Describe how culture, family, and rituals play a significant role in how children process the death experience.
- Examine the intervention process and responses to children and other survivors following a violent crime.

CEUs are available upon successful completion of the training.

### HERE'S HOW TO GET STARTED


**APPLY EARLY.**  
Request a training at least 90 days prior to the event date.

**LET PEOPLE KNOW.**  
Conduct outreach to local and regional partners to participate in the training. Enroll up to 40 participants, but there must be a minimum of 30 participants at the training.

**FIND A PLACE TO HOLD THE TRAINING.**  
Secure a training facility and cover facility costs (including audio-visual equipment).

**RELAX.**  
OVC TTAC will arrange for the training event to meet your needs on your schedule.

OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME  
TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER  
9300 Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22031  
Phone: 1-866-OVC-TTAC  
(1-866-682-4822)  
TTY: 1-866-682-4880  
Fax: 703-225-2318  
Email: TTAC@ovcttac.org  
www.ovcttac.gov



**APPLY TODAY**  
WWW.OVCTTAC.GOV/TRAINING

February 2021

[Supporting Children Living with Grief and Trauma](#)  
(Dept. of Justice – OVC TTAC)

Washington, D.C.  
FBI National Press Office  
(202) 324-3681

Twitter Facebook Email

March 23, 2020

## School Closings Due to COVID-19 Present Potential for Increased Risk of Child Exploitation

Questions regarding this release should be directed to your local FBI field office.

Due to school closings as a result of COVID-19, children will potentially have an increased online presence and/or be in a position that puts them at an inadvertent risk. Due to this newly developing environment, the FBI is seeking to warn parents, educators, caregivers, and children about the dangers of online sexual exploitation and signs of child abuse.

### Background

Online sexual exploitation comes in many forms. Individuals may coerce victims into providing sexually explicit images or videos of themselves, often in compliance with offenders' threats to post the images publicly or send the images to victims' friends and family.

Other offenders may make casual contact with children online, gain their trust, and introduce sexual conversation that increases in egregiousness over time. Ultimately this activity may result in maintaining an online relationship that includes sexual conversation and the exchange of illicit images, to eventually physically meeting the child in-person.

In order for the victimization to stop, children typically have to come forward to someone they trust—typically a parent, teacher, caregiver, or law enforcement. The embarrassment of being enticed and/or coerced to engage in unwanted behavior is what often prevents children from coming forward. Offenders may have hundreds of victims around the world, so coming forward to help law enforcement identify offenders may prevent countless other incidents of sexual exploitation.


Abuse can occur offline through direct contact with another individual. During these uncertain conditions, where time with other adults and caregivers has increased immensely, parents/guardians should communicate with their children about appropriate contact with adults and watch for any changes in behavior, including an increase in nightmares, withdrawn behavior, angry outbursts, anxiety, depression, not wanting to be left alone with an individual, and sexual knowledge.

### Recommendations

Parents and guardians can take the following measures to help educate and prevent children from becoming victims of child predators and sexual exploitation during this time of national emergency:

#### Online Child Exploitation

- Discuss internet safety with children of all ages when they engage in online activity.
- Review and approve games and apps before they are downloaded.
- Make sure privacy settings are set to the strictest level possible for online gaming systems and electronic devices.
- Monitor your children's use of the Internet, keep electronic devices in an open, common room of the house.



[School Closings Present Potential Risk of Child Exploitation](#)  
(Dept. of Justice – FBI)



# K-12 School Security Guide Preview

The guide is organized across three sections that aim to:

- Enhance understanding about layered physical security in a systems-based way;
- Provide information about the various elements of a comprehensive school security system, including physical security strategies at each layer of a school campus; and
- Describe the common challenges that schools face as they plan for and make physical security improvements and strategies that have helped K-12 schools overcome these challenges in the past.

## 2.2 | THE SCHOOL PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM: STRATEGIES AND ELEMENTS

After taking this bin's eye view of a school's physical security system from the perspective of the broader school safety system, local education agencies can derive more insight into thinking about how to better protect and mitigate against threats, i.e., how will they address the physical security strategies of detection, delay, and response on their campuses? Table 2.2 defines these three physical security strategies and provides examples of measures that contribute to achieving them.

Table 2.1 - PHYSICAL SECURITY STRATEGIES

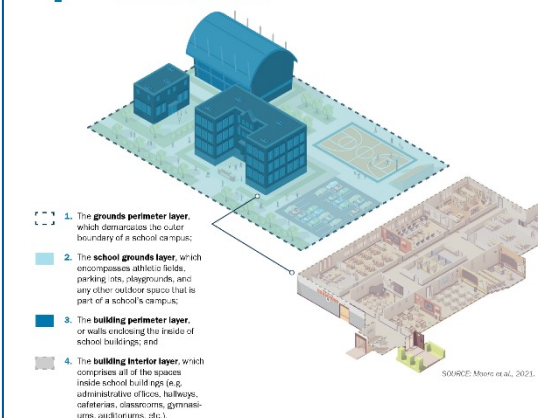
Physical Security Strategy	Measure Definition	Examples
Various threat mitigation	Measures that minimize the risk of a threat occurring	More secure construction (e.g., CCTV, lockable doors, perimeter fencing, etc.)
Threat level or risk assessment	Measures that assess the level of threat or risk to a school	Identifying windows, doors, or other potential vulnerabilities; conducting drills at facility entrances
Threat response	Measures that respond to a threat or risk	Security guards, current situation, and response equipment; training

Physical security measures are most effective at providing protection and mitigation benefits when they are installed to function alongside and in concert with other measures as part of a system (Jackson and LaTourrette, 2015). For instance, entry screening technology such as I.D. card or badge readers might offer protection, but if no one is monitoring school entry points, there is a smaller chance that the technology will delay or stop intruders from entering a building without authorization. Clear personnel roles, policies around operating and monitoring various technologies, and policies detailing what actions should follow the detection of a threat are therefore critical to the success of physical security measures. Regular training provides school staff and personnel the opportunity to practice their roles in simulated emergencies, and increases preparedness for worst case scenarios. Thinking about how various measures, personnel roles, policies, and training programs work together to address the three physical security strategies of detection, delay, and response is critical to planning and building an effective school physical security system.

## 2.3 | LAYERS OF THE SCHOOL PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Local education agencies should also consider how their physical security system is or will be distributed across a school's campus. Different security measures perform their various functions of detecting, delaying, and responding to threats at specific "layers" of a school campus. There are four main layers that schools should think about when planning for physical security:

FIGURE 2.2 - SCHOOL PHYSICAL SECURITY LAYERS



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FIGURE 2.3 - ELEMENTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM



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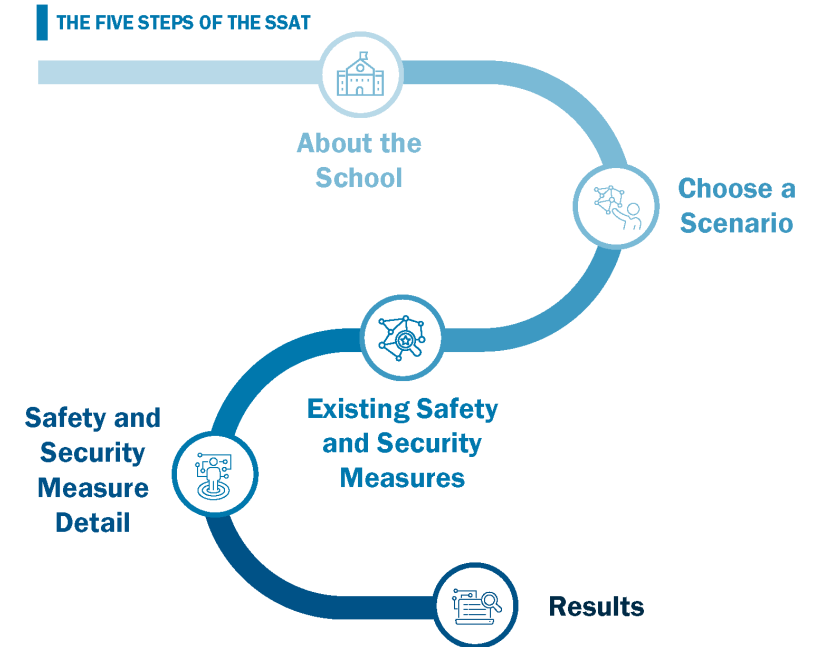
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# K-12 School Security Assessment Tool

The **K-12 School Security Assessment Tool (SSAT)** is a web-based program that walks Local Education Agencies and other stakeholders involved in the school security planning process through a complete vulnerability analysis and provides recommendations for improving security at a specific school.

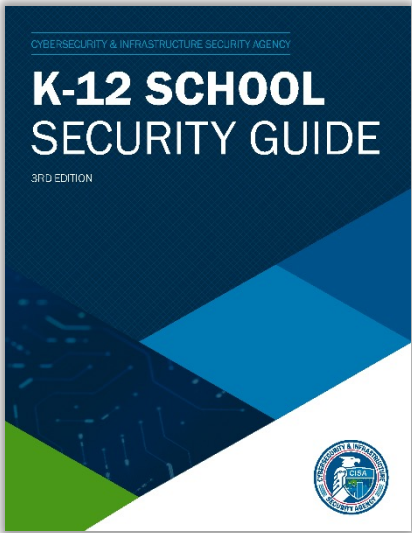
## The tool will launch with the K-12 Guide and will:

- Prioritize results and recommend immediate actions
- Provide simplicity in both language and design
- Equally serve users with varying levels of training and experience
- Be highly portable, allowing online and offline access

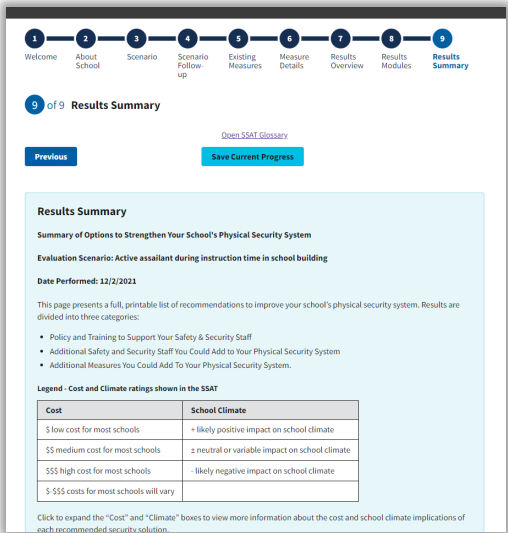


# K-12 School Security Product Suite

**Associated Product Suite: Available Starting February 2022**



**K-12 School Security Guide  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)**



**School Security Assessment Tool  
(SSAT) & Aides**



**K-12 Guide Training  
(In Development)**



**K-12 Guide  
Train-the-Trainer Toolkit  
(In Development)**

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## Key Resource Links

- <https://SchoolSafety.gov>
- <https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/global-mhttc/responding-covid-19-school-mental-health-resources>
- <https://cdc.gov>

Questions, feedback, or ideas?

Please contact [SchoolSafety@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:SchoolSafety@hq.dhs.gov)



# Question & Answer

