

SLArts Parent/Guardians/Caregivers -

Wow! What a week we all had! We've all been hearing and watching the Coronavirus, though it felt as if life changed exponentially after Wednesday evening. The feelings of anxiety and okay, a bit of excitement at the prospect of school being dismissed unexpectedly (students' excitement not teachers) were palpable in our building by Thursday afternoon. I know in my own home, by Thursday evening, feelings of confusion, fear, disappointment, frustration anger and disbelief had begun to surface. We all began to process the impact that this virus was having on our lives. Prior to last Monday, Covid-19 was something, for many of us, that we watched from afar and was happening in other parts of the world and country. We increased our handwashing, wiped down surfaces and stayed home if we were sick. By Thursday evening, we watched the things around us be postponed, closed until further notice and canceled. We watched in a matter of hours our entire world, socially, emotionally, educationally and financially shift under our feet.

I want to continue to support you and your students as much as possible during these changing times. As adults, we are navigating our own stress as we manage how these changes will impact our lives, and luckily we have fully developed frontal lobes. Our ability to manage stress and problem-solving skills have had years of practice. For our children, this is a different story.

Adolescence is the second greatest time of brain-development behind infancy. Brain's develop from the front to the back, with the frontal lobe, or rational/decision-making/problem-solving part of our brain, the last to develop. Meanwhile, the emotional part of our kids' brains is on overdrive at this point in life, thanks to hormones and puberty. Punchline... our kids' ability to process this time period will likely be felt heavily in their emotional brain with a limited ability to understand, rationalize and problem-solve through these feelings.

On top of this, a huge component of mitigating this disease and "flattening the curve" is to distance ourselves socially from one another. I am guessing many of you have started having these conversations with your kids; my own experience ended in some tears and door-slamming. How do you explain to a group of individuals who are by nature, addicted to socialization, that it has to be limited? These are not easy conversations for any of us and plan on that adolescents' emotional brain to rear it's loud, aggressive, impulsive and righteous head.

Below, I've included a few links to some articles, I've come across that are helpful. Some for kids who may be feeling anxious about the situation and other for parents who may be looking for ways to speak with their kids on these topics. Some of these articles are a few days old and messaging is changing so quickly, that they may now have some conflicting information. As adults with our fully developed frontal lobes, it's our job to sort through this and figure out what is best for our children and families.

I intend to keep looking for things to pass onto all of you and would welcome things that you come across which may be of value to our SLArts Community. Additionally, please do not hesitate to reach out if you have specific needs with which I can be of assistance, for you or your child. I will also be emailing all the students to let them know that they can email me if they have specific needs or just need another adult with whom to be connected.

I know these next few weeks will be trying as we all learn to exist with one another in a new manner, though I am confident that our SLArts Community will come out stronger in the end.

Thinking of you all.

Amy Mautz, LCSW

SLArts School Social Worker

Office Hours during Remote Learning: Tuesday/Thursday 11am-1pm

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[Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

[What Kids Want To Know About Coronavirus: An Original Comic : Goats and Soda](#)

[How to Talk to Your Anxious Child or Teen About Coronavirus](#)

[CDC- Talking with Children - messaging for parents and people working with children](#)

[Social distancing doesn't have to doom your weekends. We have ideas](#)

[Social distancing in the coronavirus pandemic — maintaining public health by staying apart](#)

[Pediatrician Recommends NO Coronavirus Break Playdates. Here's Why.](#)

Educational Resources

[Here's The Entire List of Education Companies Offering Free Subscriptions Due to School Closings](#)

[Making the Most of COVID-19 School Closures](#)

Breakfast/Lunches available around Salt Lake City for all kids 0-18 regardless of which school they are registered:

https://www.slcschools.org/news/2019-20/coronavirus-information/meals-for-students/?fbclid=IwAR164Rld2kCifLbGNn830PDeBmrXf5BDV6QwQLXCWEiZnkDYuOXOO_slU

Community Resources

[Utah 211](#)

[SafeUT - Crisis and Tip Line for Utah](#)

