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Preparing To Go Back To School

School is right around the corner and as many of us have heard our students will be going back to fully in-person learning this fall. Although many of us are happy to see our children go back to school some of us are still weary and a little anxious about what fall has in store for us. This brief [article by the National Association for School Psychologists](#) explains how to help children cope with the changes caused by Covid-19, especially how to help prevent anxiety. The article reminds us that children look to the adults around them on how to act and react in any given situation and that it is important to keep explanations age appropriate.

This short [article by Scholastic](#) provides parents with some useful tips and tricks to help prepare their new students for the first day of school. Some of the tips include visiting the school and classroom (if possible) ahead of time, making a portable photo album, and rehearsing self-help skills such as hand washing and cleaning up. For more information on how to prepare for school this fall please view our [full blog post here](#).



Coloring and SEL

Did you know that doodling and coloring can help in memory retention? According to [Harvard](#), doodling can help to increase memory retention by about 30% as long as the doodle is not taking away your entire attention span. Not only does doodling help with focusing your attention, but so does coloring. This brief [article by CNN](#) explains how coloring is just as important for adults as it is for children in stress reduction. This short [article by Color Psychology](#) discusses the multiple



benefits of coloring for children. Coloring helps to improve handwriting, color recognition, and helps to prepare them for school by offering structure. For more information on coloring and SEL please see the entire [blog post here](#). For some fun coloring pages please visit our coloring pages [here](#).

Follow-up: Our Pets Challenge!



Last issue we discussed how amazing our pets are and how they help us in many ways. We asked our readers to post a photo of their pet on our social media pages with a caption that explains how their pets have helped them in SEL. If you have not done so yet, we hope you will join us in this challenge! For more information on how pets help us in our SEL check out our full blog post [here](#).

General Resource Round-up

As we prepare to go back to school and the summer comes to an end we would like to provide you with some useful resources.

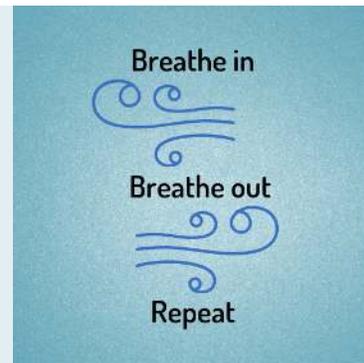
[SEL for Families Resources](#) [LGBTQ Resources](#) [Women's Resources](#) [Father's Resources](#)
[Mental Health Awareness](#) [Self-Care Resource Round Up](#)
[Importance of Friendships](#) [SEL for Educators](#) [SEL for Everyone](#)

Tips and Tricks to Handle Anxiety

Anxiety, as many of us know, includes emotional, cognitive, and physical symptoms. As explained by Very Well Mind in their article [Simple Steps to Help You Cope With Anxiety](#), anxiety includes feelings of fear, negative thoughts, and increased pulse. This brief [article](#) about stress by the CDC discusses some of the health issues related to stress as well as some healthy ways to cope with stress. This article, [Do You Live with Anxiety? Here Are 11 Ways to Cope](#), by Healthline explains the importance of breaking the anxious thought process along with some other

important ways to beat anxiety. Not only do adults get anxious but so do children, especially with all of the uncertainty caused by covid. This brief [article by KidsHealth](#) discusses some great ways for teens to help manage their anxiety - such as practicing breathing and meditation exercises.

For more information on how to handle your anxiety please visit the full [blog post here](#).



Dealing with Uncertainty

As children are getting ready to go back to school and offices are reopening, each day has more uncertainty than the previous - especially with Covid-19 mixed in. Dwelling on the uncertainty of “what might happen” can cause anxiety. The Greater Good notes in their article [Seven Ways to Cope with Uncertainty](#) that acceptance is key in reducing stress and being able to move forward without hesitation. Being able to accept that a situation might change helps you to accept that change in the future and keeps you from worrying about the possible or inevitable change. Accepting the uncertainty of life is just as important as having a positive attitude in reducing stress. In this [article by Psychology Today](#) it is noted that it is important to remember that just because something is unexpected, does not make it bad - in other words, find the silver lining. Not only do adults suffer from anxiety when it comes to the unexpected but so do children. These brief articles by [Greater Good](#) and [BBC](#) explain a few ways to help children prepare for the unexpected such as giving advanced warnings and priming them that things might change soon. Children need consistency so helping to prepare them for change is utterly important for their mental health.

For more information on how to handle the anxiety of uncertainty please view our full [blog post here](#).

SEL, Equity, and Anti-Racism

CASEL [recently updated their definition of SEL to include equity](#). How does that impact the work that you are doing? Are you participating in expanding equity efforts in your work? SEL4CT is looking to take our next steps in this work and would love to hear more about your efforts. Please send us an email so we can set up some time to discuss further at info@sel4ct.org.



Are you looking for resources to support your efforts or perhaps expand further into equity work? Check out our [resource page](#) and [blog posts](#). We're adding content as we learn about it. Is there something we should include, or have missed? Is your organization doing this work? Please send us an email and let us know!

SEL Day 2022 Committee

#SELday



Do you think it is important to spread awareness about SEL? Do you have some free time that you would like to fill with SEL advocacy? Then we have the perfect opportunity for you! We are looking to add new members to the SEL Day committee to prepare for SEL Day 2022 and to spread the word about SEL. These committee positions are flexible and voluntary, if you have any ideas on how to increase awareness of SEL Day and SEL in general please reach out to info@sel4ct.org.

Gratitude Minute: Educators

We at SEL4CT would like to take a minute to thank all educators (formal, informal, current, new and former) and all the staff that support them to make education possible! We want to acknowledge all of the hard work that these folks have put in to provide a safe and fun learning environment. Teachers do more than just teach the subject at hand. They help with social and emotional skill building, organization skills, support healthy learning communities, lift up and provide opportunities to explore undiscovered talents in their students, and even go the extra mile to support things like personal hygiene skills, and so much more. If you haven't already, please thank an education worker today!

Workshop Presenter Opportunity



SEL Presenters needed by August 31. Please [click here](#) for more information and to apply.

Promote The Work

Gratitude Resources

Gratitude Germination Challenge

The Importance of Gratitude in SEL

Mindful Appreciation



Are you feeling the need to share and connect? Do you have a perspective, opportunity, or new information to share, something you think we should be talking about? Well we want to hear from you! Tell us about it so we can share it and spread the word.

We are looking for guest blog writers, passionate committee members, enthusiastic novices and generally interested folks to join us as we do the work to share the word about SEL with children of all ages looking to learn, practice and share the social emotional skills needed to thrive.

Have an event you'd like us to promote? A method you'd like to discuss, a perspective we should all hear, or a resource we should all see? Please reach out! info@sel4ct.org



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SEL4CT, the Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Connecticut, is powered by the Connecticut After School Network.