



2022-23

# PARENT/CAREGIVER ROADMAP for

## Social-Emotional Wellbeing and Academic Success v.2



HOPE &  
GROWTH MINDSET

CONNECTEDNESS



ABILITY TO CALM



SENSE OF SELF-EFFICACY  
AND COMMUNITY EFFICACY



SENSE OF SAFETY

# Message from Superintendent



Dear Parents/Caregivers,

It is my distinct pleasure to present this Roadmap for Social-Emotional Well-Being & Academic Success, a practical and easy-to-use guide for teaching and applying key resilience factors in our daily lives.

We are living in a time of historic adversity—and historic connectedness. The challenges presented by this pandemic have been great, but even greater has been our collective determination to summon hope, to heal, and to persevere as one.

Through our collective determination, countless children, youth, and adults have practiced critical skills and developed resilience, proving once again that resilience is a malleable skill that can be taught and learned.

This Roadmap is the culmination of tremendous collaboration, healing energy, and learning that has been cultivated over the course of this pandemic around the teaching of resilience factors. It is a practical guide with impactful strategies that can help our students—and ourselves—become even better prepared for life's challenges. We hope that you get as much strength and inspiration from using these strategies as we get from sharing them.

Finally, I want to thank and acknowledge the many Los Angeles Unified teams that came together to create this roadmap, including our Student Health and Human Services Division, Division of Instruction, Division of Special Education, and Human Resources. This truly was a collaborative effort. I want to express my gratitude to all the professionals who curated resources for this project and to recognize them as co-presenters of this roadmap.

With Gratitude,  
Alberto M. Carvalho  
Superintendent



# Table of Contents

<b>Message from Superintendent</b>	1	<i>What does science teach us about connectedness?</i>	13
<b>Table of Contents</b>	3	<i>What messages do my children need to hear from me to feel safe and loved?</i>	14
<b>About this Roadmap</b>	4	<i>How can our family talk about stressful events?</i>	14
The Five Resilience Elements	4	<i>How can I talk to my child about difficult topics?</i>	15
<b>Sense of Safety</b>	5	<b>Resources</b>	15
<i>What does the brain science teach us about feeling safe?</i>	6	<b>Self-Efficacy (“I can-do attitude”)</b>	16
Anti-Racism	6	<b>Community Efficacy (“We can-do attitude”)</b>	16
<i>What are common reactions to extreme stress?</i>	6	<i>What does science teach us about self-efficacy and community efficacy after stressful events?</i>	16
<i>How can I feel safe?</i>	7	<i>How can I develop a sense of self-efficacy in myself and my children?</i>	17
<i>How can I challenge my automatic negative thoughts?</i>	8	<b>Resources</b>	17
<i>What can I say and do to help my child feel safer?</i>	8	<b>Hope &amp; Growth Mindset</b>	18
<b>Resources</b>	9	<i>What does the science of hope teach us?</i>	18
<b>Calm</b>	10	<i>As a caregiver, how can I instill hope in my child?</i>	19
<i>What does the brain science teach us about being calm?</i>	10	<i>How can I teach my child a growth mindset?</i>	19
<i>What can I do to stay calm when my child is shut down, upset, worked up, or stressed out?</i>	11	<b>Resources</b>	20
<i>What can I do to help my family get or stay calm?</i>	11	<b>Conclusion</b>	21
<b>Resources</b>	12	<b>Contributors</b>	21
<b>Connectedness</b>	13	<b>References</b>	22
<i>What does science teach us about the caregiver-child relationship and resilience?</i>	13		



**If a community values its children, it must cherish its parents.**  
 – John Bowlby



## About this Roadmap

This guide was developed for parents and caregivers. It provides information about resilience and offers ideas about how to promote social and emotional health and academic success. It is our hope that after you review this guide, you will realize that you are already doing a lot of things right. The ideas in this guide are based on brain science, so we also offer science-based tips to enhance your family wellbeing. You may use this guide to learn more about how to promote your own and your child's resilience. Together we can embrace this journey towards recovery, resilience, a sense of belonging and community, and academic achievement.

### The 2021-22 Parent/Caregiver Roadmap for Social-Emotional Well-Being & Academic Success



was mailed to families in the fall 2021 and can still be viewed on the LAUSD SHHS website.

[www.achieve.lausd.net/shhs](http://www.achieve.lausd.net/shhs)

## The Five Resilience Elements<sup>1</sup>

A worldwide panel of experts met to identify resilience elements that could be used to guide efforts to recover after community exposure to extreme stress. The roadmap is organized into these five elements and apply to all systems that children rely on – family, schools, and communities. The five resilience elements are:

1. a sense of safety
2. ability to calm
3. a sense of self-efficacy and community efficacy
4. connectedness
5. hope & growth mindset

## Understanding Resilience<sup>2</sup>

We are excited to share what we know about the “ordinary magic” of resilience. Resilience is not a trait and best described as a dynamic and ongoing process similar to building a “muscle.” As such, it grows through continuous development, exercise, and use to ensure it is fine tuned to meet adversities, barriers, and challenges. Further, the resilience of children depends on the resilience of families, schools, communities, and societies. The resilience phenomenon has four components:

6. **Risk:** Stress, adversity, illness, violence, historical trauma, and discrimination
7. **Protective Factors – Personal or Individual:** Strengths, assets, problem-solving skills, social skills, hope, cultural pride, and a sense that life has meaning.
8. **Protective Factors – External or Environmental:** Family and peer support, high expectations, pro-social bonding, opportunities for meaningful participation, connections to effective schools and community supports, community organization and infrastructure, and family-friendly policies.
9. **Positive Outcome:** Adaptation, competence, growth, or thriving.

Please feel free to read this roadmap to your child and practice the suggested strategies together. On behalf of the LAUSD staff and students, we cherish and treasure you.



# Sense of Safety



*The safety of the people shall be the highest law.*

*- Marcus Tullius Cicero*

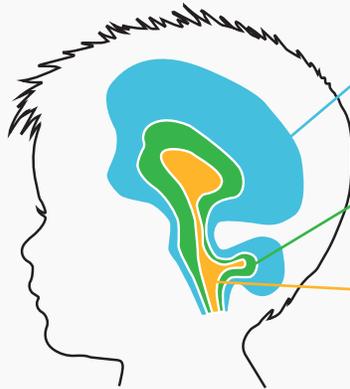


This section provides definitions of the resilience element, sense of safety, reviews the brain science, common reactions to stress and trauma, and presents strategies to help you and your child(ren) feel safe. Links to resources related to feeling safe are offered at the end of this section.

## Sense of Safety

1. We feel a sense of safety when we have consistency in our lives.
2. Having a sense of safety is comprehensive; it includes physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial stability for ourselves and for the people we care about.
3. Volatile, Uncertain, Chaotic, and Ambiguous (VUCA)<sup>3</sup> environments may shift our mind and bodies to a fight, flight, or freeze response. When we are afraid, our brains still respond like they did when we lived in the wild. When in danger, we had to decide in a blink of an eye whether to fight, flight (run, climb a tree), or freeze (hoping we would not be seen or heard).

We need to feel calm and safe (**Brainstem**) first, then relate and feel connected (**Limbic Brain**) to another person, before we can think and learn (**the Cortex**).



**The Cortex develops third:** The cortex is responsible for speech, language, abstract thinking, reflecting on the past, planning for the future, our hopes and dreams.

**The Limbic develops second:** The limbic brain is involved in the regulation of emotion, memory, attachment, and social-emotional communication.

**The Brainstem develops first:** The brainstem is responsible for simple and reflexive functions like blood pressure, heart rate, and regulating body temperature.



**When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you.**  
– African Proverb



### What does the brain science teach us about feeling safe?<sup>4</sup>

- We think and learn best when we are **calm and alert**. When signals from our body tell us we are comfortable and safe (e.g., our internal needs like hunger and thirst are met), and input from the outside world tells us we are safe and protected (e.g., there is no external threat) – we will be in a state of calm.
- Feeling **alarmed, fear, or terror** stirs up our biological fight-flight-or-freeze responses. When the stress response is activated, the higher parts of the brain shut down, which interferes with our ability to think clearly and make good decisions. Stress can interfere with learning, relationships, and behavior.
- Repeated loss, community violence, acts of racism and discrimination, actual or perceived threats to our life are a few examples of Volatile, Uncertain, Chaotic and Ambiguous (VUCA) environments and situations that may shift our mind to a fight, flight or freeze response.
- Anything new can will activate our stress-response systems. Our reaction to novelty is, “Uh-oh, what is this?” Until the new thing is proven safe and positive, it will be perceived as a potential threat. Fear shuts down thinking and amps up feeling. So, learning something new requires a safe relationship and environment.



When we feels...	Then we...
Calm, rested, comfortable & safe	Can be curious and learning
Stressed and worried	May be emotional, resistant or compliant
Fear or terror	May become defiant, aggressive, checked out, or shut down



**Better to prevent than regret. – Salvadoran Proverb**



## Anti-Racism<sup>5</sup>

Physical and emotional safety, can and need to address racism and discrimination in our systems - homes, schools, and communities - so all our children feel safe. Anti-racism is an active process of recognizing and dismantling racism by changing systems, policies, practices, and behaviors that indirectly and directly promote racial discrimination.

Here are some reflection questions for us to think about and then act on to make necessary changes in our systems. *How can we make regular space for self-reflection in the systems of which we are a part?*



### Diversity asks:

- Who is included in the conversation and making decisions?
- Is the dominant culture normalized at the expense of other cultures?

### Equity asks:

- Who is trying to join the conversation but can't?
- How can we speak up for people trying to join the conversation?

### Inclusion asks:

- Have everyone's ideas been heard?
- How can we model inclusion for our children?

### Justice asks:

- How do you want to impact your children because of the antiracism work you're doing now?
- What rules and behaviors in my home, school, and community shape people's access to resources?

## There are different types of stress<sup>4</sup>

**Good Stress:** A demand on our body and an essential part of normal development; it's a key element in learning and mastering new skills.

**Tolerable Stress:** When we are exposed to stressful experiences, and we are provided the protection of supportive relationships. This helps reduce the biological fight-flight-or freeze response and promotes a return to balance.

**Toxic Stress:** The key factor for whether stress is destructive is when the pattern of stress is unpredictable, extreme, or prolonged. A stressor will push us out of balance and an internal stress response will be activated to get us back in balance.



## What are common reactions to extreme stress?<sup>6</sup>



*You are neither sick nor senseless. You are going through a crisis, and you are reacting in a normal way to an abnormal situation.*



Everyone responds differently to stress. You may recognize some of these reactions in your child, loved ones, and yourself.

- Nightmares or trouble sleeping
- Wanting to NOT think or talk about the stressful events
- Feeling out of control
- Having trouble concentrating at home, school, or work
- Feeling angry, annoyed, or irritable
- Feeling sadness, grief, or loss
- Having physical health problems or complaints
- Being on guard to protect yourself; feeling like something bad is about to happen



Although these are common reactions to stress and trauma among adults and children, it is important to know when to be concerned and reach out for counseling and support.

If these reactions last longer than a few months or interfere with daily life tasks (for example, bathing, eating, working, or going to school), then it is helpful to know that professional support is available and effective. Please see [page 26](#) of this Roadmap for more information about mental health resources available.

## How can I feel safe?

*What supports do you need when you feel overwhelmed, exhausted, and unbalanced?*

Let's talk about choices we can make to feel safe. We can manage stress by establishing routines for daily brain and body-care. Routines include eating nutritious foods, getting adequate sleep, moving our bodies regularly, and taking rest breaks.

Let's break it down with examples for things we can do to feel safe:

### ESTABLISH ROUTINES



regular bedtime, regular mealtimes, rest breaks throughout the day

### MOVEMENT



walking, dancing, hiking, bike riding, stretching

### COMMUNICATION



expressing our thoughts, feelings, needs, concerns, doubts, and questions

**MANAGING OUR STRESS**



deep breathing, getting a good night's sleep, saying no to an overload of activities

**CHOOSING WITH WHOM WE SPEND TIME**



family and/or friends we trust and feel safe around

**REACHING OUT TO OTHERS FOR SUPPORT**



family, friends, clergy, counselors

**Our need for sleep varies by age<sup>7</sup>**

**Infants:** up to 12 months old need 12 to 16 hours including naps.

**Ages 1 and 2** need 11 to 14 hours including naps.

**Ages 3 to 5** need 10 to 13 hours including naps.

**Ages 6 to 12** need 9-12 hours.

**Ages 13 to 18** need 8-10 hours.

**Adults** need at least 7 hours.



***How can I challenge my automatic negative thoughts?<sup>6</sup>***

Our thoughts influence our feelings and behaviors. We can train our brain to challenge our negative thinking by asking ourselves if there are any other ways of thinking about a situation that make sense.

For example, you can use the questions below to push back negative thoughts:

- **Other ways to think about it:** *Is there another way to look at this? Is there another reason why this would happen?*
- **What will happen next:** *Even if this thought is true, what's the worst thing that can happen...what's the best thing that can happen...what's most likely to happen?*
- **Plan of action:** *Is there anything I can do about this?*
- **Check the facts:** *How do I know this is true? Has this happened to me before? Has this happened with other people or in other situations?*

Here are examples of automatic negative thoughts that parents may have and how to challenge those thoughts.

Automatic negative thought	Alternative (and more helpful) thought
"I should always sacrifice my interests for those of my child".	Major sacrifices are inevitable in parenting. However, always prioritizing our children's needs over our own is not balanced or sustainable. We can come up with win-win solutions that we can all live with.
"I'm never going to get this right".	How would you challenge this negative thought? What other helpful thought can you come up with? It's okay to ask friends for ideas – it's not cheating, it's collaboration or crowdsourcing!

## What can I say and do to help my child feel safer?

Caregivers asked for everyday scenarios and suggestions on how they can help their child in different situations. Here are two conversations between a caregiver and student that model what caregivers may say.

### For conversations with a younger student

**Caregiver:** *I know things have been overwhelming for some time now. I have been doing things to stay calm and think clearly. What can I do to help you feel safer?*

**Child:** *I don't know*

**Caregiver:** *I understand. I would love to know if there are things I can say or do to make you feel safer.*

**Child:** *I like sitting on your lap when you read to me.*

**Caregiver:** *I like that too. Would you like to do that now?*



### For conversations with an older student

**Caregiver:** *I know things have been overwhelming for some time now. I have been doing things to stay calm and think clearly. What can I do to help you feel safer?*

**Child:** *I don't know*

**Caregiver:** *I understand. I would love to know if there are things I can say or do to make you feel safer.*

**Child:** *I don't like it when you tell me how to fix things when I feel overwhelmed.*

**Caregiver:** *I understand. What would you like me to say or do instead?*

**Child:** *I like it when you tell me a time when you felt scared.*

**Caregiver:** *Thanks for letting me know. Let me think, when I was your age, I remember feeling scared when...*



## Media<sup>1</sup>

Safety can also mean safety from rumors and over-exposure to media. More exposure means worse outcomes. Also, young children may think the event has not ended if they see it repeatedly. As caregivers, we can limit how much news media our children watch, especially if children feel distressed after viewing. The questions below are ways that caregivers can start a conversation with children.

- "It's hard when it seems like everything has changed. Would talking about it help right now?"
- "I know you may have seen \_\_\_ video on \_\_\_ social media platform. What do you think about that? What are your friends saying about it?"

## Resources

**The Beyond the Bell (BTB) Branch** is the District's umbrella organization responsible for all before/after school programs and expanded learning opportunities. Beyond the Bell's mission is to ensure that all children and youth in LAUSD have access to high quality and safe programs. The programs provide supervised academic, enrichment, and/or physical fitness/recreational activities that inspire learning and achievement beyond the regular school day (before/after school and Saturdays).



## Resources

**The Black Student Achievement Program (BSAP)** believes that successful Black student achievement is defined by high academic performance, strong social-emotional awareness and management, and positive cultural identity. In the 2019-2021 LA Unified School Experience Survey, 68% of Black students reported feeling overall connectedness at school and 69% reported feeling safe at school. The Black Student Achievement Plan is committed to building a positive school climate for Black students, through **H**umanized Engagement and Connectedness, **E**nhanced Integrated Supports, **A**uthentic Family Partnerships, **R**aising Black Mental Health Awareness and **T**ailored Trauma Informed Practices.



**The Specialized Student Services** department provides comprehensive, specialized support services to eliminate disparities in well-being, school stability, attendance, achievement, graduation, and college access for our students in foster care, experiencing homelessness, involved in the juvenile justice system, as well as students returning from probation camps and/or Los Angeles County Office of Education schools. Specialized Student Services (SSS) Counselors provide local, integrated, and specialized support services for targeted student populations, including direct services, case management, trainings, and referrals.



**The LAUSD Indian Education Program** is designed to address the unique cultural, language, and educationally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students, including preschool children and ensure that all students meet the challenging State academic standard.



**The School Enrollment, Placement & Assessment (SEPA) Center** consists of a multidisciplinary student health and services team trained to educate and assist families to navigate the school system and access district and community resources. The mission of the center staff is to ensure that students are provided all services required to enroll in school and connect family with additional supports needed for academic, social, and emotional success. All students are welcome including immigrant and refugee students and their families.



**The Office of Human Relations, Diversity & Equity (HRDE)** has an abundance of resources and services to support efforts to promote safer and more affirming learning environments for LGBTQ+ students and families and to reduce incidents of bullying and bias. The Human Relations website has a rich library of educational resources for students, staff, and families on a multitude of topics that affect our world today. Visit the website to access resources on topics on Talking to Children About Mass Shootings, Being an Anti-Racist Leader, What's Happening in Ukraine? and What to Do If You're Being Bullied. The Stories of Excellence Advisory Lessons are an opportunity to learn about the



visionaries who are changing the world through their leadership and advocacy.

# Calm

This section provides definitions of the resilience element, ability to calm, reviews the brain science and strategies to help you and your children feel calm. Links to resources related to calming are offered at the end of this section.

“

*Don't be afraid to weep—it will free your mind from sad thoughts.*

*- Hopi Proverb*

”



“

*Do not push the river, it will flow itself.*

*- Polish Proverb*

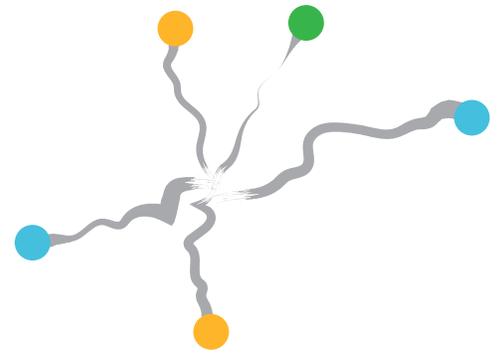
”

## Ability to Calm

1. Calm is feeling safe and protected in our bodies and thoughts.
2. Choosing our thoughts (e.g., “things tend to work out” “I can figure this out”) can make us feel calm.
3. The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations.

## What does the brain science teach us about being calm?<sup>4</sup>

Our heart beats faster when we feel threatened, scared, or nervous. Our emotional brain sends a distress signal to the rest of the body to fight-flight-freeze for protection. When a child/youth is shut down, upset, worked up or stressed out, their behavior is not a reflection of their relationship, love, or respect for you, but a reflection of their arousal level. Knowing this may help you be more understanding and, as a family, find ways to bring their arousal down.



Rhythm is essential to a healthy body and mind. Rhythm is regulating - it balances our emotions. Patterned, repetitive, rhythmic activity is one of the most helpful ways to move children from stressed out or super-high anxiety states, to their calmer 'thinking brain'. Rhythmic activities open the top part of the brain for easier learning. Rhythmic activity is soothing and calming because it reminds us of being in our mother's womb, hearing her heartbeat, and feeling warm, full, and safe.

## What can I do to stay calm when my child is shut down, upset, worked up, or stressed out?<sup>4</sup>

If we, as adults, are shut down, upset, worked up, or stressed out, then we cannot help a child or young person stay or get calm. Humans are emotionally "contagious", and we sense the distress of others. Our internal storm becomes the family's storm. To help you identify your own ways to become calm, you are invited to reflect on the following questions:

- *Do I take breaks to care for my own body and brain to prevent blowing my top?*
- *Do I value and make it a priority to spend time with people and activities that help me to stay calm and balanced?*
- *What activities and strategies make me feel balanced and calm?*
- *What supportive and nurturing relationships do I reach out to and rely on when I'm feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or overloaded?*
- *Who is there for me when I need a break?*

We asked parents/caregivers to share their strategies for feeling calm and this is what they said:

- Going outside, movement, putting on music and dancing with the kids
- Running, reading, time at the beach or in nature
- Prayer, having a laugh with loved ones, listening to music, taking a nap
- Epsom salt bath (lavender), chamomile tea, heated pillows, spending time with people I care about, sauna, cuddle meetings with my daughter, meditation, massage

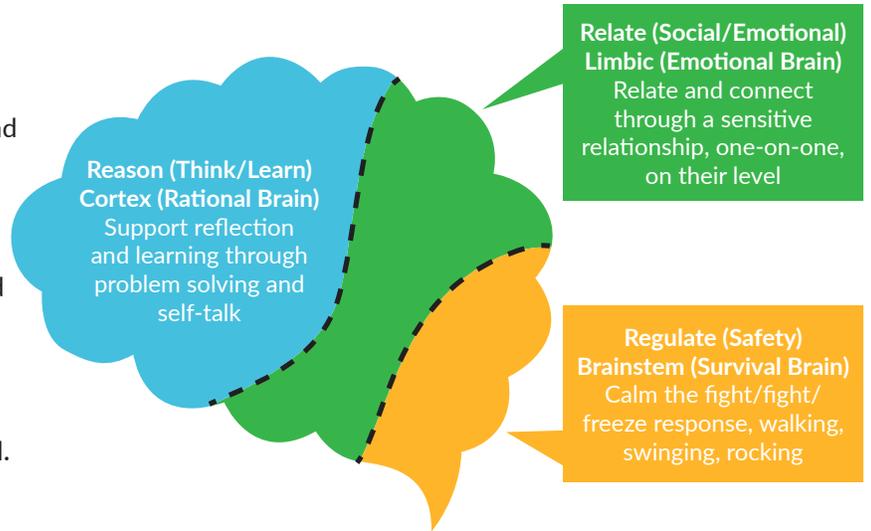


***Don't be afraid to weep—it will free your mind from sad thoughts. – Hopi Proverb***



## What can I do to help my family get or stay calm?<sup>4</sup>

Surrounding children with supportive relationships and regular **brainstem** calming activities can help a child's brain and body to feel safe. Putting calming activities into the daily family routine to shift children from **alarm, or fear** to **calm and alert** states. Taking body and brain-care breaks throughout the day - for as little as four minutes at a time - can prevent two-hour power struggles that arise when children, young people, or caregivers, feel stressed, overwhelmed, or overloaded.



**Alertness and courage are life's shield. – Filipino Proverb**



Here are some ideas and options for helping your family become calm in times of stress.<sup>4</sup>

Brain Science	Strategies
<b>Relationships:</b> One of the best ways to become calm and find our balance is through our relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spending time or talking to another person, often makes us feel better.</li> <li>• Smiles and words of kindness from the people we care about can make us smile back and feel calm.</li> </ul>
<b>From the top-down:</b> We can use our thoughts ( <b>Cortex</b> ) to reason, problem solve, and send signals to the impulsive and lower part of the brain ( <b>Brainstem</b> ).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can calm our mind and body by saying to ourselves: <i>“Even though I’m mad or frustrated, I’m not going to say something I will regret or will hurt someone.”</i></li> <li>• Notice and challenge our thoughts - negative thoughts are stressful and positive thoughts fight stress.</li> </ul>
<b>From the bottom-up:</b> We can also use body and brain calming activities to calm the <b>Brainstem</b> and better access the <b>Cortex</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking, dancing, running, drumming, tapping, singing, breathing, movement, music.</li> <li>• A good laugh provides stress relief. Laughter increases the endorphins (a hormone that relieves pain and creates a feeling of well-being) that are released by our brain. Over the long-term, it can improve our immune system.</li> </ul>



**Control your emotion or it will control you. – Samurai Proverb**



Brain Science	Strategies
Escaping through our imagination	We can take breaks from the outside world and find calm inside to escape the stress we may be feeling. When we imagine our favorite activity, place, or person – our brain can take our body there and feel good.
Taking mini-breaks	Taking body and brain-care breaks throughout the day (for as little as four minutes at a time) can prevent feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or overloaded.
Self-soothing	We can pay attention to the signals our bodies are sending (e.g., when we're tired, thirsty, hungry, sleepy) and respond to our body's needs (e.g., take a nap, drink water, eat a snack or meal, rest). Self-soothing is a way we can regulate our emotions and mental state.



*True peace between nations will only happen when there is true peace within people's souls. – Sioux Proverb*



## Resources

LAUSD's workshop series for parents and families called, "Stress Management & Emotional Wellbeing" is available at the links below.



Workshop 1



Workshop 2



Workshop 3

The following are videos to help you practice your ability to calm:



Physical Education

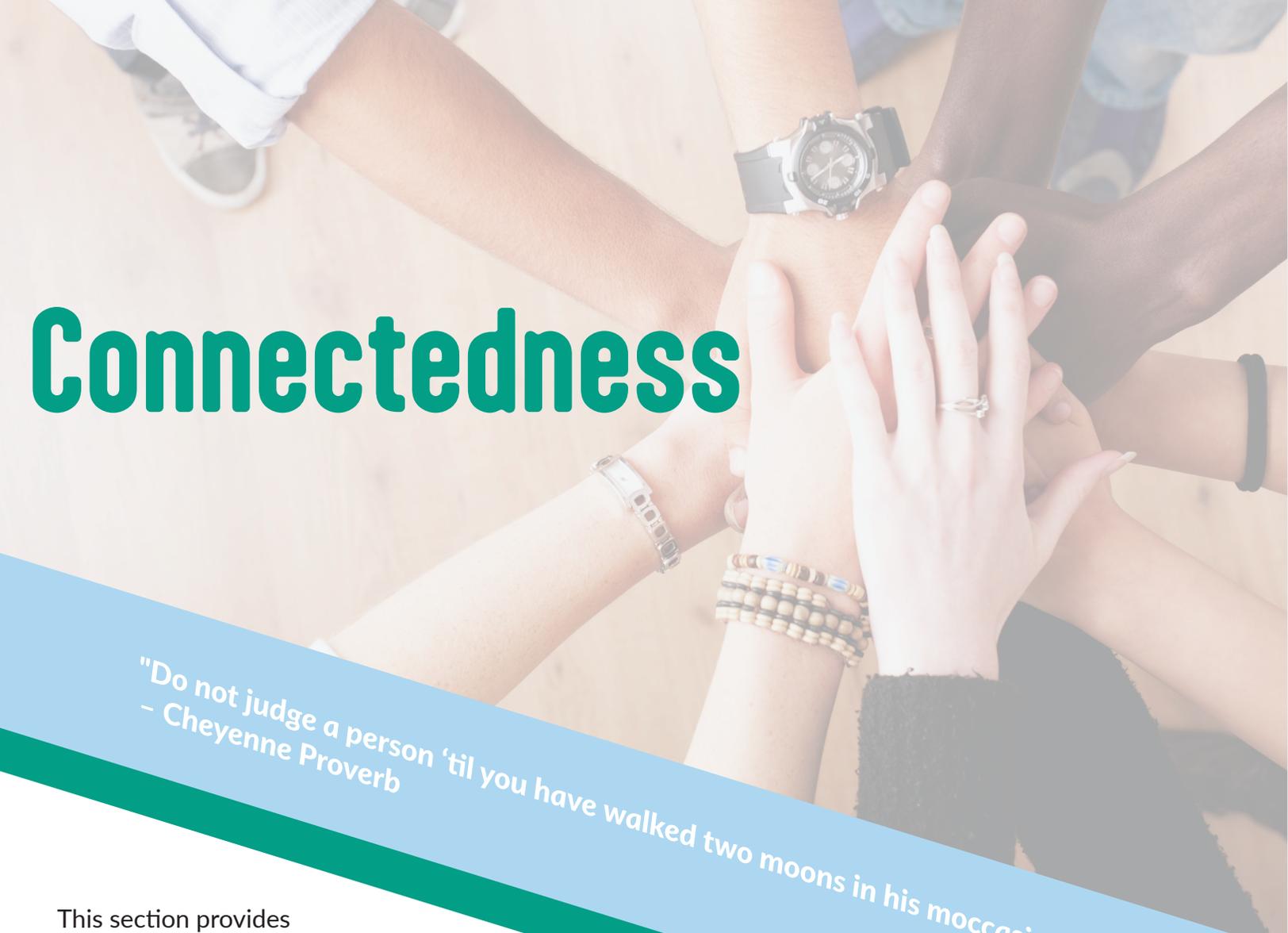


Staff Wellness

The UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center website offers free downloadable meditations in 15 languages. The Loving Kindness Meditation has been shown to reduce PTSD symptoms, burnout, and implicit bias:



Free Guided Meditations



# Connectedness

"Do not judge a person 'til you have walked two moons in his moccasins."  
– Cheyenne Proverb

This section provides definitions of the resilience element, connectedness, reviews attachment theory, the science related to connectedness, and presents strategies for talking with your family about stressful events. Links to resources related to connectedness are offered at the end of this section.

## Connectedness

1. The personal experience of feeling close to others.
2. It is being valued as a member of a community; it is a sense of belonging.
3. Positive interactions with people are regulating and reward us with pleasurable feelings.
4. Relationships are the key to healing.



***Tell me who your friends are, and I'll tell you who you are.***  
– Latin American and Bulgarian Proverb



## What does science teach us about the caregiver-child relationship and resilience?<sup>8</sup>

Attachment theory helps us understand the power of the caregiver-child relationship. Children send a signal to caregivers when children need safety, security, and attention. When caregivers respond in an attuned (personalized and tailored) way, it soothes children's distress. When caregivers consistently recognize, understand, and respond, it teaches children that they can trust others to help them when they are distressed. Children learn that their distress can be soothed, and ways to soothe themselves.



*The best way to be is to be yourself because your affect is contagious...genuine and sincere engagement...find your sweet spot as a confident and comfortable healthy adult caregiver. — Bruce Perry, MD, PhD*



Throughout our lives, we seek comfort and security through relationships because we learned to trust others in our first relationship with a caregiver. Establishing caring relationships is critical for promoting the ability to manage feelings and behavior, to cope with stress and frustration, to reduce fear and anxiety, to care for self and to self-soothe, and to develop self-discipline, self-reliance, self-confidence, self-worth, self-love, self-respect, and self-acceptance. Further, research tells us that attachment security protects us and prevents the development of PTSD.<sup>2</sup> A secure attachment bond meets a child's need for security, calm, and understanding. It allows for the best development of the child's brain and nervous system. When children have a secure attachment with their caregiver, their developing brain organizes itself to provide a foundation based on a feeling of safety.



## What does science teach us about connectedness?<sup>1</sup>

There is a tremendous amount of research about the benefits of social support in managing stress and trauma. Being connected to others means we have opportunities for practical problem solving when faced with overwhelming challenges. It means experiencing emotional understanding and acceptance for others. It means sharing stressful experiences and feeling like we are connected – and not alone. It means we can learn from others about ways to cope.

Our personal history of healthy relationships – including positive connections to family, community, and our culture – is better at predicting our health and mental health than our history of hardships, misfortune, or stressful events. Connectedness is a powerful buffer.

## What messages do my children need to hear from me to feel safe and loved?<sup>10</sup>

There are messages we need to receive during childhood from our parents or caregivers because they have a big impact on the way we see ourselves and relate to others. These are powerful statements that we can embrace and share with our children.

Which of these messages did you get? Which messages are you committed to giving your children from now on?

- I love you.
- I will take care of you.
- I see you and I hear you.
- I have confidence in you. I am sure you will succeed.

## How can our family talk about stressful events?<sup>11</sup>

First, it is okay to talk about it. Sometimes we avoid talking about stressful life events because it feels painful, or we want to protect our children. Or we may be unable or unwilling to talk about traumatic or stressful events for fear of embarrassment, disapproval, or punishment. That's understandable. Yet, it takes a lot of work and energy to suppress stories. Over time, the work of holding back our stories becomes a chronic stress and takes a toll on our bodies. We know that talking or writing about stressful experiences is beneficial. Research tells us that creating clear stories about stressful events - including details about both the facts and the feelings related to the events - leads to improvements in physical and mental wellbeing. Further, expressing both pleasant and unpleasant feelings lead to the greatest improvements in physical health. We can model storytelling and self-expression for children through journaling, conversations, stories, songs, and art.



*There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.*  
- Maya Angelou



## Opening up by writing it down<sup>12</sup>

We can put structure and organization to our anxious feelings by writing. Writing about emotional upheavals is linked to improved health. Below is a journaling prompt for writing about stressful events that has shown lots of good health results.

*Over four days and 15 minutes a day, write (draw or audio record) your very deepest thoughts and feelings about an extremely important emotional issue that has affected you and your life (especially one that you may not have shared with anyone before). Connect your topic to your relationships with others, to your past, your present or to who you have been, who you would like to be, or who you are now. Write without stopping to worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar. The only rule is that once you begin writing, drawing or audio recording, continue to do so until the time is up.*

## How can I talk to my child about difficult topics?<sup>13, 14</sup>

Talking to your children about important health topics and behaviors makes a difference! Youth who perceive their family communication is open, honest, and trustworthy are less likely to drink or smoke. Also, giving youth clear rules, adequate supervision, and consistency protects them against risky health behavior and illegal behavior. Communicating cultural values, beliefs, and expectations influences decisions youth make.



*You cannot purchase friendship—you have to do your part to make it.* - Sauk Proverb





***Listening well is as powerful as talking well and is also as essential to true conversation. – Chinese Proverb***



### **Attendance Matters: *What should I do if my child is absent?***

Daily student attendance continues to be a critical component of academic success. Students with excellent attendance have better academic results. If your child is absent, please notify your child’s teacher or call the school. You may check Schoology for missed work and submit any missed work to help stay on track. You may upload a Note via Parent Portal or provide a note to your child’s school. Our LAUSD community cares and is here to support you! You are invited to communicate with your child’s teacher, Pupil Services and Attendance Counselor, or administrator if your child is experiencing difficulties attending school. Additionally, the LAUSD Student and Family Wellness Hotline at (213) 241-3840 is available Monday to Friday from 8 am to 5 pm; press 3 for School Attendance and Enrollment.



***A few kind words can warm three winter months. – Japanese Proverb***



### **Resources**



**Parent and Community Involvement Videos, Articles, and Activities**



**LAUSD HRDE – Bullying Resources**



**LAUSD HRDE – Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression Resources**



**Handouts and Videos are Available to Learn More About Social Awareness**



***To communicate rationally and effectively with anyone, it helps if you make sure they’re regulated, make sure they feel a relationship with you, and only then try to reason with them. – Bruce Perry, MD, PhD***



***A good companion shortens the longest road. – Kurdish Proverb***



# Self-Efficacy

["I can-do attitude"]



*The path is made by walking. – African Proverb*



# Community Efficacy

["We can-do attitude"]



*When spider webs unite,  
they can tie up a lion.  
– Ethiopian proverb*



This section provides definitions for the related resilience elements - self-efficacy and community efficacy, reviews the science about why these concepts are important, and offers links to related resources.

## Self-Efficacy

1. The belief in one's own ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal.
2. An "I can do attitude" influences how we think, behave, and feel.
3. The more we face moderate challenges and succeed, the more capable we are of facing bigger challenges.

## Community Efficacy

1. Working together for a greater cause.
2. Community efficacy can exist when our belief in ourselves strengthens our belief in our collective ability to solve problems and make action plans.

## What does science teach us about self-efficacy and community efficacy after stressful events?!

During stressful and traumatic events, it's understandable to feel helpless because we had no control. We might develop a sense of "can't do" in other areas of our life – like at your job, your child in math class, at our job, or other life tasks. We can change this mindset and regain our belief that we (ourselves, our family, and community) can cope with stressful events. We have skills and can learn more to cope with stressors and achieve our goals. Remember that we have a track record of achieving goals. Even if this situation is completely new and different, **individually, and collectively, we can figure it out.**



*By trying repeatedly, the monkey learns how to jump from the tree.*

*– Cameroonian Proverb*



*The human brain is not designed for the modern world. For thousands of generations, we lived in small, multigeneration, multi-family groups. – Bruce Perry*



When parents/caregivers call the LAUSD Hotline, we ask:

“Are you interested in getting more information about services and support that address mental health, such as stress, worry or emotions, that may be available through LAUSD for your child or children?” Most, if not all, parents say “yes” to this question. This is an example of what self-efficacy & community-efficacy looks and sounds like. Asking for help is a way to access the strength of the community. It requires personal vulnerability and leads to empowerment.

### **How can I develop a sense of self-efficacy in myself and my children?**

Adults can help children develop self-efficacy. Here are a few ideas.

- Model challenging negative thoughts.
- Teach children how to set goals and come up with strategies for sticking to goals even when it's difficult.
- Notice and celebrate successes by encouraging them to keep a success journal listing their successes, skills, talents, and strategies they used to achieve their goals.
- Get involved in school or district-based leadership roles.

Channeling your passion for positive change in your community will provide you with purpose and will model that behavior for your children. Perhaps it is advocating for specific resources as a member of your School Site Council (SSC) or requesting parent workshops on mindfulness and physical wellness. Learn more about various school and district-based leadership opportunities by visiting the Office of Parent and Community Services webpage.



***I can ask for help. We can work together to figure out the best solutions for us.***



***It takes a whole village to raise a child. – African Proverb***



## **Resources**



### **Who is Los Angeles Unified Adult Education?**

We are dedicated teachers, administrators, and support staff who provide access to high quality pre- and post-secondary education and training opportunities in local communities throughout Greater Los Angeles. We are both a national and state leader in adult education, helping students learn English, earn their high school diplomas and train for careers. We also administer the largest apprenticeship training program in the country.



### **Parent Self-Efficacy**

Here you will find articles, handouts, and videos that are available to learn more about self-efficacy.



***You want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. – African Proverb***



“

*Tomorrow belongs to the people  
who prepare for it today.*

*- African Proverbs*

”



# Hope & Growth Mindset

“

*Where love reigns, the impossible may be attained. - Indian Proverb*

”

This section provides a definition of the resilience element, hope, reviews the science of hope, how you can instill hope in your child, and how you can nurture hope. Links to resources related to hope are offered at the end of this section.

## Hope

1. Hope is being able to envision a better future, which helps us take the steps to make it happen.
2. Hope is a thinking process that taps a sense of agency and the awareness of the steps necessary to achieve one's goals. Agency is a feeling of control over actions and consequences, the ability to take charge of one's life.



*It's better to light a candle than curse the darkness.*

*- Chinese Proverb*



## Growth Mindset

1. The belief that you can grow your talents and abilities with effort.
2. Those with growth mindset see effort as needed for success, embrace challenges, learn from criticism, and persist when faced with setbacks.

## What does the science of hope teach us?<sup>15</sup>

Research links hope with overall physical, psychological, and social wellbeing. Children who can identify a means to carry out goals and the ability to initiate and sustain action towards goals are considered more hopeful. There are two components related to hope – agency and pathways thinking.

**Agency thinking** reflects the belief that we can take action and persist towards our desired goals. For example:

- "I think the things I have done in the past will help me in the future."
- "Even when others want to quit, I know that I can find ways to solve the problem."



**Pathways thinking** represents a belief in our capacity to find multiple ways to reach our goals. For example:

- "I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me."
- "When I have a problem, I can come up with lots of ways to solve it."

## Children with a growth mindset...<sup>16</sup>

- Do better in school because they have an empowering perspective on learning.
- Focus on improvement and see effort as a way to build their abilities.
- Have fewer symptoms of depression.



*Even if the sky falls on you, there is a hole you can escape from.*

*- Korean Proverb*



## As a caregiver, how can I instill hope in my child?<sup>17</sup>

Ancient wisdom as well as psychological science suggest that children benefit from revisiting the **traditions and positive rituals** that their ancestors honor. Hope is understanding that throughout history and across cultures, individuals have recovered and healed in the face of adversity through storytelling, kindness & empathy, gratitude, and a sense of community.

**Here are some practical ways we can nurture more hope in our life:**

- List our successes, strengths, and resources.
- Develop our coping skills.
- Make a Positive Contribution.
- Plan for the future, distant or near, grand, or small, with specific steps.

Hope is forward looking and optimistic. Fundamentally, hope is about having a goal and a path to reach it. Hope is setting goals and figuring out how to get there from here. That's the essence of hope. Also, as your hope levels rise as a caregiver, so will your child's.



**What does not happen in a year may happen in a moment.**

**– Spanish Proverb**

**How can I teach my child a growth mindset?**

- **Teach your children how the brain works.** When they practice something (for example, math, basketball, reading, or skateboarding), their brain is rewiring itself and forming new connections that make it easier next time.
- **Model a growth mindset for them.** Our children learn a lot of their behaviors and beliefs from watching the adults in their lives. Let them overhear you thinking aloud when you go through challenges. For example, “*This is really hard for me. I guess I better keep practicing*” or “*I haven't learned how to do this yet, but I'm on my way.*”
- **Show your struggles.** Talk about your mistakes and what you've learned from them. Growth mindset views failure as a springboard for growth.

**Resources****Growth Mindset**

For more information about growth mindset, please check out these articles, books, handouts, and videos.

**9 Ways to Teach a Growth Mindset to Kids**

When kids know their brains are capable of growing, amazing things can happen! So how can you help them develop this mindset? Here are 9 tips to give your kids the gift of a growth mindset.

**Growth Mindset**

For an introduction to growth mindset, please read this handout.



**Sometimes I go about pitying myself, and all the time I am being carried on great wings across the sky. – Ojibway Proverb**



### Community Hotlines

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255 (24-hour)
- Trevor Lifeline (866) 488-7386 (24-hour)
- Teen Line (800) 852-8336 (6pm-10pm, daily)

### Text and Chat Resources

- Crisis Text Line (24-hour) Text "LA" to 741741
- Lifeline Chat (24-hour) <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>
- Teen Line Text (6pm-10pm) Text "TEEN" to 839863



### Emergency Information for After Hours Services

If you need IMMEDIATE help, call 911.

For a psychiatric emergency, contact the Department of Mental Health 24-hour ACCESS Center at (800) 854-7771.

### Could My Child Benefit from Individual or Family Therapy?

While children are often able to adapt on their own after a critical incident or life stressor, seeking professional help can be beneficial. These services support resilience by providing tools to cope, reminding our children they are not alone, helping identify language to describe their feelings, and sharing with trusted adults. When any of the following responses are present, this may indicate a need for therapy with a professional.

- Sudden and significant changes in behavior or interests
- Anxious behavior, excessive worrying
- Isolation or avoidance of friends, family, and/or school
- Extreme confusion, incoherence, or trouble concentrating
- Abrupt change of daily routine
- Extreme sadness, hopelessness
- Decline in academic performance
- Sudden or rapid changes in mood
- Increase/decrease in eating or sleeping
- Sudden change in appearance or personal grooming
- Substance abuse or self-injurious behaviors
- Harmful acts to self, other children, or animals
- Thoughts of suicide, evidenced through verbalizations, artwork, writing, or giving away prized possessions

After critical incidents or life stressors, children need the attention and care of their parents and caregivers. Sometimes the combination of individual therapy and group support can be helpful to a child, and sometimes one or the other is what your child needs. Reach out to your school administrator, Psychiatric Social Worker, or counselor for support and resources.

LAUSD connects students and families with a variety of resources and services that are free or low cost. If you are interested in learning more, please visit [askshhs.lausd.net](https://askshhs.lausd.net) to submit a Student & Family Wellness Self-Referral.

A representative from Student Health and Human Services will be in contact with you.

If you need support and would like to speak with someone during regular business hours, contact:

**L.A. Unified Student and Family Wellness Hotline:**  
(213) 241-3840

Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm | Press 2 for Mental Health  
[www.shhs.lausd.net](https://www.shhs.lausd.net)

## Conclusion

LAUSD developed this guide for parents and caregivers to promote social-emotional wellbeing and academic success. We described the science behind relationships, behavior, and learning, as well as offered practical strategies for families to practice. We are hopeful that together we can embrace recovery, resilience, a sense of belonging and community, and academic achievement by promoting safety, calming, self-efficacy and community efficacy, connectedness, hope and growth mindset. The resilience of children depends on the resilience of families, communities, and societies. At LAUSD, we cherish and treasure our students and families.



Please feel free to share your personal and family resilience strategies by posting what has worked for you in the Parent/Caregiver Roadmap Schoology group. Also, please let us know what you think of this Roadmap by completing a brief survey.



## Contributors

This Parent/Caregiver Roadmap for Social-Emotional Wellbeing and Academic Success is part of a larger effort to promote mental health, welcoming and affirming classrooms, positive relationships, healthy lifestyles, and social-emotional learning and wellbeing. We recognize that the numerous challenges that underlie our current reality may expand the scope of education. However, we can positively address the needs of our students and support resilience in our school communities. A variety of LAUSD staff and divisions collaborated in the development of this Roadmap, affirming the critical importance of addressing our community's wellbeing and supporting all students and adults in leading healthy, fulfilling lives, and achieving our full potential.

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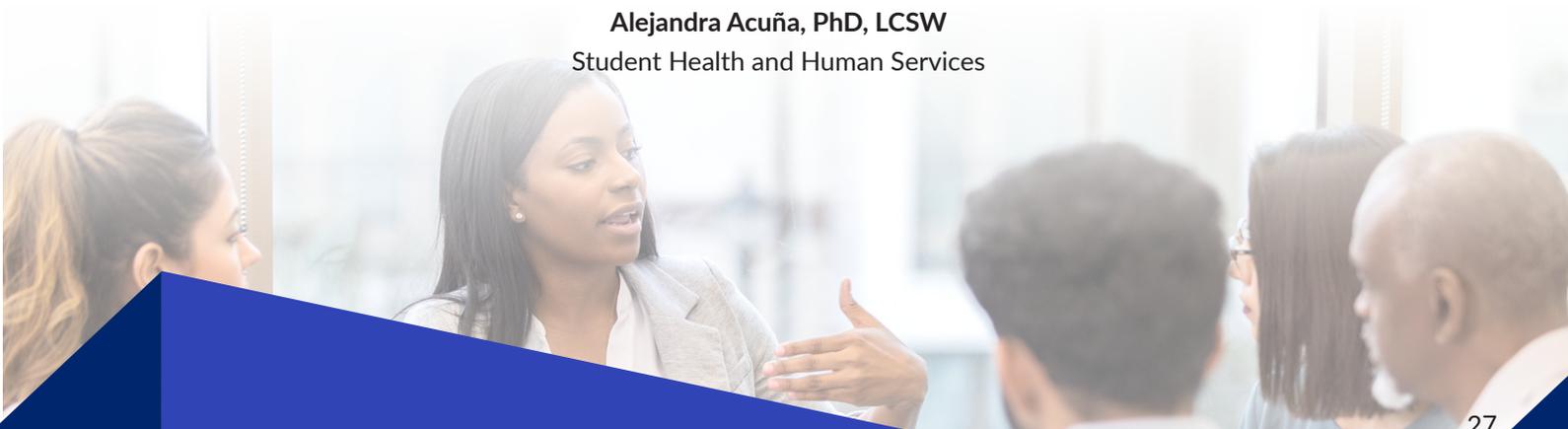
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Student Health &  
Human Services

2022-23

**PARENT/CAREGIVER  
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