SUPPORTING STUDENT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The successful reopening of school buildings requires administrators, families, staff, local public health officials, and community stakeholders to collaborate regularly and effectively. District-level leaders need to ensure an organized, multitiered system of supports that addresses both academic skills and emotional and behavioral health.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL'S SUPPORT

RECOGNIZE POTENTIAL FOR TRAUMA

- Identify students and staff with higher risks, with trauma history or chronic stress.
- Use adverse childhood experiences (ACES) as guide.
- Look at community specific factors that indicate a history of other educational disruption (e.g., fires, hurricanes, flooding).
- Be attentive to stigma and racism that may occur as a result of COVID-19.

ADDRESS SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND STAFF
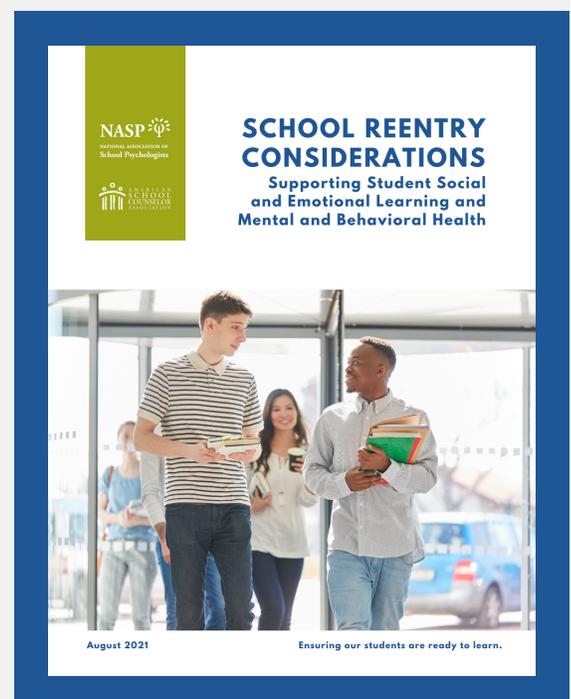
- Establish process and policies for screening and identifying students' needs.
- Develop strategies to provide support at different phases of recovery.
- Embed social–emotional learning into the core academic content areas.

ENSURE ACCESS TO SCHOOL-EMPLOYED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND NURSES

- Identify how students can access supports during the school day.
- Consider ways to increase availability and accessibility.

ANTICIPATE DISCIPLINE CHALLENGES

- View behavior through a trauma-focused lens.
- Focus on positive and effective discipline practices.
- Implement culturally responsive, restorative practices.

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SCHOOL REENTRY CONSIDERATIONS
Supporting Student Social and Emotional Learning and Mental and Behavioral Health

August 2021   Ensuring our students are ready to learn.

SUPPORTING STUDENT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOL-WIDE SUPPORT

ESTABLISH MULTIDISCIPLINARY DECISION-MAKING TEAMS TO SUPPORT RECOVERY

- Ensure coordination of response within and across the school community.
- Address short-term and long-term plans.

PLAN TO INCLUDE DELIBERATE OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- Provide opportunities to participate in missed traditions, rituals, or activities.
- Build school community.
- Empower students to work cooperatively and to assist and support one another.

ADDRESS PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

- Explicitly share physical and psychological safety protocols for students and staff.
- Define and communicate expectations.
- Plan for virtual wellness spaces and protections for immunocompromised individuals.

ADDRESS STAFF NEEDS

- Establish system-wide approaches to address secondary trauma stress and compassion fatigue in staff.
- Embed self-care and staff well-being in the school culture.
- Identify and share community resources.

ENGAGE FAMILIES

- Include family voices in decision making.
- Use a variety of methods to frequently communicate with families (e.g., meetings in the evenings, use of virtual platforms).
- Share information about resources (e.g., food, shelter, basic needs) in the community.

PLAN FOR FUTURE NEEDS/CONTINGENCIES

- Provide ongoing, relevant professional development for staff.
- Identify and address service gaps.
- Establish process for reviewing and adjusting policies.

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