

Counselor’s Office Information

The Mora High School Counseling Office would like everyone to know that above else, we want all students, staff, parents, and community members to take care of themselves during this extremely difficult time we have all been unexpectedly faced with. Every individual’s mental health concerns are on the forefront of our minds and we want to be as diligent as possible in assisting with these concerns, remotely, as considerate and timely as possible. We expect that there will be an uptick in mental health challenges due to isolation, unknown situations, and lack of routine. Please use the information below to take care of yourself, family, and friends. We are here to support you!

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LOCAL FOOD SHELVES: KANABEC COUNTY

Mora Food Pantry

214 NW Railroad Avenue

Mora, MN 55051

Hours: Tuesdays & Fridays, 9:30-Noon

Ogilvie Food Shelf

225 George Street

Ogilvie, MN 56358

Hours: 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 8-10:30 a.m.

Mora Public Schools Distance Learning Lunch Plan:

Food distribution to students will begin on Tuesday, March 17th. Students and/or their parents may pick up prepared breakfast and lunch meals from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at both Mora High School and Mora Elementary School. Pickup locations are as follows:

- Mora High School - at the rear parking area near the bus drop off/loading zone.
- Mora Elementary School - at the front bus loading/unloading parking area.

*If you would like your students to receive school breakfast and lunch, please contact Gayle Stassen at 320-679-6200.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: KANABEC COUNTY

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.

Crisis Text Line - this serves anyone, in any type of crisis, providing access to free, 24/7 support and information via text messages. **You can access this by texting HOME to 741741.**

You can also access crisis services by calling the East Central Crisis & Referral Line at (800) 523-3333. East Central Crisis Services provide a mobile crisis response for residents of Chisago, Isanti, Pine, Kanabec, and Mille Lacs Counties.

Other local resources include:

Welia Health

301 MN 65
Mora, MN 55051
(320) 679-1212

Northern Pines Counseling

221 South Union Street
Mora, MN 55051
(763) 234-0204

Lighthouse Child and Family Services

(this agency provides school-linked mental health services at Mora High School and Mora Elementary)
160 3rd Avenue NW
Milaca, MN
(320) 983-2335

Therapeutic Services Agency

220 Railroad Street SE
Pine City, MN 55063
(320) 629-7600

Legacy Counseling

820 Howe Avenue #108
Mora, MN 55051
(320) 679-2438

Family Based Therapy Associates

237 2nd Avenue SW, #117
Cambridge, MN 55008
(763) 689-9407

Love the Journey

23 North Pine Street
Mora, MN 55051
(320) 679-6964

Nystrom and Associates

817 N. Main Street NE
Cambridge, MN 55008
(763) 325-0300

Tips on Dealing with Anxiety:

As we know, mental health concerns in teens have been at an all-time high, which has been intensified by the changes thrown at students, parents, and the community at large the past two weeks. While not every person shows anxiety in the same way, here are some symptoms to look for with your student:

- Excessive crying or irritation
- Excessive worry or sadness

- Unhealthy eating habits
- “Acting out” behaviors
- Difficulty with attention and/or concentration
- Avoidance of activities they have enjoyed in the past
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- Changes in sleeping patterns (increased or decreased)
- Suicidal or self-harm ideation

While some of these symptoms could be typical given the change in day-to-day routines. However, if you are concerned about your child’s behaviors, here are some tips to help them:

- Talk to your child about the COVID-19 outbreak, share facts and answer questions
- Reassure your child that they are safe and validate the feelings and emotions they are having
- Limit your child’s time on social media
- Try to keep a regular routine
- Be a role model. Take breaks, practice self-care, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well
- Encourage your child to practice sitting with anxiety, rather than relieving it immediately
- Help them practice relaxation techniques, such as:
 - Deep breathing
 - Mindfulness
 - Grounding
- Challenge irrational thoughts and replace them with facts
- Stay positive
- Above all, if you’re unable to cope with your anxiety on your own, seek professional help. Please see the list of resources above.

Tips on Dealing with Grief:

As all of us know, our school and community has recently experienced a hard loss of a beloved student, and everyone has their own losses that they may be dealing with as well. This shutdown comes at a time when we need connection more than ever. Grief affects everyone differently, and is personal to us as individuals on how we experience it. Our reaction is influenced by our personality, our relationship with the person lost, our history with loss, as well as other contributing factors unique to each individual. As we move forward in this challenging time, here are some tips on how to support your student, as well as signs to watch for that your student may need additional support.

Grief Support Tips:

- Listen, encourage, and validate how your student is feeling about their loss.
 - Check in with your student about how they are feeling, and remind them that it is normal to experience a variety of emotions throughout the grief process. Acknowledge what they are feeling about the loss, and encourage them to share about how this loss is affecting them. Remind them that everyone processes loss

differently, and that there is no right or wrong way to grieve (with the exception of self-destructive behaviors).

- Allow your student time to grieve, and model healthy grieving behaviors for them.
 - Grief is ongoing, and each person will mourn differently at different times. Oftentimes we have good intentions of trying to help our loved one “be strong”, but we also want to allow time and space for individuals to grieve and feel their loss.
 - Students may not have experienced grief before, and each experience is different with each loss. They rely on the adults in their lives to demonstrate positive ways to deal with their grief and observe how we react.
- Help your student find positive ways to grieve their loss.
 - Some students may want to “do” something instead of talking to address their grief. Work with your student on strategies they may use to work through their grief such as journaling, artistic expression (i.e. art, music), or create a ritual that is personal to them.
 - Talk with them about what has helped you in times of sadness, but allow them the choice to explore what may work for them.
- Maintain consistency and a sense of normalcy.
 - Death and loss can make your student feel a loss of control. It is important to continue to provide consistency and boundaries as it provides a sense of safety and security for them during a very insecure time.
- Help your student get connected to outside resources if needed.
 - Your student may feel more comfortable talking with their peers or other adults in their lives. Help your student access their resources that work for them. If needed, help your student get connected with a therapist that can help them process their loss and work through their grief.

Signs to Watch for:

- Changes in your student’s sleeping patterns (increased or decreased).
- Changes in your student’s appetite.
- Withdrawal or changes in your student’s social connections.
- Increased anger or irritability.
- Making comments about hopelessness for the future.
- Displaying signs of overwhelming or severe emotional pain.
- Making comments about suicide or harming themselves.

KANABEC COUNTY GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Kanabec County Public Health

905 East Forest Avenue, Suite 127

Mora, MN 55051

Ph. 320.679.6330 Fax 320.679.6333

Provides the following services:

- **Women, Infants & Children (WIC):** Provides a nutrition and breastfeeding program, nutrition tips and advice, support for breastfeeding, healthy foods such as milk, cheese, fruits, vegetables, cereals, and infant formula.
- **Family Home Services:** Home visits for families who are expecting a baby or have children under the age of 3.
- **Transitions Into the Community**
- **New Baby Visits**
- **Child and Teen Check Ups**
- **Immunizations**

Kanabec County Family Services

905 East Forest Avenue, Suite 150

Mora, MN 55051

phone: 320.679.6350 fax 320.679.6351

Toll free: 877-599-4808

Provides Services for Persons with Chemical Dependency, Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health, Child Support, Child and Adult Protection, Financial Assistance and More.

Kanabec County Public Assistance Programs (to apply for any of the following programs contact Kanabec County Family Services at 320-679-6350)

- **SNAP:** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program helps Minnesotans with low incomes get the food they need for sound nutrition and well-balanced meals. Approved participants get a debit card to use to buy food at many stores and farmer's markets. In the past, SNAP was known as Food Stamps.
- **General Assistance (GA)/Group Residential Housing (GRH)/Minnesota Supplemental Aid (MSA)**
 - ***General Assistance(GA)*** - provides cash assistance for single adults without children who have a serious illness, disability or other issue that limits their ability to work.
 - ***Group Residential Housing(GRH)*** - program pays for room and board for seniors and adults with disabilities who have low incomes. The program aims to reduce and prevent people from living in institutions or becoming homeless.
 - ***Minnesota Supplemental Aid (MSA)*** is an income supplement for people who receive federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, or who could get SSI if their income was not above the SSI limit. The monthly benefit may also

cover special needs payments for people who qualify. Special needs payment may be provided for medically prescribed diets, guardian or conservator fees, some home repairs or replacement of household furniture and appliances, and some high housing costs.

- **MFIP/DWP**
 - **The *Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)*** helps families with children meet their basic needs, while helping parents move to financial stability through work. Parents are expected to work, and are supported in working with both cash and food assistance. Most families have a lifetime limit of 60 months on MFIP.
 - **The *Diversionsary Work Program (DWP)*** is a four-month program that helps Minnesota parents find jobs. The goal is to help parents quickly find work so that they do not need to go on the Minnesota Family Investment Program. When families first apply for cash assistance, most will be enrolled in this program.
- **Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)**
 - Paying for child care can be difficult for families. Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program can help income-eligible families who qualify.
- **Health Care Programs**
 - Minnesota has health care programs to meet the needs of different people. Some programs help people who have little to no income. Other programs help people who work but do not have access to affordable health insurance.

Lakes and Pines

Lakes and Pines CAC, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization; a charitable, educational, private, non-profit corporation serving the seven county area of: Aitkin, Carlton, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine.

Phone: (320)679-1800 | Toll Free: (800)832-6082 | Fax: (320)679-4139

Services Offered through Lakes and Pines:

- Housing Assistance
- Head Start (Preschool Program)
- Home Improvement Programs
- Financial Assistance Self Sufficiency Programs
 - SNAP/Food Support
 - Social Security Application Assistance
 - MNSure Assistance & Navigation
 - Transportation Programs

Internet Access

Midco offers Lifeline, which is a federal program intended to put home phone and internet service within reach of qualifying families – giving low-income households affordable home phone or internet access. The Lifeline Internet Service is \$14.95 per month (includes modem), but with a subsidy credit, the customer's cost is \$5.70 a month for 25x3 service. Typically, the

free installation takes three-to-five days and that includes the approval process. Please contact Midco for more information.

UPDATED UNEMPLOYMENT INFORMATION:

Please see statement issues by Minnesota Governor Tim Walz:

On March 16, 2020, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz issued an executive order to ensure workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic have full access to unemployment benefits. The executive order makes applicants eligible for unemployment benefits if:

- A healthcare professional or health authority recommended or ordered them to avoid contact with others.
- They have been ordered not to come to their workplace due to an outbreak of a communicable disease.
- They have received notification from a school district, daycare, or other childcare provider that either classes are canceled or the applicant's ordinary childcare is unavailable, provided that the applicant made reasonable effort to obtain other childcare and requested time off or other accommodation from the employer and no reasonable accommodation was available.

Governor Walz's executive order waives the non payable or "waiting" week to ensure applicants have access to unemployment benefits as quickly as possible.

While all applicants for unemployment benefits must actively seek suitable employment, Governor Walz's executive order stipulates that you may look for suitable work that does not pose a risk to your health or the health of others. If you have only been laid off temporarily, you can meet work search requirements by staying in contact with your current employer.

Finally, Governor Walz's executive order waives the ordinary five-week benefit limitation for business owners who have become unemployed as a result of COVID-19.

If your employment has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage you to apply for unemployment benefits online.

INFORMATION FOR SENIORS

Graduation:

At this time, plan on Mora High School's graduation ceremony taking place on May, 31st 2020 in the gymnasium. As with everything relating to the COVID-19 outbreak, there is new information processed and released daily. Make sure to check your email and school website for new information regarding Mora High School's graduation ceremony for the 2020 graduates.

ALC and Night School:

ALC Staff Contact Information

Karen Felger: kfelger@moraschools.org

Denise Ganz: d ganz@moraschools.org

Pete Eaton (Night School): peaton@moraschools.org

The ALC staff is planning on working with all students in a timely manner, while meeting each student's individual and unique needs. As always, the ALC staff plans to help students achieve their goals and support them in the best way possible.

At this time, the priority for credit recovery will be with the Senior class. If you are currently enrolled in the ALC or needing night school credit recovery and you are not in the Senior class, please continue your work as usual and staff will try to assist you as time allows. There will be a plan for all 10th and 11th grade students to make up credit in the future. Seniors needing credit recovery through the ALC or night school, please check your school email for more information from Karen Felger. If you believe you should be contacted and have not been, please email Denise Ganz.

ALC staff will continue to use PLATO to meet student credit recovery needs. Here is a reminder on how to access PLATO:

Website: <http://ple.platoweb.com>

Account Login: mjshs

Username: first initial last name

(Example for Sam Jones: sjones)

Password: first initial last name

(Example for Sam Jones: sjones)

Scholarships:

Scholarship Contact Information

Jessica Gravening (Counseling Secretary): jgravening@moraschools.org

All Dollars for Scholars and all Local Scholarships are still due on March 26, 2020. The Community members offering these Scholarships encourage you to apply. They are behind the class of 2020 every step of the way!

Dollars for Scholars is completed electronically, please refer to the packet of information given during Blue Day. Keep in mind that you need to make sure you are applying to all the scholarships that you are matched to.

Local Scholarships are a bit trickier, but staff are available to answer any questions if you get stuck. If you are capable of scanning your finished application and emailing it to Jessica Gravening, that is preferred. If not, there will be a bin outside the little gym from 11:00am-1:00pm, Monday-Friday, to drop off your completed application.

For more information on scholarships, please go to the Mora Schools webpage (http://moraschools.org/mora_high_school/counseling_office) and direct your attention to the panel on the left hand side.

COUNSELOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Mora High School counselors will plan to have weekly virtual meetings for students to attend for information on tips given in this document, scholarship information, updates on school information, etc. Counselors will also be available via email, phone call, and Google Hangout sessions for face-to-face meetings. Please refer to your school counselor, based on last name.

Samantha Rushmeyer

School Counselor for students with last names A-K

Email: srushmeyer@moraschools.org



Sarah Ellstrom

School Counselor for students with last names L-Z

Email: sellstrom@moraschools.org



Mora Elementary Social Workers

Sara Rossow (Pre-K - 2nd grade): srossow@moraschools.org

Staci Kuhnke (3rd grade - 6th grade): skuhnke@moraschools.org