



## The PREPaRE Model, Crisis Intervention, and Global Pandemic

The PREPaRE model ([Brock et al., 2016](#)) is a sequential, hierarchical approach to school crisis preparedness. This infographic illustrates its application when responding to the stress generated by a global pandemic.

P		<p><b>Prevent</b> physical and psychological injury. Protect youth from harm by ensuring health promoting behaviors, while at the same time minimizing exposure to potentially traumatizing material. Do not expose youth to excessive amounts of media (i.e., that beyond which offers basic crisis facts and supports health).</p>
R		<p><b>Reaffirm</b> health/welfare by ensuring youth and caregivers have <a href="#">crisis facts</a> and make available guidance directing actions that <a href="#">minimize health risks</a>. This promotes the individual's ability to predict and adaptively respond to a pandemic. Crises that are more predictable and viewed as more controllable tend to be less traumatic. Giving youth concrete actions they can take to <a href="#">maintain health</a> will help them to view the crisis as more controllable.</p> <p>Keep in mind that levels of stress prompting adaptive behavior (e.g., handwashing) are appropriate. However, strive to ensure threat perceptions, and resulting stress, match the actual degree of health risk. Monitor adult reactions and minimize exposure to those who have lost emotional control. This is especially important for younger children.</p>
E		<p><b>Evaluate</b> and monitor stress reactions. Again, in an ongoing crisis, stress is, to a certain point, appropriate and adaptive. However, extreme stress can compromise the <a href="#">immune system</a> and suggests the need for crisis intervention. Factors that can generate such stress include getting sick or having loved ones who are sick (or are in a high-risk group). Pre-existing physical and mental health problems, and isolation and lack of social supports also predicts more extreme stress reactions.</p>
P a r e		<p><b>Provide and Respond</b> to mental health needs. While face-to-face crisis intervention is difficult due to social distancing requirements, there are other options for supporting adaptive coping with an ongoing stressor. From the three general groupings of PREPaRE crisis interventions the following are suggested.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Promote social support systems.</i> The availability of primary caregivers is essential for young children. Older children and adolescents will also need to connect with friends, teachers, and other support networks outside of their immediate families. Social media, Facetime/Duo Mobile, Google Hangouts, Zoom, and GoToMeeting are examples of options for maintaining such social connections.</li> <li>2. <i>Provide psychological education.</i> Informational bulletins, flyers, and handouts can be shared with school community members. These documents supplement naturally occurring social support systems, by providing expert guidance on how to support adaptive coping (a variety of resources are available from <a href="#">NASP</a>). It would also be possible to provide more direct caregiver trainings via virtual meeting platforms (e.g., Zoom, GoToMeeting).</li> <li>3. <i>Offer psychological intervention.</i> Stabilization and grounding of persons with extreme stress reactions is important to staying healthy and maintaining a strong immune system. When social support is lacking, and psychological education insufficient, consider <a href="#">virtual service delivery</a> resources. A listing of help line resources, including suicide hotlines, such as the one offered by <a href="#">NAMI</a> (National Alliance on Mental Illness) can be made available to support this level of intervention. Further, the availability of, and links to, local community mental health should be identified so as to be able to make appropriate referrals. Remember to follow mandated reporter regulations if child abuse is suspected. Regardless, be sure to document all student contacts.</li> </ol>
E		<p><b>Examine</b> the effectiveness of the mental health response to a pandemic. Keep notes and document actions taken, and reflections made. While no two crisis situations are identical each and every one offers the opportunity to learn and strengthen future crisis interventions.</p>