

CONNECT WITH EASE

Employee Assistance Service for
Education

Overview:

Message From EASE

Article: *Beating the Back-to-School Blues*

Free/Low-Cost Events

Awareness Days

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**Free confidential support for school
district employees and family members:**

Work-related concerns
Emotional distress
Stress
Anxiety
Depression
Substance use
Grief and loss
Life transitions
Family issues
Wellness

**Professional counselors are
available. Call EASE for 24/7
assistance.**

**Connect with EASE:
1-800-882-1341**



MESSAGE FROM EASE DIRECTOR

As a new school year begins, many of us spend time preparing classrooms, offices, campuses, schedules, programs and systems for the year ahead. But amidst all the planning and preparation, ***how much time do we spend preparing ourselves?***

This month's article, "Beating the Back-to-School Blues", invites us to pause and reflect with a few simple but meaningful questions. Taking a few moments to reflect now can help create a stronger foundation before the pace of the school year accelerates.

One thing we've learned through our work with school communities is that the strongest organizations aren't the ones where everyone simply pushes through challenges—they're the ones where people support one another, ask for help when they need it, and recognize that wellbeing isn't a luxury, but an essential part of sustaining the important work they do.

For many students and families, schools are more than places of learning. They are places of stability, connection, support, and hope. Whether you work directly with students, support staff behind the scenes, maintain facilities, provide transportation, prepare meals, ensure safety, or keep daily operations running, every role contributes to creating an environment where students can learn and thrive. The way we show up each day matters.

Just as we prepare for the year professionally, it's equally important to prepare personally. Small, intentional practices—setting an intention for the day, paying attention to your wellbeing, seeking support early, and extending yourself the same compassion you offer others—can make a meaningful difference throughout the year.

We know that working in education can be both rewarding and demanding, and the challenges you face don't stop when the workday ends. Whatever you're navigating, you don't have to do it alone. EASE is here to provide confidential support whenever you need it.

Welcome back, and best wishes for a meaningful, healthy, and successful school year. We're grateful to be part of your journey.

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

Low-Cost/Free Activities

Click each hyperlink to access and review the following information:

- **Month-Long Events:** [Family-Friend Movie Nights at Alhambra Park Bandshell](#), [Supercar Sundays \(Woodland Hills\)](#), [Smorgasburg LA](#), [Grand Park's Wellness Break: Yoga & Breathwork Classes](#), [Sounds of LA County Summer Concert & Movie Series](#), [Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival](#), [The Music Center's Dance DTLA](#)
- **Aug 1:** [Afro-Latino Culture Fest](#)
- **Aug 1-7:** [Everybody Plays Summer Adventures](#)
- **Aug 5:** [Sensory Play Time](#)
- **Aug 8:** [Movie Night at Dodger Stadium](#)
- **Aug 11:** [Neurodivergent Family Night](#)
- **Aug 2:** [Dena Community Backpack Giveaway \(Rose Bowl\)](#)
- **Aug 15:** [Upland Back 2 School Backpack Giveaway](#)
- **Aug 16:** [Back-to-School Supply Giveaway & Family Fun Day \(Hawthorne\)](#)
- **Aug 22:** [LA Fix-It Clinic at Norwalk Library](#)
- **Aug 29:** [Grandparents Day Health Fair at Plaza Mexico, Flea Market at Santa Anita Park](#)

Beating the Back-to-School Blues

As we approach the start of a new school year, we hope that you have spent the past few months rebuilding, reconnecting, and replenishing your energy and sense of well-being with your loved ones. A new school year can bring about mixed feelings – the loss of slower days, anticipation, excitement, anxiety, and hope.

Knowing the expectations and challenges that lie ahead, it is essential to reflect on the healthy habits, activities that filled your sense of wonder, and the people who helped you reconnect with parts of yourself outside of your professional roles.

It's easy to feel the stress and anxiety creep in. Despite the anticipation of your calendar filling up and your email inbox slowly beginning to trickle in, remember to make room for intentional pauses for calm and grounding amidst the back-to-school buzz. Allow yourself a moment and space to reflect on the following guiding questions:

- ***What brought me joy during my summer break?***
- ***How did I feel and what did I notice about myself when I had extra time?***
- ***What practices or small habits do I want to carry into the next school year?***

In the same way we would plan for the school year, consider making the same effort to plan for your self-care. Use this time to build up and carry those tiny, daily rituals - however small - to create quiet and intentional acts of mindfulness into your days ahead. A few examples to incorporate into your practice include:

- ***Setting an intention before your day begins.***
- ***Listening to and acting on your bodily cues (hunger, fatigue, dehydration, overstimulation).***
- ***Seeking support before crisis hits.***
- ***Being compassionate with yourself when things don't go as planned.***
- ***Joining and building a community both in the workplace and in your personal life.***
- ***Creating a start-up and wind-down routine.***

At EASE, we deeply understand the profound gift and responsibility you carry as educators and members of the education community. Take space and make space to catch your breath, reflect, and receive support. Savor the end of the summer season and embrace another year of new connections, adventures, and beginning anew. Don't forget to make yourself a priority in the process. We are here to help as you get back in the swing of things.

Workshops and Resources

Click the images and text to access and review the following event details and resources:

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

back-to-school checklist

- Talk about it!** Connect and chat with your kids or students about their feelings of going back to school, new teachers, building and maintaining friendships, fears, classes, and exciting opportunities.
- Set up clear routines:** Classroom, drop off, extracurricular activities, pick up time. This will help lessen stress, anxiety, and confusion.
- Touch base again and again!** Connect about their day/week/semester:
 - What went well?
 - What didn't go well?
 - What are they **looking forward to** the most for next week/month/semester?
 - Are they feeling **overwhelmed, depressed, or isolated**?
 - Try not to micromanage homework assignments/deadlines** or overload them with busy work.
 - Encourage them** to tap into their hobbies, try something new, or offer them volunteer opportunities.
 - Have fun!** Enjoy some fun activities together, relax, share funny memes or jokes.
- Meet the teachers/parents** to gain clear direction and expectations.
- Together, discuss a clear list of expectations** for the school year as well as rules and consequences in the classroom and at home. Having an open conversation provides kids a fair chance to understand, internalize and give their opinion on the expectations.
- Keep spaces organized:** Set up designated areas in the classroom and at home to foster routines.
- Make sure to have a clear and readily available list of support resources and emergency contacts** for your students/children in case they need it.
- Encourage setting up reminders** and alarms to instill a sense of responsibility, accountability, organization, and timeliness.
- Identify which special events or school activities are important for your students/kids** and make an effort to share, show your excitement, and be present.
- Support and nurture your kids or students with positive and encouraging words.**

CRISIS TEXT LINE | NEED TO VENT? TEXT **SCHOOL** TO 741741

EASE IS AVAILABLE



HOW TO CONTACT EASE

- 1** SCAN QR CODE FOR WEBSITE
- 2** CALL THE OFFICE
562-922-6683
- 3** EMAIL US
ease@lacoee.edu
- 4** CALL THE EASE 24/7 HOTLINE

EASE Hotline: 1-800-882-1341

Select "1" for EASE office
Select "2" to speak with a Counselor

Conversation Starters: Back-to-School Edition



Conversation Starters

Back-to-School Edition

What is your favorite memory from this summer?

The Kids Mental Health Foundation

Conversation Starters

Back-to-School Edition

How are you feeling about the start of the school year?

The Kids Mental Health Foundation

Conversation Starters

Back-to-School Edition

Is there anything you're worried about with going back to school?

The Kids Mental Health Foundation

Conversation Starters

Back-to-School Edition

What do you like most about yourself?

The Kids Mental Health Foundation

Conversation Starters

Back-to-School Edition

If you could make a rule for your classroom, what would it be?

The Kids Mental Health Foundation

Conversation Starters

Back-to-School Edition

What are you most excited about learning this year?

The Kids Mental Health Foundation

The Kids Mental Health Foundation | #KidsMentalHealthFoundation | KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org

School Wellbeing Toolkit

Flashcards to provide teachers and staff with meaningful access to practical strategies that support the whole school community.



Resilience • Support • Engagement • In the Classroom • Family Support • Teacher Support • Engagement • Student & Family Support • Teacher Support • Engagement



TALK TO US