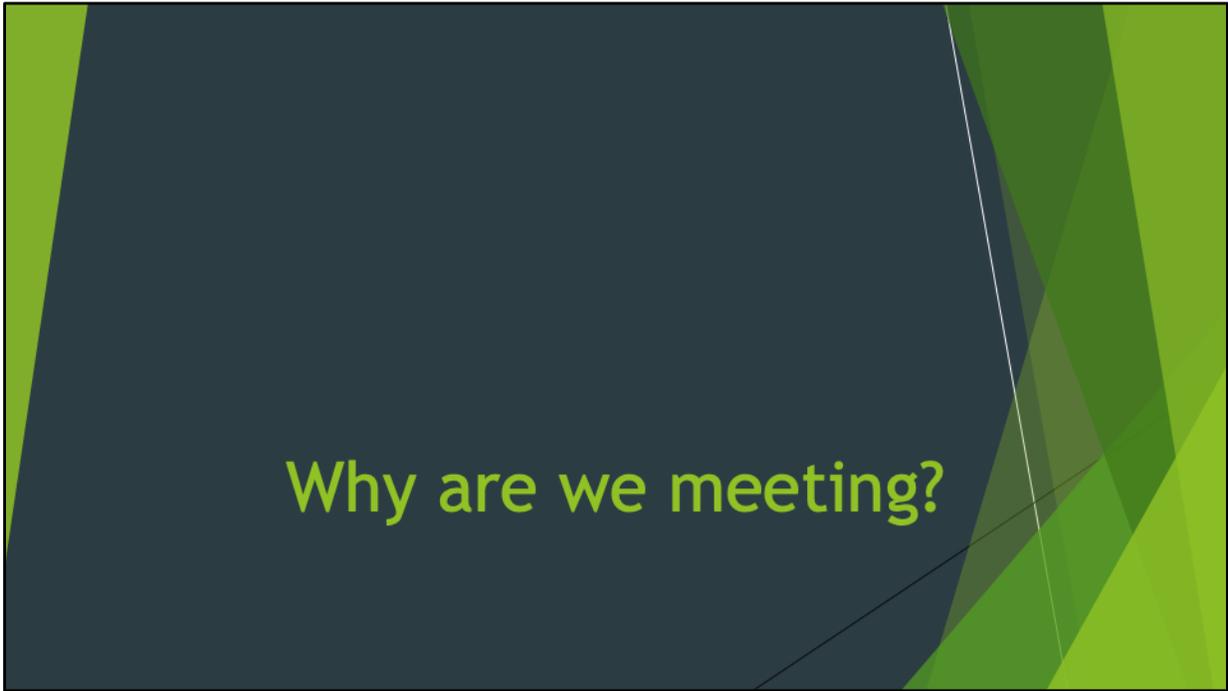


Talking about Coronavirus Covid-19

The New Community School

March 3, 2020



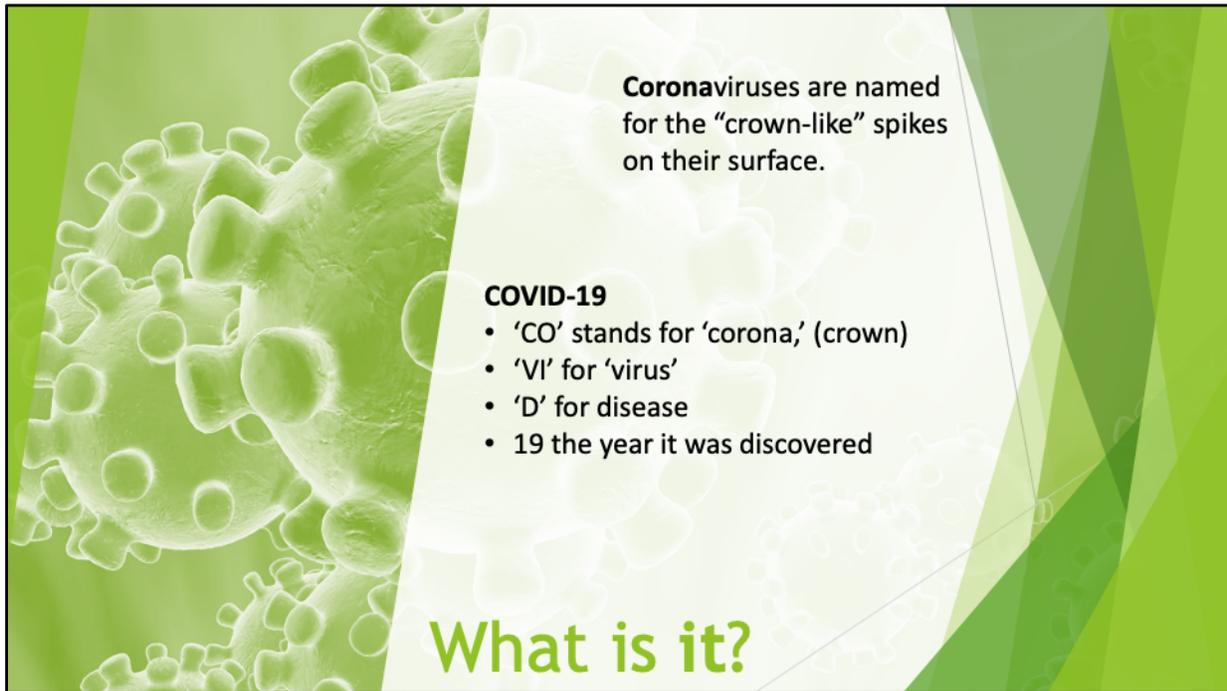
Ask students:

Before we talk about Coronavirus Covid-19, I'd like to get an idea of why you think we've created this opportunity to meet with you about it?

(Field student responses, provide affirmations where possible.)

Segway from Student Response:

Many of you have hit exactly on why we are taking the time to meet. It is a chance for us to come together as a community to talk about something happening in the world around us. Along with your parents, it is our responsibility as an educational institution to help you learn and grow. Current events often give us some of the best moments to create opportunities for "real-world" learning. We can help you access information, answer questions, and address concerns. The current Coronavirus Covid-19 is definitely a topic dominating headlines and if I were to ask each student at TNCS to present a project based strictly on what they know about the virus, without doing any research, we would have over 200 VERY DIFFERENT PROJECTS WITH VERY DIFFERENT INFORMATION.



Let’s talk about what it is. We are not going to go deep into this today because our knowledge of this disease continues to grow each day as scientists and researchers learn more.

What you should know. I think this description from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), our government agency that works

“Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can infect humans or animals.

Sometimes an animal coronavirus can change so that it can infect people and become a human coronavirus. There are seven known types of human coronaviruses. Four types are common and cause mild to moderate respiratory infections, like the common cold. Two other types, called SARS and MERS can cause severe respiratory infections. The seventh type is the COVID-19 which is a new coronavirus recently discovered in China. Public health officials are trying to learn more about this new virus, the infection it causes, and how it spreads. “

DIRECT QUOTE CDC <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/epidemiology-fact-sheets/coronaviruses/>



Scientists are still learning about the disease.

(DIRECTLY FROM THE CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>)

Current understanding about how the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses. COVID-19 is a new disease and there is more to learn about how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States.

Person-to-person spread

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).

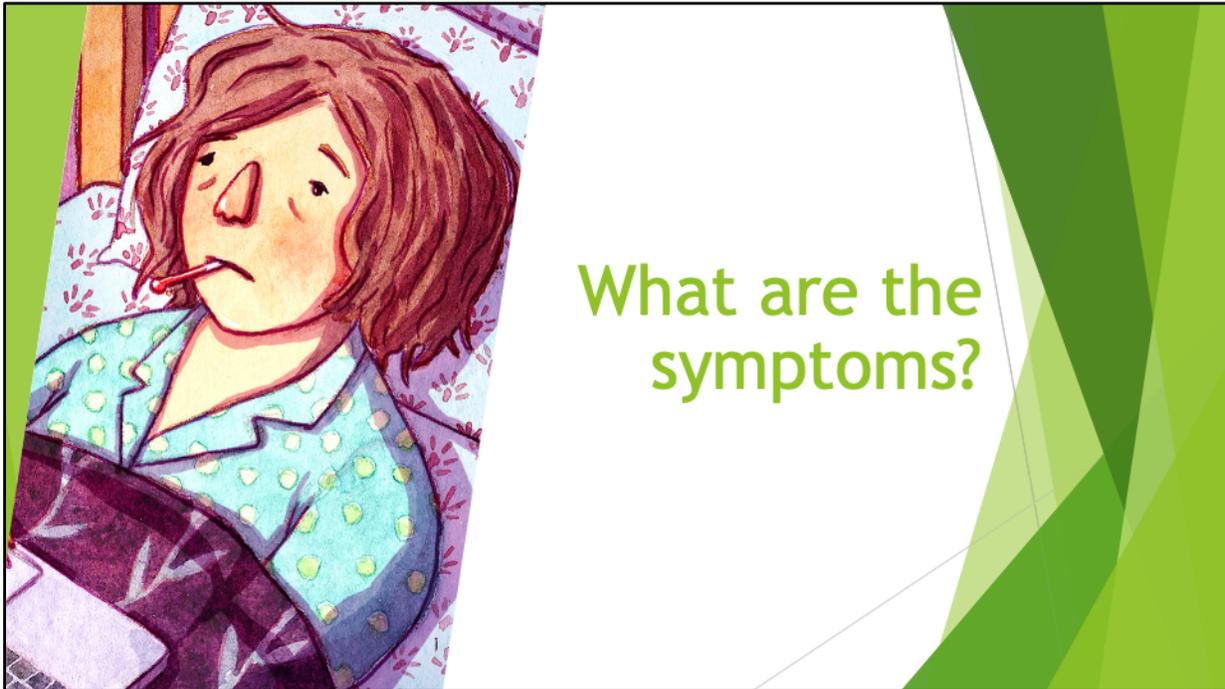
Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

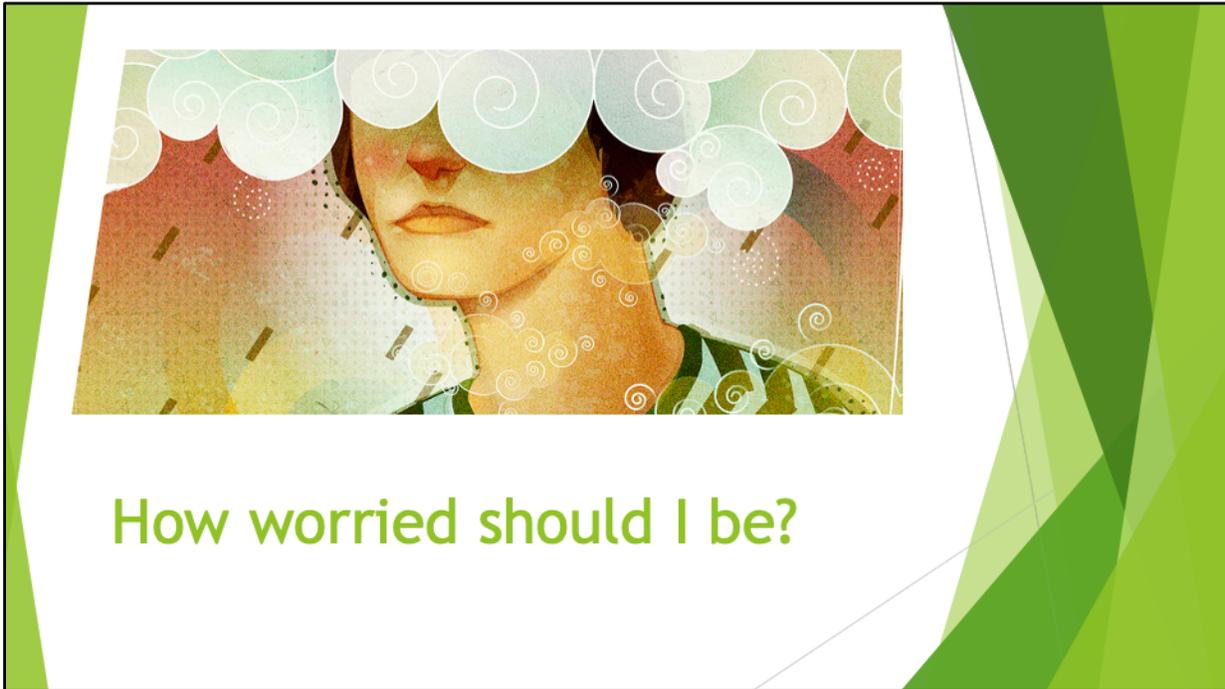
e cold,



In some ways, it may be easier to think of this as a new form of a cold. In fact, in people with healthy immune systems, this would present like a mild cold. In others, it may be more flu-like. In some people with weak immune systems or compromised respiratory systems, such as the elderly or very young children, the infection can be more serious.

With symptoms being much like the common cold, it is easy for us to begin to worry about every sniffle, sneeze, and cough we may have, or that others may have. We are still dealing with cold/flu/strep season. And with what appears to be an “early spring,” many of us may begin to develop allergy symptoms.

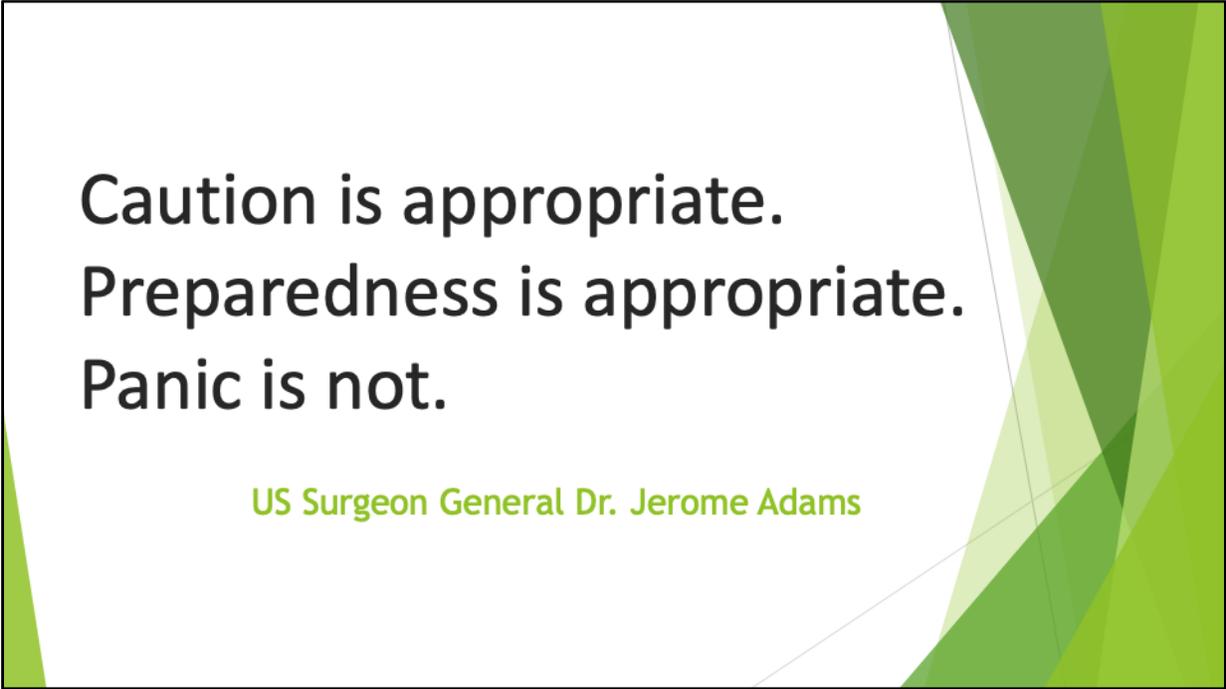
This would be an easy time to start self-diagnosing or developing anxiety about the COVID19 Coronavirus. Or we may be tempted to joke with others they are infected. Which leads us to wonder...



But instead of monitoring yourself for symptoms, we want you to monitor yourself for fear/anxiety/worry.

That is the greatest compromise to your health at the moment.

It is easy for us to begin to let our imaginations wander and our minds worry. That is a very natural thing when we are confronting something unknown. With the COVID19 news and images constantly in the news, we are hearing words like quarantine, isolation, incubation, along with statistics including an ever-growing number of cases and how many deaths. Add in the news pundits offering opinions and speculations, and we are in a media storm that creates panic, fear, and worry.



**Caution is appropriate.
Preparedness is appropriate.
Panic is not.**

US Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams

Our US Surgeon General puts it best: "Caution is appropriate. Preparedness is appropriate. Panic is not."

We are not in a place to panic.

There are 327 million people in the United States.

There are only just over 100 cases in the US (and almost half of those we people we brought back from traveling abroad on a cruise ship and they are being treated.)

There have been no cases in Virginia, nor in any of the states bordering Virginia. Most cases have been found on the West Coast, as people travel to mainland China more readily from there.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/02/health/us-coronavirus-cases-monday/index.html>

What are we doing about it?

- ▶ Staying informed
- ▶ Keeping your parents informed
- ▶ Keeping you informed

- ▶ Being proactive
- ▶ Being preventative
- ▶ Being positive



At TNCS, we are heeding that advice. We are using caution. We are being prepared. We are NOT panicking.

What we are doing is staying informed. Mrs. Raggio is doing an exceptional job staying up to date on information and recommendations. She, along with the administration, are keeping your parents informed about what we know and what we are doing. In turn, we are keeping you informed. As an educational institution, it is our job, along with your parents, to help educate and inform.

We are being PROACTIVE, meaning we are here to help you learn how to “learn” about current events in our world using facts and reliable resources.

We are being PREVENTATIVE, by establishing protocols that help us practice good daily habits and routines, along practicing necessary precautions even before they may be needed. You’ll notice more hand sanitizer stations coming up around school. Please use them responsibly. Treat them gently. Every item that breaks around school doesn’t cost US money, it costs your parents money. And it prevents us from breaking ground on our new health and wellness expansion.

And we are being POSITIVE, by promoting compassion and empathy, not only for

those around the globe who are dealing with this disease, but also with each other. There are people on this campus who have loved ones in some of the affected regions, there are people on this campus who are worried about loved ones who may be more susceptible to the disease should it spread.



Ask: What do you think is the number one thing we can do to be PROACTIVE?
(Take a few student answers, acknowledge good ideas and incorporate appropriate responses.)

Those are all good ideas... The definition of PROACTIVE is: the anticipation of future problems, needs, or change. The main thing that is the most PROACTIVE thing we can do is not to spread the disease. I'm not talking about COVID19. The true disease we should be worried about is a disease called misinformation. Being PROACTIVE to learn about the disease is okay, however, just reading a headline is not information. Just hearing a statistic is not information. Just repeating what someone told you is not information. The definition of information is: "knowledge obtained from investigation, study, or instruction." Those tend to create a REACTIVE, as we react to those pieces of information. Many news sites want you to click as many links as possible to find information. They will make sensational headlines so you will continue to click. The more you click, the more money they get from their advertisers. Do not be tempted to "spin" in information, looking for the next nugget.. Limit your exposure and screen time devoted to this news story. And avoid the "I read, I heard, Did you hear?" ... That means you are in the "spin cycle" of misinformation.

What if I want to know more?



If you want information, go to organizations who are truly dedicated to giving you REAL INFORMATION.

The WHO provides a global view of the virus, while the CDC provides a closer look at the United States. For a look at things happening in the state of Virginia, the VDH provides regional information. These are reliable resources without sensationalized or exaggerated

There are teams around the world studying and learning about this new strand of coronavirus. Each day gives us new information and helps us move forward to treatment and prevention. While there have been some deaths linked to the disease, remember what we covered earlier, most have been associated with a weakened or compromised immune system and/or respiratory system. Most people have had the coronavirus and recovered. And they are who we focus on because they hold the key to how our immune system responds. And they may hold the key to a treatment or vaccine.



Ask: What does the word PREVENTATIVE mean? BUT YOU CANNOT USE THE WORD "PREVENT" to define preventative!
(Take a few student answers, acknowledge good ideas and incorporate appropriate responses.)

Some official definitions are:

1: to keep from happening or existing

2: to hold or keep back : [HINDER](#), [STOP](#)

3: to deprive of power or hope of acting or succeeding

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prevent>



So now, let's go to PREVENTATIVE.

(If students offered preventative measures during PROACTIVE question, use those to launch into these.)

Remember: Your health directly impacts your immune system. Eat healthy, drink water (but DON'T SHARE WATER BOTTLES, especially as we enter into Spring Sports, start bringing your own REUSEABLE water bottle), and finally....sleep smarter. Try going to bed just 15 minutes earlier tonight and see the difference. But you'll have to put the device down... and you know what, that's probably a good thing. Because your device is covered with germs. Did you know that your phone surface has 10x more germs than a toilet seat? But before you douse that device with a wipe or hand sanitizer, it is important to know how to clean your devices. Be on the lookout in the coming days, we are working with Ms. DelMonte to help us all know an effective and SAFE way to keep our devices clean! And your advisor will lead you through safely cleaning your devices on Thursday or Friday.

(<https://time.com/4908654/cell-phone-bacteria/>)

Handwashing: 4 seconds under the water is not handwashing. That's simply spreading the germs around on your hands. If you are out of practice, now is the time

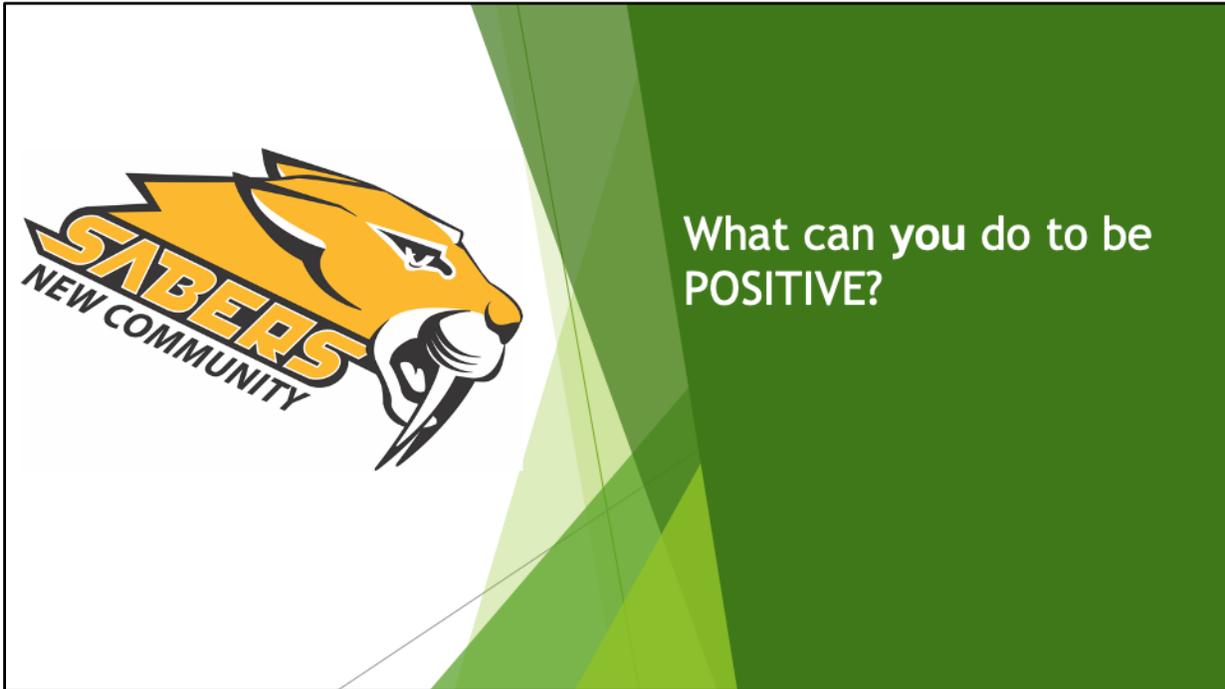
to seriously consider washing your hands before and after you eat. Who can tell me how long handwashing should last? (at least 20 seconds) And that doesn't mean just letting the water run, treat those hands like they are in a carwash. Soap, foam, scrub.

Also, while thinking about your hands, do you realize that most people touch their face about 23 times per hour? Avoid touching your face with your hands, especially eyes, nose, and mouth. These mucus membrane areas are susceptible to germs.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/worried-about-coronavirus-learn-to-stop-touching-your-face-20200227-p544zn.html>

Wipes: teachers and students are a team at TNCS. We are stepping up wiping down tables in classrooms and the dining hall. It is EVERYONES responsibility. Walking away from the table when a wipe gets delivered reflects your character. Try stepping up and see how it feels to take part in the greater good of our community.

And last but not least: if you are smoking or vaping, now is a critical time to think about quitting. The COVID19 virus is respiratory disease and it thrives in a compromised respiratory system. And if you haven't started, then don't. Easy enough.



And finally, POSITIVE. The opposite of negative. **Negative Energies** are emotions that are not desirable to people which express; sadness, anger, hate, hopelessness, fear, stress, greed, jealousy, selfishness and pain; while **Positive energies** are the desired emotions which describe; love, happiness, joy, pleasure, forgiveness, generosity, compassion, kindness, gratitude, hope and peacefulness.

Honor what you are feeling. It is natural to have a little worry when things like this come along. We are not in a place where it needs to dominate our thoughts. The people who really need to be paying attention to this are already on it. Scientists, researchers, scholars all over the globe are working diligently to learn more about this new strand of coronavirus and how it will behave. The flu has been far more deadly this season. While you may have worry, make that worry do good work in the world. Turn worry into positive energies like compassion and empathy for those in the world who are directly facing this. Send love and hope, put good energy in the world. So much healing happens as a result of hope.

OPTIONAL REPEAT: This isn't the first time we've had a coronavirus concern. We have done this before. There are 7 Versions of the coronavirus. 1-4 are still with us and are pretty common strands of a "cold". 5 and 6 were much like this new one (SARS 2002

(gone by 2004 and MERS 2012, now only found in camels) They ran their course. This is the 7th. We go through these things. “Thanks to research investments into the SARS and MERS outbreaks, NIAID scientists and grantees are better prepared to develop diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines against COVID-19. Included in those projects are basic research to understand how the virus infects cells and causes disease; adapting platforms used to develop diagnostic tests and vaccines; and evaluating treatments such as broad-spectrum antivirals and potentially monoclonal antibodies. In fact, within two weeks of the discovery of COVID-19, NIAID researchers had determined how the virus enters cells.”

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/types.html>

<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/coronaviruses>

Just know that we decided to talk to you today because we respect you. And we want you to know we are watching this. And we will keep you informed because you deserve that from us. What we need from you is to step up. Strive to move away from joking about it as a coping skill, remember, we have some students who are truly worried about loved ones abroad. Let’s be mindful. As students, as teachers. We never know who is listening to our words, then repeating them. And if we all remember the telephone game, we know how quickly things can get changed.



Sometimes, we just want to know more. So let's make it a safe place and give you real information.

You have resources right here on campus:

- Want to know more about the virus? Stop by the clinic and chat with Ms. Raggio. She is really keeping us all up to date on what we need to know.
- Worry and anxiety got the best of you? Stop by Baker House and sit in with Mr. DiFazio who can help you turn worry into work.
- Want to just take your mind off things and meditate, or find ways to keep your immune system healthy? Stop by the cottage and see Mr. Morgan
- Want to learn how to properly clean your device? Stop by Ms. DelMonte office during your break or lunch.
- And of course, talk to your parents. Ask questions, share your concerns, and maybe you can even help them be more PROACTIVE, PREVENATIVE, AND POSITIVE.



Allow for questions, do not be afraid to say "I don't know."

Citations

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/epidemiology-fact-sheets/coronaviruses/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>

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