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Special Education Report

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New Resources on Supporting Children, Students Social, Emotional behavioral and Mental Health During Covid-19

Prior to the COVID 1-9 pandemic, 13-22% of school-aged youth experienced some sort of mental health challenges. Research estimate that 80% of those children have unmet treatment needs that may result in social, emotional or and behavioral issues. Without the proper support these students could face reactive and exclusionary discipline such as ISS, suspension, and not limited to expulsions, which further impacts mental health issues. This furthers a negative impact on their academics, social, emotional and mental area of their lives.

Emergency Room visits have increased by 24% for children/students 5-11 and 31% for children/students 5-18 years old. Sadly, reports show an increase in lack of sleep due to stress, worries, depression, loss of confidence, not fitting in, being accepted and fear counties to take a toll. This has led to a new high in contemplated suicide attempts, self-harm amongst children/students.

Comparing students without disabilities to students with disabilities and special need experience higher rates of anxiety, depression, academic-related distress, mental and social health challenges, greater peer victimization with a higher rates of suicide ideation and self-harm. While (IED) Individualized Education Program is specific to their individual needs to help them academically, what is on their IEP that can help them socially? With the return of school, a new level of anxiety due to COVID-19 continues to rise. Ask your IED be not just limited to academic. Covid-19 has defined the "New Norm" of life, this should also translate on IED. Consider placing a student with group of students that are empathic, friendly, role models, and consider leaders. This will not only benefit children/students with special needs and disabilities it could have a dule effect in teaching children/students without disabilities, patience and acceptance creating a positive learning environment both academically and socially. Teaching physical health, positive mental health, promotes a successful life. How they think, feel and act with oneself and others is greatly impacted

by their emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It will help teach how to deal with stressors, relate to other, have empathy for different situations while making healthy short term and long-term choices.

Recommendations to help support and improve the social, emotional, and behavioral health outcomes:

- Prioritize wellness for each and every student
- Breaking away from cookie-cutter framework, rather implement individualized approach based on needs.
- Enhance mental health literacy, while reducing stigma and other barriers.
- Integrate emotional, social, and behavioral health support through the days and academics.
- Establish partnership with teachers and principals not just academically, include, emotional, social, and behavioral health.
- Support clubs, sports and child/student social gathering following the CDC guides.

Referenced: Education Weekly:

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U.S Department of Education Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health Needs.