

December 2020 Focus: Stress

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Get to know a little more about me on the next page!

What's Happening at Harding?

- PARENTS/CARETAKERS: be on the lookout for information for the **virtual group**: *Social Emotional Learning in the Home* happening Tuesday, December 15th.



Topic of the month:

STRESS

Stress is contagious! Children know when their caretaker(s) are tense and overwhelmed. Data shows that the greatest source of childhood and adolescent stress is not school work, extracurricular activities, or peer pressure, but parental stress. SO – that means, **it's very important to manage your own stress!**

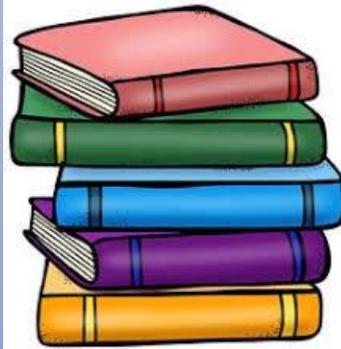
Here are some tips to do so:

- Reach out for support
- Ration your exposure to negative thoughts/media
- Focus on the good
- Budget for time to get things done
- When 'bad' things happen, try taking a different perspective
- Get good sleep
- Make time for something that brings you joy

READY, SET, READ!

Book Topic: Self Control and Problem Solving

- Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes
- My Mouth Is a Volcano! By Julia Cook
- You Will Be My Friend by Peter Brown
- Clark the Shark by Bruce Hale
- The Turtle Ship by Kelena Ku
- Destiny's Gift by Natasha Anastasia
- Finding the Music by Jennifer Torres
- The Mangrove Tree by Susan L. Roth



See some tips for reading with your child on the next page!



MINDFULNESS MATTERS

Learn some breathing techniques!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odADwWzHR24>

Feel free to include the whole family and take time to focus on breathing.... together!

Make Time for Free Time Activity Corner:

- ✚ Make homemade play dough! *(instructions attached, see page 3).*
- ✚ Practice yoga with your child! *Some suggestions:*
 - Pre-k – K: <https://youtu.be/CBko9JPMtHs>
 - 1st – 3rd: <https://youtu.be/4ZpkRACgws4>
 - 4th – 6th: <https://youtu.be/X655B4ISakg>

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About me: Who, What, When, Where, Why!?



Hi! My name is Kelly McGuire, I am a Licensed Professional Counselor who is contracted through Care Plus NJ, Inc. as the School Based Clinician at Harding Elementary School. I will be on site (while the building is open) Monday through Friday during regular school hours. I am available to work with families and students in need of any additional support.

You'll receive a monthly newsletter (like the one above) the first Friday of each month, each with a different topic. I will also be hosting parent groups throughout the school year. I know these times are uncertain and often chaotic, but I look forward to working together throughout the year. I am very excited to be a part of the Harding School Community and am available to help out/provide support in any way I can!

Tips for reading with your child:

Use this four-step process to help reinforce the character trait featured in each story:

1. **DESCRIBE:**

Talk with your children to answer these questions: What character trait did the story define? How do you know? Why is it important? Can you make a connection to the story from your own life? Make a poster together, or have the child write or draw/tell you something relating to the book.

2. **DEMONSTRATE:**

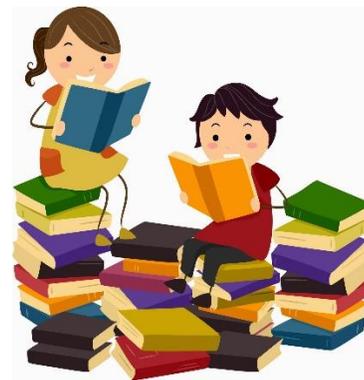
Act out what the character trait looks like/feels like. Role playing different ways children can demonstrate this character trait will help reinforce the behavior.

3. **PRACTICE:**

Plan activities where the child has to take time to practice the featured character trait.

4. **PROMOTE:**

Promote, support, and encourage children as they initiate and engage in behavior that demonstrates the character trait. Catch them being kind, flexible, honest, confident, etc.!



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Homemade Playdough!

(A lot of recipes can e found online!)

Playdough ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup salt
- 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil (coconut oil works too)
- Food coloring, optional
- Quart sized bags

Stir together the flour, salt and cream of tartar in a large pot. Next add the water and oil. If you're only making one color, add in the color now as well. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly. Continue stirring until the dough has thickened and begins to form into a ball. Remove from heat and then place inside a gallon sized bag or onto wax paper. Allow to cool slightly and then knead until smooth. If you're adding colors after, divide the dough into balls (for how many colors you want) and then add the dough into the quart sized bags. Start with about 5 drops of color and add more to brighten it. Knead the dough, while inside the bag so it doesn't stain your hands. Once it's all mixed together you're ready to PLAY.

Store the play dough inside the bags once done to keep soft. Keeps for up to 3 months.

