

Guidelines for Speaking to Stressed People

1. Start with self – remember that they are looking to you to gauge their own responses. Start with your own well-being. Establish a routine for your days.
2. Structure – consider when and how you would like to be available to your staff. Do not take calls and texts outside of normal school hours. Be firm in your “turn off” times. Do offer contact times when you can be reached.
3. Recognize limits – there are so many unknowns. It is ok to not know. None of us know how this will go, but we do know that the steps we are taking currently are working. We need to stay the course.
4. Stay in your lane – if folks are asking for services that are not within your scope, refer them to those who can help. Food banks, Kids Help Phone, Crisis line are all boosted for extra support. Online resources include assessing for Covid as well as financial aid.
5. Recognize cognitive distortions:
 - a. Catastrophizing – this is a phase we are going through – it won't be forever
 - b. Black and White thinking – it is not all either great or terrible – all of this is grey – we are in a new reality and we will get through this.
 - c. Fallacy of uniqueness – most families are stressed and the worry you have is worry that many have. We are understanding that stress and doing what we can.
6. Refer to EFAP if additional support is required. Brooks Landing remains open and counselling support is offered by phone.