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Coping and Staying Emotionally Well During COVID-19-related School Closures

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campuses and students often goes beyond academics: we need to be aware of and prepared to cope with the potential impact these closures will have on the mental health and wellbeing of students, staff, and faculty.

For most of us, having to unexpectedly leave or disengage with our community – even if just for a short time – can be stressful. [If you're feeling that stress](#), remember that is a natural response. Beyond that, others of us who live with anxiety or other mental illnesses can experience exacerbated symptoms from the added stress.

Tips for Staying Well

To help you cope through this stressful period, consider the following tips for staying well:

Maintain routines as much as possible. Whether you are returning home or participating in online learning from your dorm temporarily, try to maintain your typical schedule throughout the day.

Practice healthy habits and the kinds of self-care that most benefit you. Prioritize getting a healthy amount of sleep, eating well, avoiding alcohol, and moving or exercising regularly.

Avoid crowds — but stay connected. School closures can mean you might find yourself distanced from the people you would normally see on campus. If so, make the effort to stay connected through social media, email, texting, and video calls. Take advantage as well of new opportunities to see friends and loved ones close-by.

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Take breaks to ease your mind and distract yourself when you start to worry. Play a game. Watch a movie. Take a yoga class. Try a meditation app. For more coping skills to consider, head to [activeminds.org/selfcare](https://www.activeminds.org/selfcare).

More Than a Bad Day

If what you are feeling seems bigger than what these techniques can support, seek help from a professional. Many therapists also offer counseling via phone or video conference if leaving the house or being distanced from your typical therapist is of concern. Ask about their options and explore ways to get extra support during this time. And if you need it, please contact the Crisis Text Line by texting "BRAVE" to 741-741.

Sharing Compassion

Many students experience daily issues impacting their work – including food or housing insecurity, and financial struggles – which could undoubtedly become even more challenging in the face of school closures.

We encourage school administrators to consider the questions many low income students and more may have about healthcare, food, emergency aid, housing, and learning supplies (for example laptop and internet access), so schools can best serve students in the face of school closures.

Speak Up

Finally, if you are a student with significant concerns about how school closures could impact your health and wellbeing, please get in touch with staff and/or faculty you trust to get the assurance and support you need.

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struggling – even if that help is through a remote connection.

And if you are experiencing the impact of a school closure, please know that the Active Minds team is thinking of you, sending positive thoughts and encouragement, and virtual elbow bumps.

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WRITTEN BY



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Laura develops innovative strategies and unique partnerships to empower students to help schools and society embrace a comprehensive, public health approach to mental health. Prior to Active Minds, Laura led public health initiatives at the National Association of County and City Health Officials and Tulane University. Laura earned her Master of Public Health degree in community health sciences from Tulane University and her Bachelor of Arts degree in communications from Loyola University New Orleans. She enjoys running, reading, finding adventure with her husband and three girls, and following the Washington Nationals and New Orleans Saints. Laura works from Philadelphia.

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