



Each week, MAEC's Collaborative Action for Family Engagement (CAFE) Center curates resources on how families can educate children at home, enjoy "out-of-school" time, cope with this new normal, and plan for the next school year. If you are a parent advocate or educator, and know families who could benefit from this information, please share it and help spread the word.

The Family Table

How Are We Going to Reopen Schools?

Thursday | July 23, 2020 | 3pm ET



Collaborative Action for
Family Engagement



Join us at the Family Table

Thursday, July 16, 3pm ET

New name, new look, and a new focus on reopening schools.

Pull up a chair to The Family Table as we learn about the considerations that have guided state reopening conversations in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

We are pleased to be joined by Steven Hicks, Assistant State Superintendent for the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Development and Pam Smith, Acting Executive Deputy Secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Families

across the country will benefit by hearing from these two states and how they approach the school reopening planning process. Our guests will discuss their plans for the physical safety and well-being of students, teachers, staff, and families. They will give listeners insight into their considerations to ensure an equitable education for all students.

This webinar will also feature the **Question Corner** with child psychologist, Dr. Seth Shaffer*, and education expert, Mariela Puentes, answering your questions regarding uncertainty in the midst of the evolving pandemic.

Did you miss the last webinar? [Check it out now.](#)

[Register now](#)

Ask Dr. Shaffer



Each week Dr. Shaffer answers questions on the website that readers like you submit. This week:

How do you break down information about COVID-19 for those with special needs?

For special needs children, parents and caretakers know best as to how to explain new situations and concepts. Explaining COVID-19 is difficult for any child to understand, but there are ways to break down the information, depending on the child's abilities and age. What we do know is COVID-19 has meant a drastic change from children's daily routine, and talking with them will help them feel supported by you. The pandemic also has put a tremendous strain on parents when many of the supports are not available. So, again, make sure you take care of yourself. Generally, I suggest using visual aids and simple language to get your message across, modeling how to take safety precautions, and, most importantly, understanding the particular needs of your child can be a place to start.

[Read more](#)

Do you have questions for Dr. Shaffer? [Submit them online here.](#)



Write Every Day

Stay in top writing shape by writing every day. Writing daily for just 5 minutes can help you expand your imagination and express your feelings. Here are three tips to get you started:

1. Set a timer and just start writing.
2. Push yourself to write the entire time.
3. No erasing or going back. You can do it!

Need some inspiration? Get daily writing prompts [here](#).

Local Resources



Have you or your loved ones been affected by COVID-19? MAEC has compiled the most up-to-date state resources to help address the needs of families during the COVID-19 pandemic, including information from the state departments of education, child nutrition, and unemployment offices.

[Visit our site](#)



Innovation & Inspiration

We are inspired by school districts finding innovative

ways to address the specific concerns of our most vulnerable students. This week we feature a story about a variety of community schools across the country and their research-based approach to addressing the needs of the whole child.

Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School in New York City, Doña Ana Elementary in New Mexico, Harlem Park Elementary and Middle School in Baltimore, and Duarte High School in Los Angeles demonstrate the myriad ways that community schools were able to quickly respond to the needs of students and families and connect them to services during the pandemic. By design, the community school model addresses student well-being and learning needs and prioritizes building relationships with families. This research-based approach has been shown to improve outcomes for all families, especially those who are low-income. Read further to find out how community schools address the short and long-term needs of families and their children, and help them to cope with, and recover from, the effects of the pandemic.

[In the Fallout of the Pandemic, Community Schools Show a Way Forward for Education](#)

Learning Policy Institute, July 7, 2020



Resources for Families

Fast Break Poem

Edward Hirsch's poem, "Fast Break," captures a single slow-motion play on a basketball court. Read along with Hirsch, host Elisa New, NBA players Shaquille O'Neal, Pau Gasol, and Shane Battier, and a group of pick-up basketball players as they use basketball to understand poetry—and poetry to better understand the game of basketball.

[**Discover**](#)

Create an Award for Yourself

If you were to give yourself a medal, what would it be

for? Author Jason Reynolds, the Library of Congress' National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, encourages kids to give themselves an award for something they do well. It can be for helping with younger siblings, taking naps, or anything in between.

Create

Enjoying E-books Together

Technological capabilities of the iPad and the Nook Color have made it possible to enjoy e-books with many more interactive features. Check out article three to find simple suggestions for parents to keep the focus on the story.

Read

Contact Us

Are you looking for information or assistance?

Contact Us

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Receive information on our latest events and news.

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Not interested in receiving the Learning at Home newsletter? [Please let us know.](#)

***Disclaimer:**

I, Seth Shaffer, Psy.D. (PSY 27492), am a licensed psychologist in the State of California. I work in outpatient clinical settings, and provide therapy to children,

adolescents, and families.

Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) has hired me to share general school related parenting strategies for families affected by COVID-19. **The information I provide in the MAEC webinars or website newsletters is not a mental health service or therapy. Sharing the information does not establish a therapist-client professional or confidential relationship between me and any other person who accesses or learns of the information.** All information shared is based solely on my knowledge, expertise, and clinical training. But it is not intended to be a clinical mental health service or therapy for a specific person or circumstance.

Any viewer/participant who believes that they may be experiencing psychological distress or symptoms should consult a local mental health professional right away. They may consider calling the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 24/7 National Hotline (1-800-662-4357) or another reputable referral organization for help.

I have no conflict of interest with any organization or entity mentioned in MAEC presentation and subsequent MAEC webinars.

