

# Counselor Newsletter

May 4, 2020

## Message from a Counselor

Dear HTSD community,

As some of you may know, this week is teacher appreciation week. I am so honored to work alongside some teachers that I had as a child (yes I'm a HTSD alumni) and I'm also honored because these teachers are AMAZING! I think they deserve a round of applause for their quick learning, big hearts, and adaptability during this new way of learning. But YOU also deserve a round of applause.

As parents, caregivers, guardians, family members and friends, you became a teacher overnight. You have no training in how to teach these materials and you learning to navigate technology right there with us. So for this teacher appreciation week, I also want to appreciate YOU – the new wave of teachers. I hope you remain kind and patient with yourself because this is no easy gig you have been thrown into. But remember you are trying and making it work. Thank you for all you're doing. We are with you!

sincerely,

Ms. Megan Sherman  
School Counselor, Hess



## Weekly Highlight

Sixth edition! Welcome back! This week is teacher appreciation week AND May is mental health month! So get ready for extra tips and strategies so you can take care of you and love on our staff.

*Last week highlights:*

Set clear expectations for your child, a routine can help with anxiety, practice gratitude, try grounding techniques, and listed ideas for coping skills

## Who are we?

Three Schools,  
One District:

Joseph Shaner Elementary School  
<http://shaner.hamiltonschools.org>

George L. Hess Educational Complex  
<http://hess.hamiltonschools.org>

William Davies Middle School  
<http://davies.hamiltonschools.org>

We are the Hamilton Township School District!



In the Community

## HTSD MEAL DISTRIBUTION May 6 to May 27

Wednesday May 6 - (5 meals per student) Shaner 9:30-11 & Davies 12-1:30

Wednesday May 13 - (5 meals per student) Shaner 9:30-11 & Davies 12-1:30

Wednesday May 20 - (5 meals per student) Shaner 9:30-11 & Davies 12-1:30

Wednesday May 27 - (5 meals per student) Shaner 9:30-11 & Davies 12-1:30

Visit [hamiltonschools.org](https://hamiltonschools.org) for more information on pick up spots on site and meal information

**THANK YOU, HTSD FOOD SERVICES DEPT.!!**

**New attendance procedure.** Please have students sign on anytime between 8a-8p. If you have no internet- Call the school. Sign-in form:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeKop0M09I29tCYDKR0Yj6QG9biSABcph0AjP8\\_8xaOIBMIQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeKop0M09I29tCYDKR0Yj6QG9biSABcph0AjP8_8xaOIBMIQ/viewform)

COVID-19

**NJ State Parks are now open!**

For more information involving rules and regulations during this time visit:

[https://njparksandforests.org/sps\\_covid.html](https://njparksandforests.org/sps_covid.html)

### COVID-19 IS NOT GONE

**STAY CLOSE TO HOME.**

**BATHROOMS CLOSED.**  
"GO" BEFORE YOU GO

**NO PICNICKING.**

**MAKE YOUR STAY SHORT.**  
2 HOURS MAX

**MASK UP NEAR OTHERS.**

**NO PARKING ALONG ROADS.**



**8 ways to help teens cope with social distancing blues:**

<https://healthblog.uofmhealth.org/childrens-health/8-ways-to-help-teens-cope-social-distancing-blues>

# Parent Page

## Self-Care Corner

**Mindful Monday:** practicing mindfulness can help turn your brain off from the constant inner dialogue of to-do lists, what ifs, negative self-talk, etc. When focusing on your breath, grounding yourself in a visual prompt, counting, etc, you will begin to relax. And we all know the benefits of relaxing - Reduces stress/anxiety, lowers heart rate, sleep better, feel better. Try practicing mindfulness with a video from YouTube

**GratiTuesday:** practicing gratitude can alter your mood and thought process from negative to positive. When you take time to focus on the good in your life, it makes the other things seem not so bad. It is extremely hard to be grateful and sad at the same time. For today try making a list of 5-10 things you are grateful for. Try this dinner table discussion with your family tonight:

<https://www.strengthsdna.com/blog/pits-and-peaks>

**Work it out Wednesday:** I highly recommend moving your body 4-5 days a week. However, here is a day you can dedicate to that. It's okay to pause what you're doing and have a dance party, go for a walk, do 5-10 push-ups every hour (set an alarm), stretch, whatever! Just move your body

**Thoughtful Thursday:** do something kind for someone else today! Read this link for all the benefits of doing random acts of kindness for someone:

[https://www.honeyfoundation.org/research-info/.](https://www.honeyfoundation.org/research-info/)

Some ideas during quarantine: send cards to a nursing home, send a note to a teacher, call a friend to check in on them, pay for someone's gas or coffee, mail a card to a relative, order a pizza and send it to a hospital for the medical staff to have for dinner

**Feel Good Friday:** do something that will just make you feel good today! Repeat one of the days this week, take a bath, do absolutely nothing, stay in your pjs all day, cook your favorite meal, don't cook at all, maybe it's getting your to-do list done, clean your car, cut the grass - just do something today that will make you "ahhhh I'm glad I did that" - and It could be to feel a sense of accomplishment or just overall relief that you took the time for yourself today.

*And remember: Self-care is never selfish!*

## Teaching Tip

You can help your child with their work more effectively if you understand their "learning style"

To learn about different learning styles check out this article:

<https://centerforparentingeducation.org/library-of-articles/school-and-learning-issues/working-with-learning-styles/>

## Family Activity

Fun, food, & conversation: Check out this link for ideas to make your family dinner more entertaining!

<https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/4week-program/support/games-and-activities/>

## Something Positive

This tea company is staying in business by "tea-p-in" people's homes with surprise gifts

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/tea-company-tea-ping-peoples-homes-with-surprise-gifts/>

# Parent Page

## Teacher Appreciation Ideas

### Thank you, Teacher!

Give this thank-you card to a special teacher in your life!  
Have an adult help you cut out the card below, fold along the solid lines, and write a message inside.



For templates like the ones above to send to teachers visit (free/electronic):  
<https://www.pta.org/home/events/PTA-Teacher-Appreciation-Week>

For other ideas visit (some ideas may cost \$):  
<https://www.romper.com/p/how-to-give-teachers-gifts-for-teacher-appreciation-week-2020-22834417>

## Mrs. Aleszczyk's behavior tip of the week

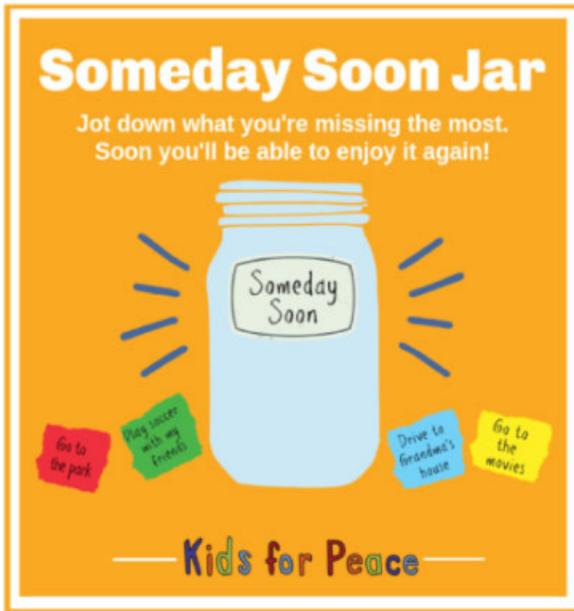
Creating a daily schedule with your child is a great way to reduce anxiety and any problematic behaviors that may arise. As adults, many of us prefer to have a schedule so we know what lies ahead of us, and what is expected to be completed. The schedule does NOT have to be fancy- simply jot down the tasks that need to be done for the day so that there are no surprises! REMEMBER: We are always including those choices!: (examples: Do you want to do math or reading first? Should we cross off completed stuff with a pencil or crayon? Do you want to cross it off or should I? Should snack come before or after writing?)



Thank you, parents  
for all your hard  
work and dedication!  
You will get through  
this!



## To Try



How to Make Your Someday Soon Jar:

1. Find any jar, basket or container around your home.
2. Decorate the jar with a "Someday Soon" label.
3. Every time your family wishes you "could do something, go somewhere, treat yourselves, see someone you love, visit a new place or invite people to visit you," write it down on a piece of paper and put it in your jar.
4. When COVID-19's stay-at-home order is lifted and when it is safe to resume regular functions, begin enjoying the activities listed inside your jar. Your SOMEDAY SOON has arrived!

For more ideas like this one visit:

<https://kidsforpeaceglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Ideas-Activities-for-Families-During-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>

## Why Work?

*You are a hard worker:*  
By doing your work you are keeping your mind sharp and proving to yourself you are strong, disciplined, and responsible. Your next year self will be glad it worked!

## Brain Break

**Pinky/L swap:** hold up your pinky finger on one hand and create an "L" with your index finger and thumb on the other. Now switch at the same time.

## Happy Thoughts

Think of 3 kind things to say to **YOURSELF**

## Coping Skill of the week

### LISTEN TO MUSIC

Listening to music throughout the day can help to:

- Increase happiness
- Improves sleep
- Improves mood
- Decreases stress
- Brings people together!



## Mindfulness tip of the week

### MEDITATE

Visualize a person, place or thing that makes you happy this week. Notice your breath and slow down your breathing to relax during your meditation practice. Try this for 10-15 minutes a day. Check back in after this time and reflect on your experience and your feelings.



# Ms. Leonellis's Mental Health Happenings

Here are 9 steps that can help you to create a good *personal development plan*:

- 1) Define your goals
- 2) Prioritize
- 3) Set a deadline
- 4) Understand your strengths and threats
- 5) Recognize opportunities
- 6) Develop new skills
- 7) Take action
- 8) Get support
- 9) Measure progress

Read the full article on how to create a *personal development plan*.

Visit:

<http://www.mindofwinner.com/create-personal-development-plan/>

## Personal Development



Did you know that May is Mental Health Awareness Month?

Check out the National Alliance on Mental Illness and get involved with education, resources, partners, and events!

<https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Mental-Health-Month>

## Informational links