**How to Teach Social Emotional Learning When Students Aren’t in School**

Millions of students are dealing with a massive disruption in their educational and daily lives.  These students need strong coping skills to help with their fears and/or anxieties.  With most school districts holding online classes, we need to find ways to implement SEL into our students “new norm”.  SEL is very crucial for managing students’ anxieties currently.  They need time now for their brains to process what happening and how they should deal with what’s happening.  If students are not allowed time to do this their brain will be in a “fight or flight mode”.  This mode is a normal reaction when facing adversity, but if your brain remains in this mode then it doesn’t have an opportunity to switch back to “learning mode”.

**Here are some activities for PARENTS and/or TEACHERS to implement for students:**

* During online class time (or at home with family), allow students to discuss they fell about what’s going on in the world at this time.  This is an open discussion in which the parent and teacher facilitate with no personal advice offered.  Just acknowledging their feelings.  (You can extend this activity by allowing students to practice giving positive reassurance or feedback to their peers)
* If you don’t want to talk about, allow your students to journal their thoughts and feelings.
* You can have your students discuss ways in which they can help in preventing the spread of the virus.
* For young students, teachers/parents can read aloud to them and them point out the social emotional skills of the characters in the story.  For older students you can discuss the social emotional skills of our local and national leaders as it pertains to the decisions being made during this crisis.
* Allow students to have fun, one way is to create a theme day each week, wacky socks day, crazy hair day, go western etc.… Allow students to participate in a theme day and take pictures of themselves and share with their friends and classmates.  You may also want to find an avenue to store and post these for others to see what you are doing to promote SEL.  This works both ways, teachers and administrators can create and send out supportive or wacky videos as well to boost morale.

**These are just a few suggestions to help us get through these challenging times.  We can do this together!**