



International
School Counselor Association

Planning for and Responding to Grief and Loss During a Pandemic

April 21, 2020

Panelists



International
School Counselor Association

We know that this is a challenging time for our ISCA Community. Please review our [COVID-19 Resources](#) for helpful webinars, websites, articles, and more. Stay well!



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COVID-19 RESOURCES

Here are a number of relevant resources to support school counselors during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and subsequent school closures.

[CLICK HERE for a Compilation of Recent Articles and Websites. Updated March 20, 2020](#)

[CIS Safeguarding Considerations for Online Learning](#)

[Position Statement: Role of the International School Counselor During School Closures](#)

f*indicates new items

Webinars Hosted by ISCA (click on the links to access the recordings)

- What is Happening?! Can Mindfulness Based Wellbeing Really Help in a Global Crisis? with Kevin Hawkins and Amy Burke from MindWell Education on April 16, 2020 (the list of resources mentioned during the webinar: [resource list](#))
- Here you will find the video from the [Angst](#) Screening and Conversation with Scilla Andreen before and after showing the film on April 2, 2020 [The Angst ISCA Panel](#) (for more resources see the section below)
- [Understanding and Communicating Your Role as a School Counselor in an Online Learning Environment](#) with Dr. Stuart Roe, from [TCNJ](#) March 19, 2020 (accompanied [PowerPoint](#))
- [Coping with Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Supporting the Mental Health of International Communities affected by the Pandemic](#) with Dr. Sean Truman, from the [Truman Group](#)

Non-ISCA Webinars

- [ISS Webinar with Secondary Counselors](#) includes recording and tools.
- [Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence](#) webinars with Mark Brackett

[Tele-therapy Services](#)

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Bereavement / Grief Resources

- * ISCA Article: [Helping Students Virtually After the Loss of a Loved One During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- * [This resource](#) comes from one of our ISCA Task Force members and has some great books to reference.
- * [Online Grief Group](#) with David Kessler
- [Podcast by Brené Brown on Grief and Finding Meaning](#)
- [This Pandemic of Grief](#) - The Center for Loss and Life Transition (also a [20 minute recording](#) from Dr. Alan Wolfelt)
- [The Dougy Center](#)
- [We are used to grieving together. What happens when we can't?](#) Washington Post
- [Grieving and Saying Goodbye in the Time of Coronavirus](#)
- [64 Self-Care Ideas For People Who Are Coping With Grief & Loss](#)
- [That Discomfort You Are Feeling Is Grief](#) - Harvard Business Review(article)
- [Brene Brown - Unlocking Us: Comparative Suffering, the 50/50 Myth and Settling the Ball](#) (podcast)
- [The Grieving Process: Coping With Death](#)(Wellcast Video)
- [Hope Again - Hope in Grief](#) (Video)
- [Therapist Aid - Grief Therapy Worksheets](#)
- [Psychology Tools - Grief, Loss & Bereavement](#)
- [Help Guide: Coping With Grief & Loss](#)
- [3 Grief Counseling Therapy Techniques & Interventions](#)

Plans and Protocols for Responding to Death of a Student or Staff

- * [National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement Pandemic Resources](#) (includes presentations and articles)
- * ISCA Article: [Helping Students Virtually After the Loss of a Loved One During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- * [Comprehensive School Suicide Prevention in a Time of Distance Learning](#) from NASP
- [Sample Protocol for Staff or Student Death](#)
- [Grief Response Procedures Manual](#) sample Protocol from a USA District
- [NCSB Guidelines for Responding to the Death of a Student or School Staff](#)
- [Addressing Grief: Tips for Teachers and Administrators](#) from NASP
- [Coalition to Support Grieving Students](#) Modules and Videos
- *Article: [Dealing with Death at School Counseling 101](#) by Scott Poland

Angst Resources

- Dr. Jerry Bubrick, a Senior Psychologist in the Anxiety Disorders Center at The Child Mind Institute & Director of the Pediatric OCD Program. Dr. Bubrick provides specific tips for PARENTS to manage the Coronavirus anxiety in their home with the school closures: [COVID-19 Tips for Families](#) (PDF)
- [COVID-19 video w/ Dr. Jerry Bubrick](#)
- Angst has developed social-impact, film-based SEL lessons, activities, resources, tips and tools that provide up to 24 weeks of experiential lessons that are appropriate for ages 10+. To request information on the film-based [SEL Lessons](#), [click here](#). Please note that the curriculum COMES with a purchase of the movie. A sample of the Angst curriculum can be found here: [Creative Coping Tools](#).

Books

- [Something Bad Happened: A Kid's Guide to Coping with events in the News](#), Dawn Huebner -Ages 6-12. How to process different world events.
- [What To Do When You're Scared & Worried: A Guide for Kids](#), James J Crist -Ages 9-13. A help guide to processing fears and worries.
- [Have You Filled A Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids](#), Carol McCloud -Encourages positive behavior and expressing kindness and appreciation
- [How are you Peeling: Foods with Moods](#), Saxton Freymann & Joost Elffers -Explores how emotions look through pictures of Foods. A good way to talk about emotions with young kids.
- [The Way I Feel](#), Janan Cain -Explores Feelings. A good way to talk about emotions with young kids.
- [A Terrible Thing Happened](#), Margaret M Holmes -Ages 4-8. A story for children who have witnessed violence or trauma



Time for Questions

Your Participation

- Please continue to submit your text questions and comments using the Questions panel

The screenshot displays the GoToWebinar interface. At the top, there is a menu bar with 'File', 'View', and 'Help'. Below it is the 'Audio' control panel, which includes a 'Sound Check' indicator and two radio buttons: 'Computer audio' (selected) and 'Phone call'. A red circle highlights a microphone icon in the left-hand navigation bar. The audio panel shows 'MUTED' in red text, with a volume slider and two dropdown menus for 'Transmit (Plantronics Savi 7xx-M)' and 'Receive (Plantronics Savi 7xx-M)'. Below the audio panel, it says 'Talking: Liz Davis'. A red box highlights the 'Questions' panel, which contains a text input field with the placeholder '[Enter a question for staff]' and a 'Send' button. At the bottom of the interface, the text reads 'Webinar Housekeeping' and 'Webinar ID: 608-865-371', followed by the GoToWebinar logo.

Panelists

- **Chrystal Kelly**, High School Counselor, The American International School of Muscat, Oman, kellyc@taism.com
- **Jen Hammonds**, Middle School Counselor, The American School of Doha, Qatar, jenhammonds@asd.edu.qa
- **Shira Fisher**, Head of Student Services, Chatsworth International School, Singapore, sfisher@chatsworth.com.sg
- **Elizabeth Mohr**, Assistant Director of College Counseling, TASIS England, emohr@tasisengland.org
- **Sarah Pearlz**, Student Services Coordinator, School Psychologist, Nagoya International School, spearlz@nis.ac.jp

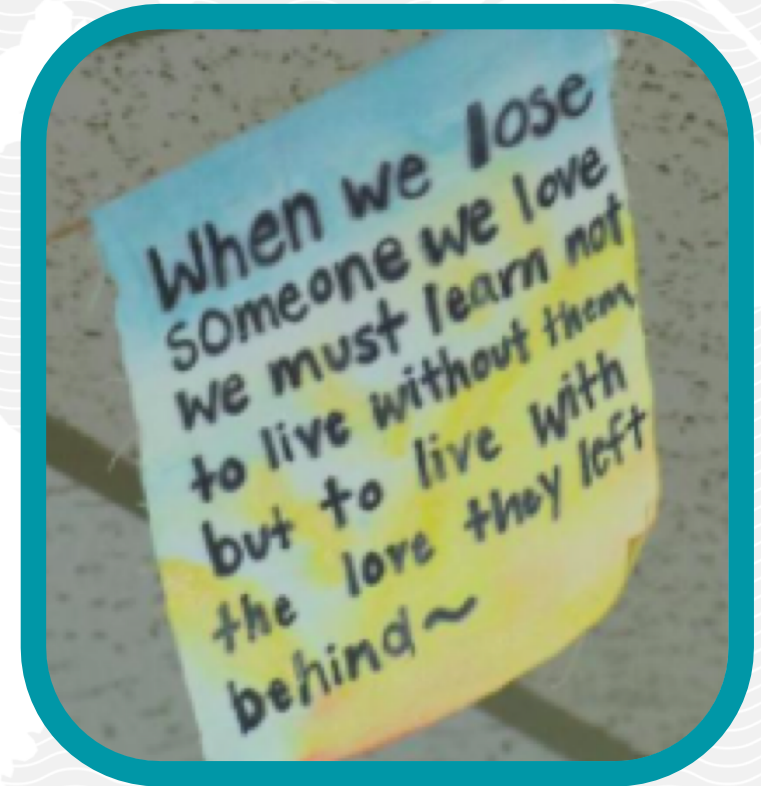
Overview of Today's Webinar

**Part A: Overview of the Program / Resources
Grief and Loss During a Pandemic**

**Part B: Response Teams
Sample Responses
Virtual Tools**

**Part C: Closing
Nurturing Hope in Difficult Times**

Part D: Q & A





PART A

Grief and Loss During a Pandemic

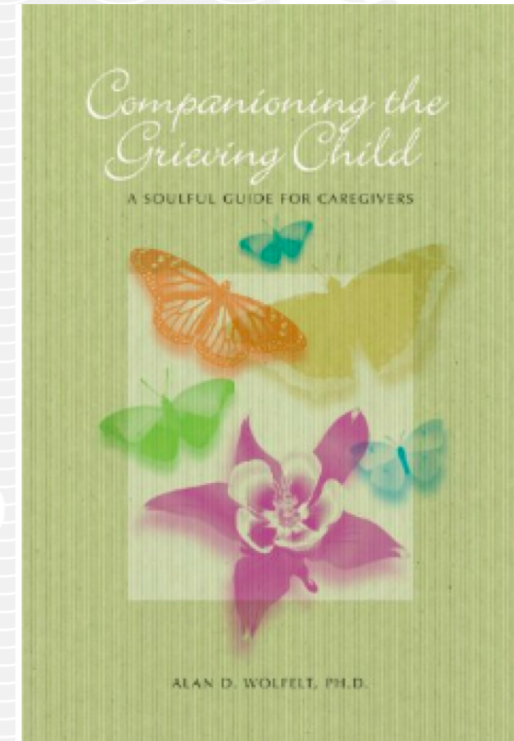
This Pandemic of Grief

- Supporting each other:
 - Many wonderful resources and experts
 - ISCA Network
 - [David Kessler and Brené Brown on Grief and Finding Meaning](#)
 - ISCA Article: [In the Time of Corona: Strategies for Grief & Loss, Transitions & Celebrations, Giving and Gratitude](#)
 - So many! Our goal: to help focus on some of the most helpful tools we have found when dealing with death in our schools.



This Pandemic of Grief

- Dr. Alan Wolfelt's thoughts ([This Pandemic of Grief](#))
 - We grieve when:
 - Attachments are harmed
 - Experience / Feel
 - shock, disbelief
 - worries, fear
 - sad, lonely, angry
 - guilty, regretful
 - Sum total of all of this is our grief



This Pandemic of Grief

- Our pandemic grief will:
 - *“change from day to day and week to week. This virus is fast. As it sweeps across continents and we collectively take action to “flatten the curve,” new rules and limitations are popping up every day. Restrictions are mounting and growing increasingly severe. As circumstances grow more dire, our grief will change.”*

This Pandemic of Grief

- To help ourselves emotionally, socially, and spiritually we need to mourn
 - *“Mourning is being aware of your grief, giving it the attention it needs and deserves, and expressing it outside of yourself.”*
 - *Acknowledge the reality of the pandemic as well as your grief*
 - *Honor all your feelings*
 - *Practice gratitude for the good in your life*
 - *Be kind to yourself*
 - *Search for meaning*
 - ***Reach out to others and give and accept support***
 - That’s our goal for today. Sharing our resources and supporting each other as international helping professionals during this pandemic and virtual learning time.



PART B

Planning Virtual Response Teams When There is a Death in Your School Community

Planning a Virtual Response Team

- Be proactive & remain positive
 - *“Prior planning, empathic leadership, and teachable moments promote healing among students and staff members after the death of a member of the school community.” ~ Scott Poland & Donna Poland*
- Scott Poland & Donna Poland’s thoughts ([Dealing With Death at School](#))
 - Planning & Preparation
 - Verification & Notification
 - Initial Intervention
 - Long Term Follow-Up

Remember that you will need to consider your context, cultures & community. *Best fit.*
Remember if you are on your own to reach out to the ISCA Taskforce & community.

PREPaRE Crisis Response Model for a Pandemic

- **P**revent physical and psychological injury.
- **R**eaffirm health/welfare by ensuring youth and caregivers have crisis facts and make available guidance directing actions that minimize health risks.
- **E**valuate and monitor stress reactions. Again, in an ongoing crisis, stress is, to a certain point, appropriate and adaptive.
- **P**rovide **a**nd **R**espond to mental health needs. While face-to-face crisis intervention is difficult due to social distancing requirements, there are other options for supporting adaptive coping with an ongoing stressor.
- **E**xamine the effectiveness of the mental health response to a pandemic. Keep notes and document actions taken, and reflections made.





Sample Response Plans When There is a Death in Your School Community

Chatsworth Grief/Loss Crisis Plan (excerpt below)

Procedures/Planning:

Anticipatory Statement to Teachers (if possible when impending Death):

Info to Staff this is something we need to start preparing for. We are creating a Crisis Team and looking to see if there is anyone interested in volunteering for areas of planning, we might need assistance....

After Death:

1. **Verify the Information.** **Determine what information the family would like to have disclosed.
2. **Create Statements** - Determine who will create messages. -What can be shared. Timelines (if anticipatory, when to let students know?) Consider procedures. Expectations for memorial. Funeral/Wake, Is Media statement needed.

Statement for Faculty/Teachers/Staff: (What is known about death, Who can they approach for questions/support, Procedures for the day, What to look out for in students that may need support)

Statement for Students: Provide face to face notification of the death and how to receive support services. Encourage students to identify friends they may be concerned about or need more support (esp in cases of suicide).

Statement for Parents: Letter to notify them of death and what services are being offered to students and families. Assure parents crisis teams have been mobilized and support services are available. Provide Wake/Funeral information if approved by parents.

Sample Comprehensive Crisis Plans for Grief/Loss

- [North Star](#) (USA)
- [Turtle Mountain](#) (Canada)
- [School Crisis Center Guidelines for Responding to Death of Student or Staff](#)
- [Coalition to Support Grieving Students](#)

Grief and Loss Family Response Team Meeting During COVID-19

Date:
What Platform:
Who:

Communication / Facts	Notes

Family needs / concerns	Notes
Basic needs, food, overall functioning during COVID	
Who makes up the family support system?	
Other	

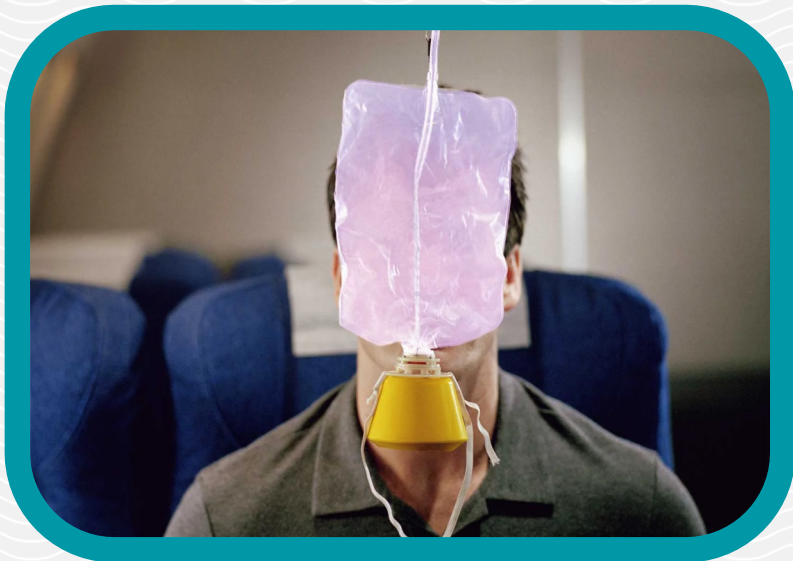
Student needs / concerns	Notes
Sudden and unexpected	
Not able to be at hospital	
First experience with death?	
Social support (family, teachers, counselors, friends, other adults)	Possibly invite staff to communicate via email. Do it in a way that doesn't expect a conversation.

Who else impacted? What support do they need?	Notes
Teachers (some teachers might also be friends)	
Support staff	
Friends of student/family	

Sample Basic Plan During COVID-19

Reflections from Faculty Member's Death

Sample Plan for Death of Staff Member





Virtual Tools for Responding to a Death in your School Community

Virtual Tools to Support Students and Families

- ISCA Article: [Helping Students Virtually after the Loss of a Loved One During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- How to plan virtually for support. Consider **individual meetings** to:
 - Reach out: What are the needs based on the response team plan? Who is reaching out (admin, counselor, other)?
 - Voice calls, video calls, emails, texting, social media
 - Provide Information...What is normal? Tips for grieving. Also acknowledging that we are not in “normal” times.
 - Share resource guides to include valuable sources: [The Dougy Center](#), [Coalition to Support Grieving Children](#), Dr. David Kessler and [grief.com](#), [Dr. Wolfelt](#) and many other resources on the ISCA site.

Virtual Tools to Support Students and Families

Direct Counseling supports virtually:

- **Counselor Led Grief Support Groups** (various virtual platforms)
 - Topics and curriculum in the ISCA article
 - Be creative/flexible with participants, timing, and topics
- **Online Referrals**
 - Helping guide families to make appointments through
 - [Truman Group](#) (online counseling)
 - [Betterhelp.com](#) (online counseling)
 - Online resources to provide to families
 - [The Dougy Center](#) (resources and virtual support groups)
 - [Grief.com](#) (resources and virtual support groups)
 - Local resources

Virtual Tools to Support Students and Families

Additional Supports using various virtual platforms

- Creating a [resource guide](#)
- Online Book Club
- Do a virtual reading of a book for younger students.
- Small Group activities, such as making a memory box, drawings, etc.

Many of the resources above can also be helpful to staff and teachers depending on the grief and loss they are experiencing

- [Addressing Grief: Tips for Teachers and Administrators](#)
- [Coping with Death of Student or Staff](#) (Sample statements of what to say pg.6)

Virtual Tools to Support Staff and Teachers

- Importance of addressing and supporting anticipatory grief (when possible) to help with grieving process
- Recognize grief/loss may trigger a variety of emotional responses based on personal experiences
- Consider individual needs to provide appropriate supports, especially when the traditional human connection is absent when supporting virtually



PART C

Nurturing Hope in Difficult Times

Nurturing Hope

- Supporting each other
 - Many wonderful resources and experts
- Courage & Renewal Facilitator David Henderson ([Optimism vs Hope](#))
 - Optimism: belief that things will get better, that there is a silver lining.
 - in and of itself, does not lead to change
 - Hope (verb): belief that things can get better.
 - tied with **goals** and **agency**

"There's a difference between optimism and hope. *Optimism* tries to deny what's happening. *Hope* is dealing with bad news, but still trying to find that ray of light."

Alan Wright, Chaplain
of Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center

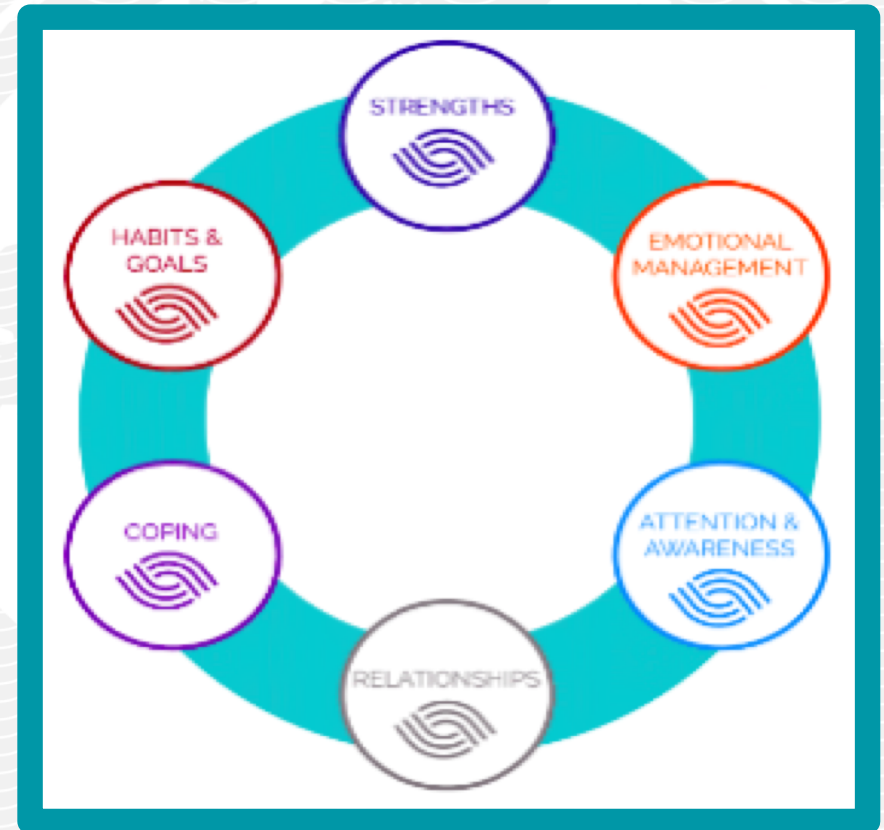
Exercises to Nurture Hope

- Visualize your best possible self one year from now. This might be your best self in a relationship, at work, in your community or just everyday life. Consider how to use your highest character strengths to reach your best possible self.
- Set a goal you would like to accomplish. Boost your hopeful thinking by writing down at least three ways to reach your goal, as well as the many reasons why you can reach it.
- Journal about one good event and one bad event in your life each week. Consider why the good events will last and how they relate to the actions you take. Then consider why the bad events will pass, why they are limited in their effect and why you aren't completely to blame.

--from Ryan Niemiec, Psy. D., www.viacharacter.org

Building Hope & Resilience

- [Visible Well-Being](#): Free online resource from Professor of Positive Psychology Dr. Lea Waters to build resilience during COVID-19 for teachers, students, & families
 - Strengths
 - Emotional Management
 - Attention & Awareness
 - Relationships
 - Coping
 - Habits & Goals
- The Guardian - The Good Place
 - [Dr. Lea Waters - Articles & Videos](#)



Other Tools to Build Hope & Resilience

- Posttraumatic Growth: Positive change experienced from trauma.
 - *--does not mean that the trauma was positive*
- Upside of Stress: How you think about stress impacts how your body responds to stress
- Navigating Transitions: Class taught through www.viacharacter.org

*“The wound is the place
where the light enters you”*

Rumi



PART D

Question and Answer Time

Panelists

- **Cheryl Brown**, Executive Director, International School Counselor Association (ISCA), cbrown@iscainfo.com
- **Chrystal Kelly**, High School Counselor, The American International School of Muscat, Oman, kellyc@taism.com
- **Jen Hammonds**, Middle School Counselor, The American School of Doha, Qatar, jenhammonds@asd.edu.qa
- **Shira Fisher**, Head of Student Services, Chatsworth International School, Singapore, sfisher@chatsworth.com.sg
- **Elizabeth Mohr**, Assistant Director of College Counseling, TISIS England, emohr@tasisengland.org
- **Sarah Pearlz**, Student Services Coordinator, School Psychologist, Nagoya International School, spearlz@nis.ac.jp