

# Support Services August Newsletter



## Welcome Back!

As we are heading back to school on our virtual campuses, students are making new connections, exploring digital platforms, and completing challenging assignments. Students need social emotional skills to be successful in these virtual environments when collaborating with peers and persevering through lessons.

SUSD has been utilizing a research based curriculum called Sanford Harmony for the past couple of years on our elementary campuses to provide all students with Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Social Emotional Learning develops student's understanding of emotions and gives them skills to form strong relationships.

We are excited that Sanford Harmony is now offering Harmony at Home, a platform where parents can access social emotional activities to reinforce the SEL skills taught at school. Please follow this link to <https://www.sanfordharmony.org/harmony-at-home/> and click "get started". The site contains wonderful, grade appropriate lessons that parents can use at home to teach empathy, communication skills, relationship building competencies, and problem solving abilities.

**Please contact Matthew Lins Clinical Services Coordinator ([matthewlins@susd.org](mailto:matthewlins@susd.org)) with any questions on how to access these valuable resources. Thank you, SUSD Parents, for all that you do everyday to grow the very best citizens in our Scottsdale community!**

## A colorful illustration of a school desk. On the desk, there is a purple pencil holder with several colored pencils, a red apple, a green book, a purple book, an open book with yellow pages, and a green book. A blue backpack with orange straps is on the floor next to the desk. The background is a solid blue color.

Routines and predictability are proven to be calming during times of stress. So that means the best thing to do is to provide structure to the days as much as possible. That ***doesn't*** mean outlining a strict schedule that perfectly mirrors a school day, but more of defining a new normal for the time being.

- ❑ **Put in place daily routines.** 1) what time kids are expected to get up in the morning; 2) what time the work of the day will begin; and 3) some expectation about how much time will be spent on schoolwork or how much work will be done over the course of the day. This will differ for kids of different ages.
- ❑ **Schedule frequent work breaks.** Find ways your child can have a “calm” break.
- ❑ **Create a daily schedule for kids to follow**—or, with older students—ask them to create a schedule (with guidelines or parameters). Parents and kids respond to varying levels of structure when it comes to schedules.
- ❑ **Use the opportunity to check in with your child’s emotional side.** When you establish structure, you can look for signs of shutdown or resistance. Some red flags to look out for in your children include a drastic change in mood and lack of focus. Every child is traumatized in some way by this new normal. Remember that your child is not giving you a hard time, they are having a hard time.
  - ❑ For kids who aren’t necessarily into talking about their feelings, find a safe activity like walking, helping with a small task, or folding clothes. It can be helpful to share your own feelings about working from home or any aspect about dealing with COVID.
  - ❑ For older children, you can ask them if they want to process or problem-solve. Processing looks like talking about their feelings and acknowledging that this is a difficult time, while problem-solving might look like collaborating on safe solutions for more connection.

The most important thing for everyone right now is to always set aside time to talk as a family. *Ask what is going well and not-so-well.* We are all in a place of uncharted territory. The more ways we can keep check on a child's social-emotional temperature, the more we can help them work through their feelings about what is going on. Do not be afraid of the tough questions. Now more than ever, children need to be heard and need their feelings validated.



## Building in Calming Breaks AWAY from Screens

With students completing school work virtually, **it's important to build in calming breaks away from technology.** Below are some tips you can implement to help your students take a break, stay calm, and refocus! To ensure you and your children are taking breaks from working digitally, set alarms or reminders for breaks.



**Have you heard of the “20-20-20” rule?** For every **20** minutes looking at a screen, take your eyes off of the screen for **20** seconds, and look at something (a stationary object) **20** feet away. This helps to refresh your eyes and keeps them healthy. This is a great practice for both parents and students to implement! To help you remember to give your eyes a break, try setting a timer every 20 minutes while working.



**Create a “screen free” calming space or break zone.** Get your kids involved in picking out a space (e.g. the corner of a room, etc.) that allows them to take a screen free break. This could include comfortable pillows to sit or lay on, creating a fort, etc. Include calming items and activities in the space that your child enjoys (e.g. coloring books, a journal, stress balls, etc.). When it's time for a break from school, allow them to take some time in their calm zone.



**Create a calming glitter sensory bottle with your student.** This is a great idea to get your student involved, regardless of whether you're a young child, or an adult, this is an enjoyable tool to have! All you need is a large water bottle with the wrapper removed, glitter, and water. Mix all together and enjoy! **PRO TIP:** Keep in your student's calming break area!



**Get an easy to maintain indoor plant.** Did you know that just seeing greenery and nature can elevate our moods and cause us to feel calmer? Adding a little greenery to your space has multiple benefits. Try picking out a simple, easy to maintain indoor plant that your family will enjoy.



**Take time to move.** Be sure to take breaks to get up and move around. Stretching, doing jumping jacks, playing with your pet, or just walking around your house are all helpful ways to get your blood flowing, increase your energy, and elevate your mood.

**Blow some bubbles!** As simple as it sounds, blowing bubbles is a great way to relax and breathe deeply. As an added bonus, you and your kids can practice imagining your stressors and anxieties “floating away” with the bubbles.

## Curbside Student Meal Distribution Goes Weekly, Starting Aug. 26

The District's Nutrition Services Department will transition the daily curbside service it began Aug. 10 **to a weekly service, beginning Wednesday, Aug. 26.**

The weekly service allows families to receive **five** breakfasts and **five** student lunches in one trip. Distribution sites will to operate daily from 7 – 9:30 a.m. through Tuesday, Aug. 25, then transition to every Wednesday, starting Aug. 26, at the same, following locations:

- ❑ Oak Campus, 7501 E. Oak St., Scottsdale
- ❑ Pima Traditional School, 8330 E. Osborn Rd., Scottsdale
- ❑ Redfield Elementary School, 9181 E. Redfield Rd., Scottsdale
- ❑ Tavan Elementary School, 4610 E. Osborn Rd., Phoenix
- ❑ Yavapai/Hohokam Elementary School, 701 N. Miller Rd., Scottsdale



Meals are for SUSD-enrolled students only, including Scottsdale Online students. Families may select whichever of the five locations is most convenient for them.

***Student names and ID are required to receive the meals.***

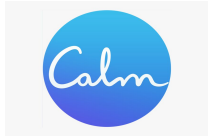
For students approved for free or reduced-cost meals, the weekly meals are free. Families that do not currently have free or reduced meal status are encouraged to apply at [www.susd.org/Meals](http://www.susd.org/Meals), especially if their financial status has changed. Breakfasts may also be purchased curbside for \$1.50 each; lunches are \$2.85 each.

The 2020-2021 school year application for free and reduced price school meals can be found in both English and Spanish at <https://www.susd.org/meals>. **Families must apply each school year to continue to receive the meal subsidies.** Receiving free-and-reduced meal status may also lead to families being eligible for other state and federal benefit programs. ***SUSD's Nutrition Services Department gladly provides eligible families with a letter of eligibility upon request to aid them in qualifying for other assistance programs.*** There is no cost to apply or to receive the eligibility letter.

Nutrition Services also provides lunches to students attending SUSD's five Enhanced Distance Learning Camps (Desert Canyon Elementary, Hopi Elementary, Pima Traditional, Pueblo Elementary and Tonalea K-8). Meal menus are posted at <https://scottsdale.nutrislice.com/>. Click on the school logo to access the curbside and camp daily and weekly menus.



# Helpful Apps to Boost Mental Health



**Headspace:** provides a WIDE variety of meditations, sleep, and movement exercises to help you out, however you are feeling. Helps reduce anxiety and stress and improve attention and awareness. Free content.



**Calm:** includes free meditations for stress, sleep, AND has meditations for kids.



**Breathe2Relax:** free, designed by the National Center for Telehealth and Technology to teach breathing techniques to manage stress.



**Happify:** provides science based activities and games that are meant to reduce stress, build resilience, and overcome negative thoughts.



**MoodPath:** personalized mental health companion, that "learns" from your responses and generates insights and provides resources most relevant to your emotional health.



**MoodTools:** a self help app targeting depression. Provides psychoeducation about risk factors, a thought diary, a suicide safety plan, and videos.



**PTSD Coach:** self help app from the National Center for PTSD provides education, assesses PTSD, and offers easy to understand tips to manage common PTSD symptoms, and offers additional treatment resources.



**Quit That!:** free app that helps users beat their habits or addictions. A recovery tool to track and monitor your progress.



**Medisafe:** a medication reminder app

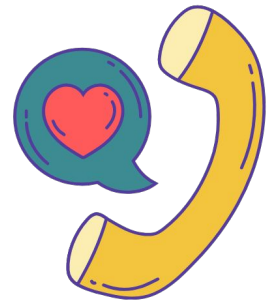
**Shine:** a self care app with research based strategies to help you reduce stress, boost self compassion, helps with focus and battles burnout.



## Crisis Hotlines and Resources

If you or someone you know is struggling, **you are NOT alone**, reach out to a number below. Remember, you do NOT need to have a “crisis” to text or call for support. Hotlines are open to speak to anybody that may need extra support.

- ❑ **Teen Lifeline** Call 24/7 or Text (602-248-8336) \*also available to parents and other adults who are in need of resources for their children.
- ❑ **Crisis Text Line** Text "Home" to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor.
- ❑ **LGBT National Hotline**: 888-843-4564
- ❑ **National Suicide Prevention Hotline**: 1-800-273-8255
- ❑ **National Domestic Violence Hotline**: 1-800-799-7233 or text "LOVEIS" to 22522
- ❑ **Empact 24 Hour Crisis Line** (1-800-273-8255)
- ❑ **Scottsdale Police Crisis Team** (480-312-5055)
- ❑ **The Disaster Distress Helpline** (1-800-985-5990) or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
- ❑ **Arizona Food Bank Network**: Find nearby emergency food for yourself or someone you know struggling with hunger [www.azfoodbanks.org](http://www.azfoodbanks.org).
- ❑ **Find Help Phoenix**: Find health and social services for Maricopa County residents.
- ❑ **Crisis Response Network** Call 602-222-9444 or 1-800-631-1314)
- ❑ **Catholic Charities**: 602-749-4405 Provides remote counseling services based on a sliding scale.
- ❑ **SAMHSA'S Treatment Referral Information**: 1-800-662-HELP
- ❑ **Covid Crisis Rental Assistance**: Maricopa County households experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 Pandemic may be eligible for COVID Crisis Rental Assistance (CCRA).
- ❑ **Vista Del Camino** (City of Scottsdale Food Bank): 480-312-2323
- ❑ **UMOM**: <https://umom.org/find-help/>
- ❑ **Family Housing Hub**: 602-595-8700
- ❑ **Youth Resource Center** (For People Aged 18-24 Years Old): 480-868-7527



# Still Struggling?

## Reach out to your Support Services Team

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### Arcadia High School

**Social Worker:**

Whitney Hess, whess@susd.org

**Guidance Counselors:**

Kelley Ender, kender@susd.org

Ruth Hart, rhart@susd.org

Sonya Kim, skim@susd.org

Patricia LaCorte, placorte@susd.org

Cheryl Guthrie, cguthrie@susd.org

### Desert Mountain High School

**Social Worker:**

Karey Trusler, ktrusler@susd.org

**Guidance Counselors:**

Michelle Okun, mokun@susd.org

Veva Pacheco, vpacheco@susd.org

Jennifer Cooper, jcooper@susd.org

Leslie Jones – ljones@susd.org

Madison Gilbreath, madisongilbreath@susd.org

### Chaparral High School

**Social Worker:**

Leah Stegman, lstegman@susd.org

**Guidance Counselors:**

Keri Board, kboard@susd.org

Leslie Rold, lrold@susd.org

Katie Kunitzer, kkunitzer@susd.org

Janine Welch, janinewelch@susd.org

Megan Mayer, mmayer@susd.org

Dayne Davis, adavis@susd.org

### Saguaro High School

**Social Worker:**

Mindy Hickman, mhickman@susd.org

**Guidance Counselors:**

LeAnne Carter, lcarter1@susd.org

Leanne DeFay, ldefay@susd.org

Katy Gerken, kgerken@susd.org

Donna Wittwer, dwittwer@susd.org

### Coronado High School

**Social Worker:**

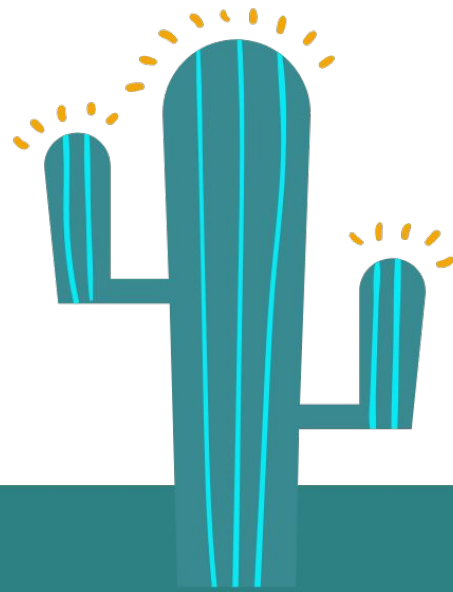
Mandy Turner, aturner@susd.org

**Guidance Counselors:**

Anna Huerta, ahuerta@susd.org

Nicole Tarter, ntarter@susd.org

Julie Stephan, jstephan@susd.org



# Middle School Guidance Counselors

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## Echo Canyon

Cathy Lewkowitz, clewkowitz@susd.org

## Ingleside

Aria Ham, aham@susd.org  
Dana Molnar, dmolnar@susd.org  
Rhonda Witherspoon,  
rwitherspook@susd.org

## Cocopah

Toni Rantala, trantala@susd.org  
June Solod, jsolod@susd.org

## Copper Ridge

Deborah Philips, dphilips@susd.org

## Mohave

Lisa Balthazor, lbalthazor@susd.org  
Todd Kemmerer, tkemmerer@susd.org

## Desert Canyon Middle School

Nicholas Pasco, npasco@susd.org

## Mountainside

Dale Merrill, dmerrill@susd.org  
Robin Stieglitz, rstieglitz@susd.org

## Cheyenne

Frances Lax, flax@susd.org

## Tonalea K-8

### **Social Worker:**

Sherena Small, ssmall@susd.org

### **Guidance Counselors:**

Gail Tronzo, gtronzo@susd.org  
Tammy Clow-Kennedy,  
tclowkennedy@susd.org

# District Support K-12

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## **Clinical Support Coordinator:**

Matthew Lins, matthewlins@susd.org

## **Director of Support Services**

Shannon Cronn, scronn@susd.org

