

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



WELCOME MARCH!

WHO WE ARE

The Student Assistance Prevention-Intervention Services Program (SAPISP) is a comprehensive, integrated model of services that:

- **Fosters** safe school environments
- **Promotes** healthy childhood development
- **Prevents** alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse

WHEN TO REFER TO STUDENT ASSISTANCE

You can make a referral at any time you have a concern about a student by submitting the referral form.

Some signs you may notice include:

- Decline in school performance
- Absenteeism or chronic tardiness

- Levels of activity or alertness change from day-to-day
- Talks freely about using or partying, or of family members using.
- Paraphernalia, clothing, jewelry, pictures, and drawings centered on chemical use
- Perfectionism or difficulty accepting mistakes
- Withdrawal; a loner; separates from others.

As a rule, an isolated instance of poor or unsatisfactory performance is not necessarily grounds for referral. However, if a student exhibits several of these signs, or there is a repeated pattern of behaviors, a referral is appropriate.

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STRESS, A TO B, MORE STRESS AND CHANGES

The heart beats faster just looking at the line above.

Once again, we are tasked with addressing the subject of stress. It is often discussed, but what does it actually mean? You might get different answers depending on whom you ask. Student Assistance Professionals always ask because we understand that it is a path that can take us to less healthy decision-making and worse, coping skills that can have profound outcomes on our health and wellness. Youth are even more affected by stress as they do not typically have the life experience and skills that come with years and decades of overcoming challenges and developing resilience.

Our friends at the American Psychological Association (<https://www.apa.org/topics/child-development/stress#>) have reminders for all of us who work with, parent, coach or mentor youth. They emphasize:

- Good sleep
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Discussing our stressors
- Finding balance

Further, adults have a responsibility to model effective coping skills as well as to help youth process their challenges.

WHY NOW?

We are now embarking on something that is really exciting – returning to school. For some of us, this will be the first time in a school setting in more than a year. And, while something exciting shouldn't carry with it a level of stress, it invariably does.

- Will the students be safe?
- Do they remember how to be in a classroom with peers and authority figures?
- Will their exuberance land them in the principal's office?

Another thing to keep in mind: **stress is an interpretation.** Between a “stressful” circumstance and my response comes an interpretation. If we breathe deeply, we can delay a response that might get us in all sorts of trouble. If we ask ourselves if this (event, circumstance, person) is in fact stressful before I feel stressed out, I might not give it as much weight. Does this minimize very complex realities? Sure. Is it wrong? The science of mindfulness is promising. With practice, it feels less silly and more authentic.

COVID-19 AS AN OPPORTUNITY

Our 32nd president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt said “A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.” Of course, our current global pandemic has been devastating for families, students, and the economy. We have suffered great losses. However, there is opportunity as well.

While it often feels like the opposite, we have grown and learned and adapted and, in that process, become more resilient. Without our normal outlets for fun, stress reduction, and support, we have developed other resources.

Some of our families are closer, friends and loved ones are reuniting over video chat formats, we have developed new ways of interacting. We have not given up, even though it's hard.

So, shall we add to our sense of resilience? Can we build up our ability to bounce back? Researchers and experts say yes.

Kendra Cherry offers this list to begin:

- **Find a sense of purpose** in your life, which will help boost you up on difficult days.
- **Build positive beliefs** in your abilities to help you increase your self-esteem.

TRUE NORTH
AT CAPITAL REGION ESD 113
WE'RE HERE TO HELP

CRISIS RESPONSE DISPATCH:

Olympic Health & Recovery Services:

Grays Harbor, Lewis
& Pacific Counties:
800-803-8833

Thurston & Mason Counties
360-754-1338

- **Develop a strong social network** of people who support you and who you can confide in.
- **Embrace change** as the inevitability that it is and be ready for it.
- **Be optimistic.** You don't need to ignore your problems, just understand that it's all temporary and that you have what it takes to make it through.
- **Nurture yourself** with healthy, positive self-care. Get enough sleep, eat well, and exercise.
- **Develop your problem-solving skills** through strategies like making a list of potential ways to solve your current problem.
- **Establish reasonable goals** by brainstorming solutions and breaking them down into manageable steps.
- **Take action to solve problems** rather than waiting for the problem to solve itself.

Learn more about resilience at <https://positivepsychology.com/what-is-resilience/>

TRUE NORTH ADOLESCENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES:

360-464-6867
esd113.org/behavioral-health

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE: 800-273-8255

CRISIS TEXT LINE: Text HOME to 741741