



Pemberton Township School District

School Counseling Department

During the closure of schools due to the health emergency, the Pemberton Township Counseling Department will be operating virtually. School counselors are available through email, telephone (blocked number), and via Google Meet video conferencing. School counselors/SAC will have access to their school-based voicemail, and school employees will not interact with students via social media platforms or accept friend requests. Initial communication with you/your child will always be via email or phone call. To schedule a virtual appointment, students and parents may email the Counselor/SAC directly to find a mutually agreed upon date/time. Google Meet conferences may *not* be recorded by any party.

Should you not wish for School Counselors/SAC to communicate, if necessary or requested, with your child via telephone or , Google Meet, please email your child's School Counselor and indicate so.

If you or someone you know is in a crisis situation, here are some resources for immediate assistance:

- **Pemberton Twp. Police Department: Call 609-894-8201**
 - **[2nd Floor Helpline](#): Call or text 888-222-2228**
 - *A confidential and anonymous helpline for New Jersey's youth and young adults.*
 - **[NJ Mental Health Cares](#): Call 1-866-202-HELP (4357)**
 - *The state's behavioral health information and referral service now also offers free, confidential help to people dealing with anxiety and worry related to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.*
 - **[National Suicide Prevention Helpline](#): Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
 - *Connect to a skilled, trained counselor at a crisis center 24/7*
 - **[Performcare - Mobile Response Services](#): Call 1-877-652-7624**
 - *Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to help children and youth who are experiencing emotional or behavioral crisis. The services are designed to defuse an immediate crisis, keep children and their families safe, and maintain the children in their own homes or current living situations (such as a foster home, treatment home or group home) in the community.*
 - **If it is an emergency, call 9-1-1.**
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Confidentiality and Privacy

It is important to note that, though the district's Google platform as well as Google Meet Hangouts are FERPA and COPPA compliant, confidentiality and privacy cannot be guaranteed with services provided through online platforms. In no circumstance may sessions be recorded by any party. The School Counseling Department, during emergency situations such as the building closures due to COVID-19, will take reasonable steps to ensure user identity.

In a face-to face setting under typical school circumstances, and to the best of the counselor's ability through virtual means, information students share with the counselor is confidential. The student's right to privacy is guarded as much as permitted by law, ethics, and school policy. All meetings held with the counselor will remain confidential unless the student or parent gives permission to share information with related parties. As professional School

Counselors, we respect the rights of confidentiality of personal information disclosed during the course of a conversation between ourselves and students, except in the following cases:

- If the student presents a danger to him/herself.
- If the student presents a danger to others.
- If the student has been neglected or abused by others.
- If required to do so by court order.
- If the parent or adult student gives permission for the information to be shared.

As mandated reporters, we are bound by Federal and State law to break confidentiality in the situations mentioned above and will do so to protect our students and to remain legally and ethically true to our profession. The professional School Counselor/SAC may consult with other school professionals but will only share information necessary for achieving the goals of the consultation.

Tips for Taking Care of Your Mental Health During Coronavirus Closures

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to social media and news stories about COVID-19. It's okay to stay informed, but overexposing ourselves to too much information can be stressful and overwhelming.
- Make sure you are still taking care of your body! Getting enough sleep, eating healthy, and making sure we are still moving around can help us take care of our mental health.

Some ideas to consider:

- Practice mindfulness and/or meditation.
- Make sure to get some fresh air and sunlight, maybe sit by a window while doing homework/or reading, do a quick workout in your own yard, etc.
- Use home workout videos to keep moving and exercising.
- Find some healthy recipes and try your hand at cooking, not only are you fueling your body with healthy food, but it could also be a fun experience!
- Make time to connect with others who live in your home or with friends through phone calls or video chats. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Practice hobbies and activities you enjoy. It's important to keep up on school and work, but fun and enjoyment are also factors that promote positive mental health. This could also be a good time to try something you've never had the time to do. Sites like Youtube have plenty of free how-to videos that can help you learn new skills, such as new dance moves, cooking techniques, or how to crochet.

Additional Resources

[Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health: Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation During an Infectious Disease Outbreak \(SAMHSA\)](#)

[Care for Your Coronavirus Anxiety](#)

[Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#)

[Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs in Emergencies](#)

[10 Things To Do With Your Teens While ‘Social Distancing’ During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Please continue to visit [our website](#) for pertinent information that will help support you. Thank you!