



## Epping School District Mental Health and Wellness Newsletter Work-Life Balance During Quarantine

April 22, 2020

Dear Epping School Community,

It is with a heavy heart that I sit down to write this knowing that the school community will not gather again in the building this year. Clearly it is the right decision to keep us all safe, and yet it is heartbreaking. And as a parent working from home, it is also a daunting thought that the daily struggle to find balance between my job as a working professional and my job as a parent will continue until June. I imagine that many of you are facing a similar challenge – trying to manage working remotely while overseeing your children’s remote learning, trying to keep your children entertained and occupied, all while trying to maintain everyone’s sanity. It’s like we now have 2 or 3 full time jobs! It can be a huge challenge and there have been, and will continue to be, hard days. But hopefully, with some planning and some thought into what strategies might work for you and your family, there will be good days too. We hope that the following tips will be useful for you. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need additional support.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Wagner and the Epping Counseling Department

### 10 TIPS FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE DURING QUARANTINE

1. Stay calm. When you are stressed, your children are going to be stressed.
  - \* When frustrations arise, as they will, try to take a moment to calm yourself before responding. If you react with frustration, anger, impatience, worry, etc. your children will respond with equally big, if not bigger, reactions
  - \* A few calming tips: Take 3 deep breaths, tell yourself that whatever is happening it’s not as bad as it feels, remind yourself that you are a role model for you children



#### 2. Adjust your expectations

- \* It is inevitable that when we are juggling so many things during the day, we are not going to do them all well.
- \* Adjust what you expect from yourself – you are likely not going to perform your job as well right now and that is okay.
- \* Adjust what you expect from your children – they are not going to fall drastically behind academically, they are going to be on screens more, they are probably eating more snacks. It is okay



#### 3. Find time to take short breaks together throughout the day

- \* We all benefit from short movement breaks during the day to get away from screens, get our blood flowing and to help us refocus when we get back to work



- \* Your children, especially younger children, will have an easier time being independent and working/playing on their own, when they get to have time with you throughout the day, even if it is only 10-minute chunks of time.
- \* Ask your child what he or she would like to do with you

4. Ask your kids for help

- \* Children like to be helpful. Try asking for them to help you out by not interrupting you when you are in a meeting. You can also ask them to help you in other ways, maybe by getting food out for lunch, playing with a younger sibling, cooking a meal or some other chore.



5. Encourage autonomy

- \* Start the day by having your child identify which school assignments they can do on their own and which ones they think they will need help with
- \* Let them make some choices in what work, chores or activities they do at different times during the day
- \* Have snacks available that children can help themselves to. This may involve preparing some food in advance and keeping it on a lower shelf in the fridge for younger children.

6. Adjust your hours, if possible

- \* It will help immensely if you can get some work done early in the morning before everyone is awake, or later in the evening once everyone is in bed.

7. Give your children a heads up before something important

- \* If you are going to be in a meeting that cannot be interrupted, let your children know in advance. Make a plan for how they will spend their time during that meeting.



8. Use visual cues

- \* A visual schedule of the plan for the day can be very helpful
- \* Use a cue, such as a stop sign, to signal when you cannot be interrupted

9. Schedule downtime for yourself

- \* This may be one of the most important strategies to helping you manage your stress. Be sure to set aside time every day for yourself – this maybe a walk outside, sitting and reading a book for fun, or watching a favorite show. If you do not take care of yourself, you will not be able to take care of your children



10. Remember: Everyone is doing the best they can. Be patient and compassionate with yourself and your children.



RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Counselor/Psychologist email and office hours:

**EES**

Julie Kratimenos: Julie.kratimenos@eppingsd.org,  
9:00am-12:00pm

Marianne McDonough: mmcdonough@eppingsd.org,  
8:30am-10:00am, 2:00pm-3:30pm

Kathy Stanley-Berting: KStanley-  
berting@eppingsd.org, 8:00am-10:00am, 1:00pm-  
2:00pm

**EMS**

Sarah Wagner: swagner@eppingsd.org, 8:30am-  
10:00am, 1:00pm-2:30pm

Nick Degruttola: ndegruttola@eppingsd.org, 9:00am-  
12:00pm

**EHS**

Sarah Wagner: swagner@eppingsd.org, 8:30am-  
10:00am, 1:00pm-2:30pm

Julie Morin: jmorin@eppingsd.org, 9:00am-10:30am,  
1:00pm-2:30pm

Melolah Bisallion: mbisaillon@eppingsd.org  
10:30am-1:30pm

Community Resources:

Dial 211 for statewide resources

Waypoint confidential support and advice for  
families: 1-800-640-6486

Seacoast Mental Health Center: 431-6703  
and 772-2710

Unemployment assistance: [www.nhes.nh.gov](http://www.nhes.nh.gov)

Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-237-TALK  
(8255)

Crisis Text Line: Text 741741

Community Partners: 516-9300

HAVEN: 994-SAFE (7233)