

Dear Families,

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) brings with it feelings of anxiety, stress, disappointment, and uncertainty. These feelings may be especially strong in children of all ages. Though all children deal with strong emotions in different ways, if your child has been faced with school closures, cancelled events or separation from friends, they are going to need to feel loved and supported now more than ever.

Many of our elementary schools have been using Social Emotional Learning curriculum to teach students specific skills for calming down those strong feelings. Over the next weeks, we'll be sharing some ways that parents can help create a sense of calmness and normalcy at home. We'll also be sharing things that parents can do to help their children navigate "the new (temporary) normal." It all begins with self-care. When you're a parent, self-care often slips to the bottom of the list. But taking care of yourself isn't a luxury, it's essential. During this difficult time when children are home and stress is running high, self-care is now more important than ever. Remember to spend time with your family. Consider taking a walk outside to notice the new springtime growth on plants and trees, listen to birds chirping and notice the skies are quiet and less crowded with airplanes. We've seen structure and routines provide a sense of stability for students at school. If possible, add some kind of self-care and fresh air routine into the structure of your day at home with students.

Although we aren't at school, we are still thinking about you. If you have questions or concerns you would like to share with a staff member, click here to see the staff directory <https://talbothill.rentonschools.us/our-school/faculty>.

## Take Care of Yourself

It can be hard to find the time or energy for self-care during a crisis, but it's important that you take care of yourself first so you're able to support your students. Finding ways to take care of yourself and manage your own emotions first is akin to adults putting on their oxygen masks before helping children with theirs. Here are some self-care strategies:

- Take time each day to notice what you're feeling and use an emotion-management strategy to find calm.
- Check in on your self-talk and reframe the situation in positive ways as best you can.
- Identify and reach out to people who can provide you with support. Connect with them on a regular basis.

## Stay Connected

With schools closed, and our current orders to stay home, try to find ways to connect with your friends, family, and colleagues. These connections will help you maintain your own social-emotional health.

**second  
step**

