How to Practice Social Distancing in a School

Opportunity EduFinance

May 2020
What is Social Distancing?

Social distancing refers to measures being taken to restrict where and when people gather in order to stop or slow the spread of infectious disease. In general, 6 feet of separation is the distance that should be kept between people interacting within their community.

Why is it important?

The overall goal of social distancing is to increase the physical space between members of the school community to reduce unintended exposures.

After schools reopen, to ensure continued teaching and learning and avoid any disruptions in the functioning of the school, it is imperative that schools follow social distancing during school hours and encourage members of the school community to follow social distancing after school hours.
How can Schools Practice Social Distancing?

| Maintain safe classroom spaces | • Rearrange student desks and common seating spaces to maximise the space between students.  
• For example- turn desks to face in the same direction rather than facing each other to reduce transmission, move class outdoors, require students to remain seated in the classroom |
| Avoid use of shared or community spaces | • Cancelling or postponing after school activities like sports practices  
• Cancelling classes or activities that occur during the school day with a high rate of mixing/ contact like P.E, choir, field trips.  
• Limiting lunch to classrooms instead of in common spaces like school ground |
| Limiting visitors | • Do not allow parents or other visitors, restrict vendor access to school |
How can Schools Practice Social Distancing?

| Reduced school schedule | • Shorter school week or school day  
|                        | • Students come on alternate days  
|                        | • Running two streams- half the classes come during morning, whereas the rest come during the afternoon |
| Dedicated individual classroom and office materials | • Do not share utensils, classroom, office supplies and teaching learning materials between students or staff wherever possible |
| Promote health checks | • Create clear communication for families who have a child or member of staff with a COVID-19 symptom. School’s sick policies should be supportive of students and staff staying at home.  
|                        | • Consider implementing daily temperature checks for students and staff at the time of entry and exit from the school premises. |
| Encourage and reinforce social norms and health etiquette | • Ensure availability of appropriate cleaning supplies (eg disinfectant wipes) for cleaning of high touch surfaces  
• Reinforce handwashing routines. Asks staff and students to wash hands upon entering and leaving classroom or other spaces in the school building  
• Ensure students and staff wear face masks throughout the school day  
• Consider ways to reinforce good hand hygiene. For example. Provide incentives (eg classroom recognition or student of the day) for proper and thorough handwashing  
• Ensure students and staff who are sick stay at home |