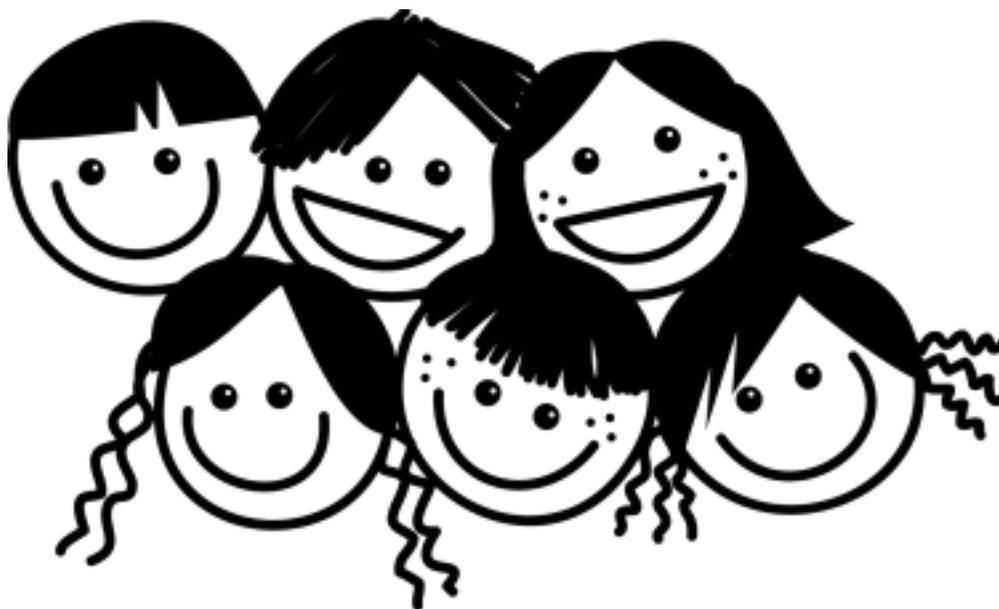




kids-teach-kids

about the coronavirus
pandemic



Intro For the Grown-Ups

The books that are used in this Curriculum are:



This Kids-Teach-Kids Curriculum has been produced by faculty at the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University (MARC). MARC has historically focused on helping children cope with social behaviors, problems like bullying and cyberbullying, and coping successfully with digital behaviors that can cause social problems.

During the current Coronavirus Pandemic, we have been largely focused on helping schools, parents, and children cope with the social and psychological effects of the global pandemic and its accompanying recession.

An important part of these efforts were books published for kids and co-authored by our Children's Literacy Specialist, Dr. Katharine Covino. These books, *The Insanely Awesome Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids* and *The Insanely Awesome POST Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids*, use humor and illustrations to teach children aged 7-11 about research-based approaches for understanding the pandemic and improving their mental health.

Before the pandemic, some of the most successful programming at MARC involved training youth to help their peers with challenging social and psychological situations. For this Curriculum, we have taken this model and adapted to the pandemic. We know that when it comes to issues like mental health and socializing, kids love to learn from peers, and thus kids can be a critical source of information.

The Kids-Teach-Kids Curriculum includes readings from the Insanely Awesome Pandemic books, with accompanying kid-narrated videos and Lesson plans, to help kids better understand the pandemic, the public health concepts that adults talk about (social

distancing, masking, the vaccines), and how to help themselves stay as healthy psychologically as possible.

Why is the Curriculum titled “Kids-Teach-Kids”?

The books in the Curriculum were illustrated by a child, and the videos in the Curriculum are all narrated by children. Kids posed most of the questions in the Lesson Plans. The premise is that kids like to learn from other kids, and that they are more engaged when other kids teach them and more likely to retain knowledge.

Are the Insanely Awesome Pandemic books required for this program?

No, but the program is built around the concepts explained in these children’s books. The program frequently references the books and thus it may be difficult for children to complete the training without copies of the books.

The books are found on Amazon. They are very inexpensive (\$8.99) and periodically they are free. Links can be found at www.insanelyawesomebooks.com.

Is this Curriculum research-based?

The facts and concepts in the Insanely Awesome book series are all research-based. The books, and the Curriculum, use these concepts along with humor, to facilitate children’s understanding of all the new facts and issues this global pandemic has raised. This approach - using science and humor together - has been tested with 9-year-olds and was found to be successful in both engaging children and ensuring that they successfully learned the key lessons being taught.

We are pleased to be able to encourage children to help each other during this unprecedented global pandemic. We look forward to seeing their thoughts, ideas, and videos!

Dr. Elizabeth Englander
Executive Director of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University

Dr. Katharine Covino
Children’s Literacy Specialist, Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center

Intro for the Kids

You know how sometimes when your mom or your teacher explains something, and it makes *absolutely no sense*? But then, your older brother or your friend on the bus explains it, and suddenly, everything is clear! That can happen anywhere. In school, at Scouts, at camp - adults are TOTALLY awesome but sometimes they're just not able to explain stuff in a clear and understandable way. Poor adults. Go pat one on the head.

You probably have lots of examples, but remember how frustrated you felt when your dad tried to teach you how to tie your shoes? You had no progress. Zip. Zero. Zilch. Your laces just lay there, mocking you. But then, your step-brother taught you in like 10 minutes.

It's not that other kids are always smarter than grownups. But sometimes, it helps to have a kid's perspective when you're explaining stuff. Like how those shoelaces actually do look like bunny ears. And how it's easier to look up people's noses when

you're shorter than they are. Sometimes, other kids can just make things clearer, simpler, and easier to understand than a grownup can. That's just the way it works.

And, just like how your friends could teach you how to dive off the dock and jump rope, they can also answer some questions kids might have about Coronavirus and the Pandemic.

Lesson Plans

Segment #1: QUESTIONS ABOUT MASKS

Lesson 1: Why do we have to wear masks?

Lesson 2: Why do some people/places have you wear masks and others don't?

SEGMENT #2: QUESTIONS ABOUT SOCIAL DISTANCING

Lesson 3: What is social distancing?

Lesson 4: Why do we have to social distance?

SEGMENT #3: QUESTIONS ABOUT DELTA

Lesson 5: I thought that the pandemic was over? Why is it coming back again?

Lesson 6: What is Delta and is it a different virus?

SEGMENT #4: QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL & FRIENDS

Lesson 7: What will it be like to be in school again?

Lesson 8: Will my school go remote again?

SEGMENT #5: QUESTIONS ABOUT THE VACCINES

Lesson 9: What is a vaccine and how does it work?

Lesson 10: When can I get the vaccine?

SEGMENT #6: QUESTIONS ABOUT FEELINGS AND WORRIES

Lesson 11: Why do I feel worried or sad sometimes?

Lesson 12: How can I help myself feel better?

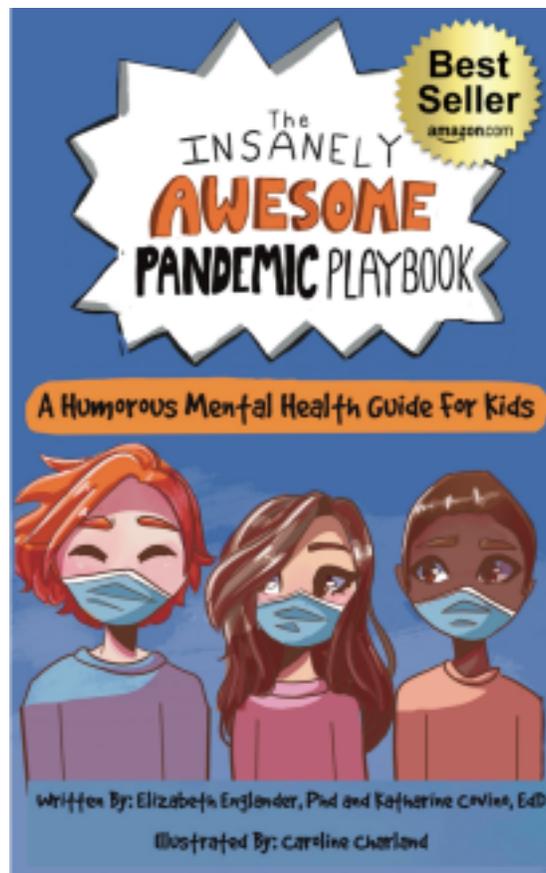
Segment #1: QUESTIONS ABOUT MASKS

Segment #1 Reading covers Lessons 1 and 2.

Segment #1 Reading:

The Insanely Awesome Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 119-136 (Chapter 5: “What CAN we do? What SHOULD we do?”)



Lesson 1: Why do we have to wear masks?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 1.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 1” video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Draw a picture showing how someone spits out less virus because they're wearing a mask.
2. Is wearing a mask weird? Look up pictures on the Internet of people wearing masks. You can search for doctors and dentists, people who work in labs and even in dusty jobs like construction. You can also look up pictures of people wearing masks during the 1918 Pandemic or the more recent epidemics in Asia.
3. Does anyone in the class have a parent or relative who wears a mask at work? Do you know why they do that? Do you think it's a good idea?

Lesson 2: Why do some people/places have you wear masks and others don't?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 1.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 2” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Compare wearing a mask and wearing a seatbelt. How are they similar? How are they different?
2. Why might you NOT wear a mask when you're in an elevator with your mom, but DO wear a mask if you're in an elevator with a 10-person singing club that's practicing their songs?

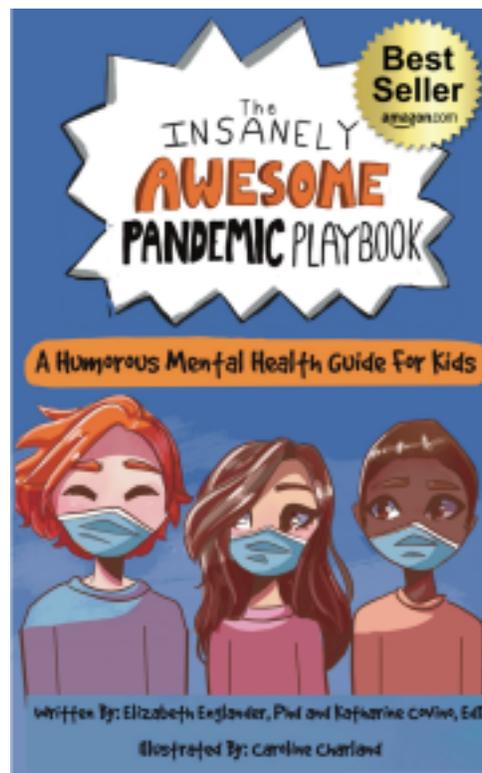
Segment #2: QUESTIONS ABOUT SOCIAL DISTANCING

Segment #2 Reading covers Lessons 3 and 4.

Segment #2 Reading:

The Insanely Awesome Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 73-78 (Chapter 3: “Why we still have to leave the house..occasionally”)
- pages 127-136 (Chapter 5: “What CAN we do? What SHOULD we do?”)



Lesson 3: What is social distancing?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 2.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 3” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. How far is 6 feet? You can use examples from the book, or measure things around your classroom or house. (Hint: measure the teacher’s desk!)
2. How far is 3 feet?
3. Which distancing recommendations have you seen? Which do you feel better about? Why?

Lesson 4: Why do we have to be “socially distant”?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 2.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 4” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Where do you think social distancing is important? Why?
2. Where do you think social distancing might not be as critical? Why?

SEGMENT #3: QUESTIONS ABOUT DELTA AND VARIANTS

Segment #3 Reading covers Lessons 5 and 6.

Segment #3 Reading:

The Insanely Awesome POST Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 129-141 (Chapter: “Back to the Future: Schools & Vaccines”)



Lesson 5: I thought that the pandemic was over? Why is it coming back again?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 3.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 5” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Have you heard grown-ups talking about the ‘waves’ of the pandemic?
What is the difference between something ONLY going up, versus a pandemic, that is more like a “wave”? (HINT: it goes back down again.)
2. Think of 3 things that people are doing to help stop the waves of the pandemic for good. How can you contribute to helping to stop the pandemic?

Lesson 6: What is Delta and is it a different virus?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 3.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 6” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

1. List as many things in nature as you can that change somewhat over time, but still essentially stay the same, like the Delta/Coronavirus. (Hints: hair and nails growing; plants and kids growing taller; hair goes grey as you get older; sunlight isn’t the same all day long; precipitation (rain vs snow); warm cocoa that cools down and becomes chocolate milk.)
2. Pick one of the examples you found and draw a picture of it changing over time. Title it: In Nature, Things Change.

Segment #4: QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL & FRIENDS

Segment #4 Reading covers Lessons 7 and 8.

Segment #4 Reading:

The Insanely Awesome POST Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 77-101 (Chapter: “Toothpicking, Tackling, and Other Friendship Weirdness”)



Lesson 7: What will it be like to be in school again?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 4.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 7” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

- Can you remember a time when you felt awkward or weird, but it didn’t last very long?
- Sometimes awkward feelings just go away on their own, but sometimes something or someone makes you feel better. Think about something or someone that helped you get over an awkward feeling.
- Talk about a time when you saw someone you hadn’t seen in a long time, like distant relatives. How did that feel and how did the visit go?

Lesson 8: Will my school go remote again?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 4.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 8” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

- If your school was different last year, there may have been things you liked and things you didn’t like about school.
- Discuss one good thing that you liked about the way it was.
- Is there something you could have changed about last year, while still keeping everyone safe? (HINT: the answer to this may be “no.” In that case, congratulate the students on choosing to keep everyone safe.)

Segment #5: QUESTIONS ABOUT THE VACCINES

Segment #5 Reading covers Lessons 9 and 10.

Segment #5 Reading:

The Insanely Awesome POST Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 141-154 (Chapter: “Back to the Future: Schools & Vaccines”)



Lesson 9: What is a vaccine and how does it work?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 5.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 9” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

- Back in the old days, people used to get a disease called “chicken pox.” Then, they invented a vaccine and now most kids never get this disease. Ask your parents about chicken pox. Did they ever get it? What was it like?
- What do you think about getting chicken pox? If you're curious about how you'd look, draw a picture of yourself. Now, put red, itchy dots all over your body.

Lesson 10: When can I get the vaccine?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 5.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 10” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

- On the Internet, find pictures of kids getting vaccines. Can you remember getting other vaccines yourself? Shots can look scary, but often they don't hurt much. How big a deal do you think it is, to get a shot?
- How do you feel about your friends, your cousins, or your brothers and sisters getting a vaccine for the Coronavirus?

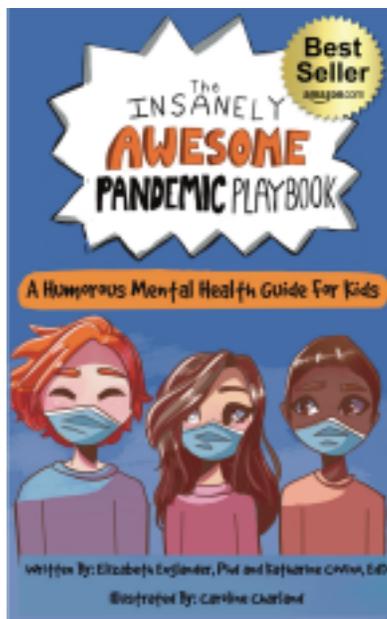
Segment #6: QUESTIONS ABOUT FEELINGS AND WORRIES

Segment #6 Reading covers Lessons 11 and 12.

Segment #6 Readings:

The Insanely Awesome Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 91-111 (Chapter 4: “Feeling ALL the feelings....”)



The Insanely Awesome **POST** Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids

- pages 49-76 (Chapter 2: “I’m Excited! No, I’m Worried. Maybe I’m Both?”)



Lesson 11: Why do I feel worried or sad sometimes?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 6.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 11” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

- Can you remember another time when something changed quickly? For example, maybe you moved to a new house, or started in a new school; or dyed your hair purple! How did you feel when that happened? How long did your feelings last?
- Sometimes we feel better about changes that we can control. Did your parents ever include you in an important family decision about change (like getting a pet, for example)? How did it feel to be included?

Lesson 12: How can I help myself feel better?

Step 1. Complete the reading for Segment 6.

Step 2. Watch the [“Lesson 12” Video](#).

Step 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

- Think of a time when you were feeling sad or worried, even just a little bit. Can you list three things that have made you feel better, like watching funny videos, playing outside, or snuggling with your dad?
- Even though it can be fun, sometimes using technology can make us feel worse. Think of three fun things you can do that don't involve screens. ● Now, think of activities you can do, using a screen, that also make you feel better.