

From the SISD Counseling Department

Dear SISD Family,

We are in unprecedented times as we experience some amount of anxiety over our personal safety in public places, including schools, due to the spread of COVID-19 in our country.

We have choices to make in how we thoughtfully respond. Our children learn from what we do more than what we say. How do we model our thoughts, words, and actions for our kids, our family, friends and communities when anxiety and fear are seemingly at all-time highs?

First, bring everything to the present moment. Our brains are wired for survival, not peace and happiness, so it's easy to spiral down a fearful path. Research tells us most of what we fear never happens. While it can be very easy to focus on social and news media, what's most important is to focus on what's right in front of us. Most likely this is your family, safe, and together in your home! With our children being at home, and parents likely working from home, this can open up opportunities for engagement and having FUN together!

Next, rather than fearing the virus, let's practice COURAGE by asking ourselves what lessons we can learn from this. Our vulnerability to illness reminds us that we are connected through our humanity. Everyone has someone who is susceptible. Perhaps this experience is telling us that we need to be more mindful of caring for ourselves, and each other.

Perhaps we consider FORGIVING those who have hurt us. Forgiveness is the key to healthy relationships and relationships are the secret to happiness (per Harvard University research).

Let us use this time as an opportunity to strengthen ourselves by modeling for others how to practice COMPASSION IN ACTION by caring for ourselves and our neighbors. We are learning that ultimately we are all connected.

This is the strongest action plan to take our personal power back and be our best self, and live our best lives. Coronavirus is a wake up call to be GRATEFUL for every moment we have.

CHOOSE LOVE every day,

SISD Professional School Counselors

*(adapted from the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement)*