


**N** Northeastern University  
Bouvé College of Health Sciences  
School of Nursing, School Health Academy


COVID-19: School Nurses  
Connecting with Students  
during the Pandemic

April 8, 2020


Presenters




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Family Therapist & Author

The NEUSHA Team



Jenny Gormley  
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Accredited Provider

- Northeastern University School Health Academy operates within [Northeastern University School of Nursing](#), an Accredited Provider of Continuing Nursing Education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation (ANCC).
- The planners and presenters of this program have no conflicts of interest to declare.
- No commercial support has been provided for this program.




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Outcomes

- Describe the importance of staying connected with students while schools are closed during this pandemic
- Identify emotions and responses that students may be expressing
- Describe strategies that School Nurses can use to connect with students emotionally
- Identify strategies for collaboration with school counseling colleagues
- Describe how fostering Resilience can support School Nurses' connections with students and school community

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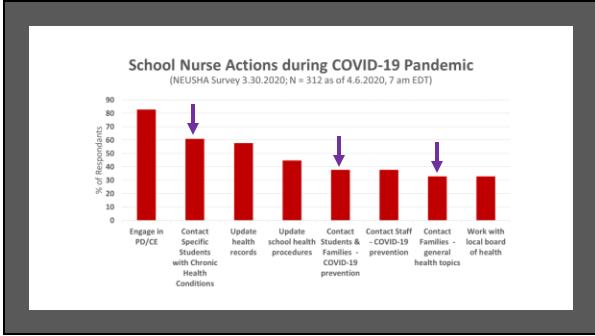
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### Presenter Introductions

Robin Cogan, MEd, RN, NCSN  
School Nurse

Kristin Lee, EdD, LICSW  
Northeastern University Faculty

Adria Pavletic, MA, MN, RN, NCSN  
School Nurse

Beth Tyson, MA  
Family Therapist & Author

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## Presentations

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"It's ok to cry when there is too much on your mind,  
the clouds rain too when they get heavy."

—Amina Mehmood

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## INTRODUCTION

- Beth Winkler Tyson, MA
- Psychotherapist with expertise in trauma-responsive parenting
- Best Selling Author of *A Grandfamily for Sullivan*
- Speaker and child welfare advocate

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## AROUSAL CHART



Yerkes-Dodson Model of Arousal

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## THE IMPACT

### Anticipatory Anxiety

- Fear of impending doom
- Intrusive negative thoughts about the future
- Anticipation more intense than the actual event
- Correlated with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

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## THE IMPACT

### Anxiety Responses

- Typical during life threatening situations
- Excess energy that needs an outlet
- Uncomfortable, but not dangerous
- Panic attacks have a life cycle of approx. 20 minutes. Let them run their course

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## THE IMPACT ON NURSES

### Shame

Shame is an unpleasant self-conscious emotion typically associated with a negative evaluation of the self, withdrawal motivations, and feelings of distress, exposure, mistrust, powerlessness, and worthlessness.

### Imposter Syndrome

Despite external evidence of their competence, those experiencing this phenomenon remain convinced that they are frauds, and do not deserve all they have achieved.

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## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

### PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY

- Rapid heart rate
- Quick breathing or difficulty catching one's breath
- Muscle aches (especially stomach and headaches)
- Shaking, dizziness, tingling
- Sweating
- Fatigue
- Ongoing worries about friends, school, or activities
- Worrying about things before they happen
- A need for everything to be "perfect"
- Constant thoughts and fears about safety (of self or of others, such as parents and siblings)
- Reluctance or refusal to go to school
- "Clingy" behavior with parents
- Inability to concentrate
- Irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Inability to relax
- Behavior like rocking, rubbing, picking, nail biting

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## WHAT TO LOOK FOR (CONT.)

### MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL




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## STUDENTS TO PRIORITIZE

- Previous history of trauma/loss
- Recent loss preceding the pandemic
- Pre-existing disabilities/mental health issues
- Intense anticipatory anxiety (greater chance of PTSD)
- Pre-existing High (3+) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)

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## WHAT WE CAN DO



Image by Tara Shannon

- EMPATHIZE
- REFLECT
- CONNECT
- REDIRECT

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## WHAT WE CAN DO (CONT.)

### EMPATHIZE

EMPATHIZE & REFLECT: "This is a strange time for all of us, you seem afraid. I would be afraid if I were you too. It is ok to be upset."

CONNECT: "You're feelings are valid, this is a scary experience." Be present with their reaction, whatever it is. Let them express themselves, even if it's sitting in silence.

REDIRECT: Once the emotional expression seems complete, share a time you were scared or uncertain as a child. (Have a story in mind ahead of time).

"When I was a kid I was scared of \_\_\_\_\_. Something I did to feel better was \_\_\_\_\_. Would you like to try that now or later?"

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## COPIII

## COPING STRATEGIES - ALL AGES

- Take a cold shower / use cool compresses on young child
- Tension releasing exercises: Push with your arms against a wall, or do self-induced body shaking
- Freeze and Melt video on Go Noodle / Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Restorative breathing (not deep breathing): Inhale very slowly, but not deeply, to a count of 4, exhale to a count of 6. (3x)
- Blow up a bag or balloon with your negative feelings, and dispose of the "bad air" outside.

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### COPING STRATEGIES - TEENS

- Keep a journal, writing thoughts on paper has the ability to reduce anxiety
- Set small, achievable goals for getting active. Ex) 10Min walk every day
- Evaluate best case and worst casescenarios - remember that both are possible.
- Give "equal air time" to negative and positive input
- Make DIY Masks
- Remind them of what they CAN control - proper hygiene and hand washing, physical distancing, etc.

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### WHAT WE CAN DO

#### INITIATE STORYTELLING

- Provides integration between the emotional and logical sides of the brain which increases a child's ability to regulate emotion
- Create a book/video of what life is like right now
- Have them share it with you

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### WHAT WE CAN DO (CONT.)

#### SHIFT STUDENTS TOWARDS OPTIMAL AROUSAL

- Lower the expectations for academics
- Reduce exposure to mass media
- Offer support to parents and validate their feelings
- Provide contact info. for local crisis and family support
- Create or update infectious disease plan
- Reassure that adults are working hard to keep them safe

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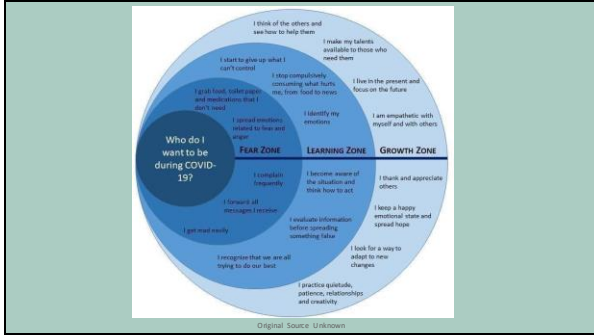
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### HOW BOOKS CAN HELP



- Learn skills for coping with uncertainty and anxiety
- A model for using empathy with children
- An example of how to express, accept and manage big emotions
- Language for adults to talk to children about scary life changes

Available now in paperback and Kindle 

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### RESOURCES

- [1. Sesame Street Health Emergencies](#)
- [2. NASN Coping Skills for Covid](#)
- [3. Beth Tyson - Trauma Parenting Blog](#)
- [4. Children's Books for Anxiety](#)
- [5. Tension/trauma releasing exercises](#)
- [6. Covid-19 Mental Health Videos by Bruce D. Perry](#)

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### STAY CONNECTED

Please reach out to me with any questions, I am happy to help!

For future mental health webinars and virtual author visits please contact me at:

[admin@bethtyson.com](mailto:admin@bethtyson.com) [www.bethtyson.com](http://www.bethtyson.com)

Cell: 610-905-9604

Follow Me on Social Media:

Instagram: @thekinshipcoach

Facebook: @authorbeth

Twitter: @author\_tyson

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### THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

It's been my pleasure to share this time with you!

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## The Virtual School Nurse's Office is Open

Robin Cogan MEd RN NCSN



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**Planner , Presenter, Author Disclosures**

I, Robin Cogan, disclose the absence of personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this educational activity within the past 12 months.

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**Learning Outcomes**

Describe the importance of staying connected with students while school is closed during this pandemic

Identify emotions and responses that students may be expressing

Describe Strategies that School Nurses can use to connect with students emotionally

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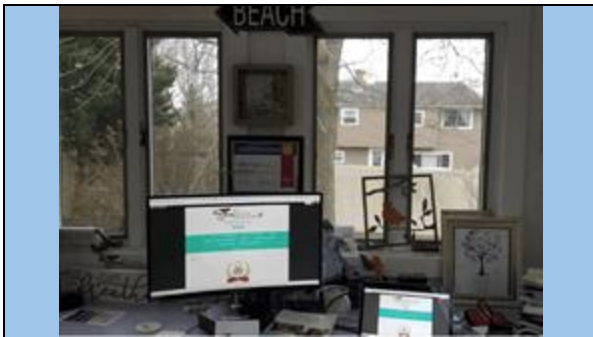
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An open letter from school nurse Robin Cogan to parents & caregivers

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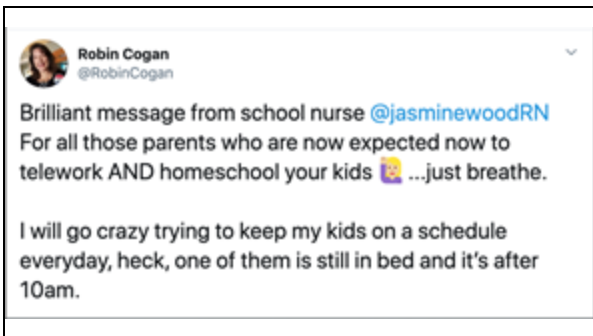
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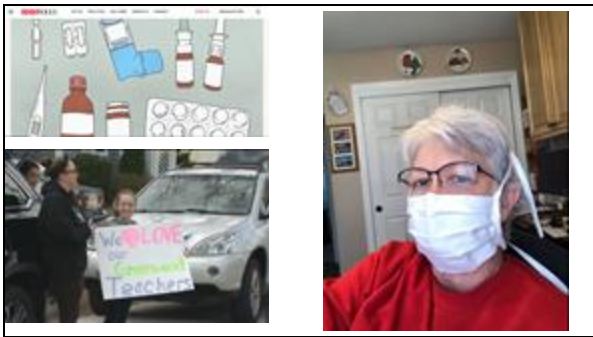
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How are you staying connected with students, staff, and families?



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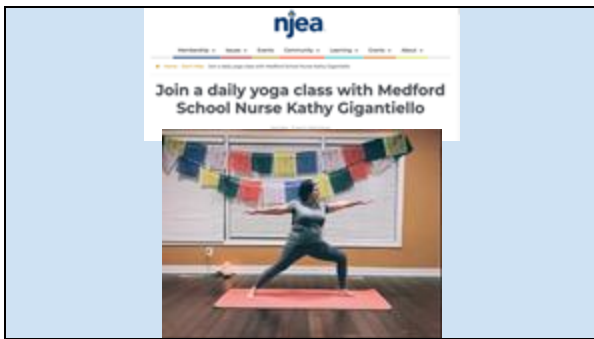
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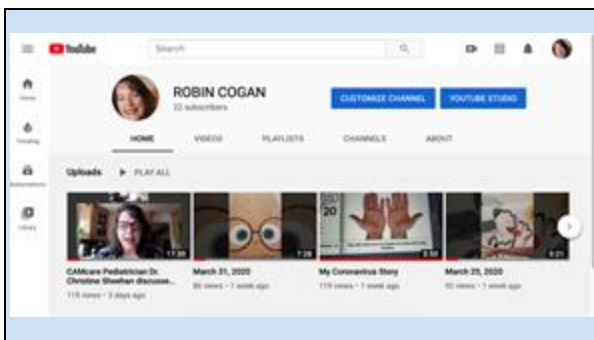
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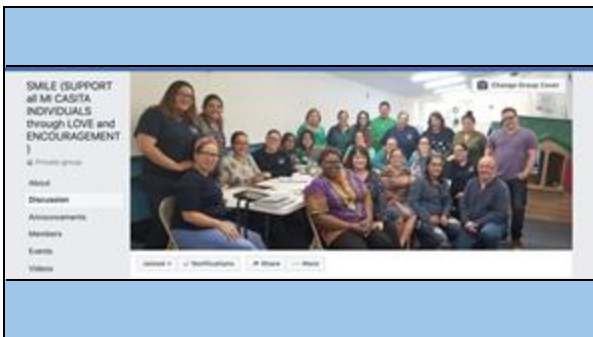
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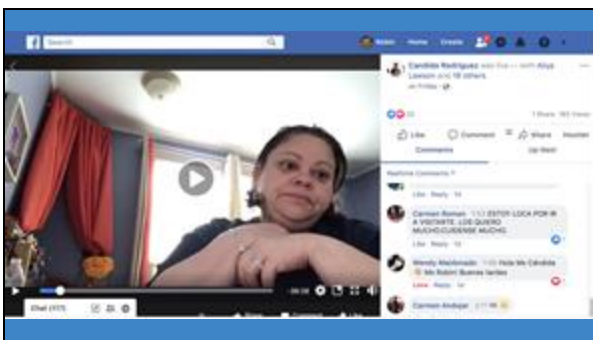
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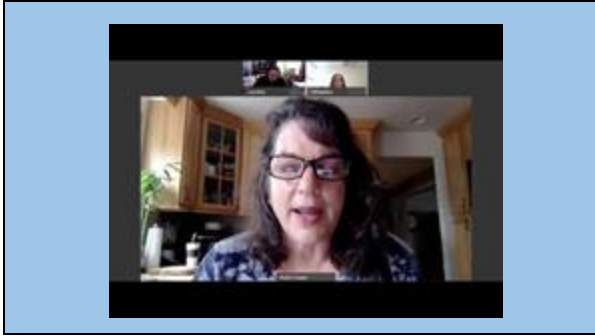
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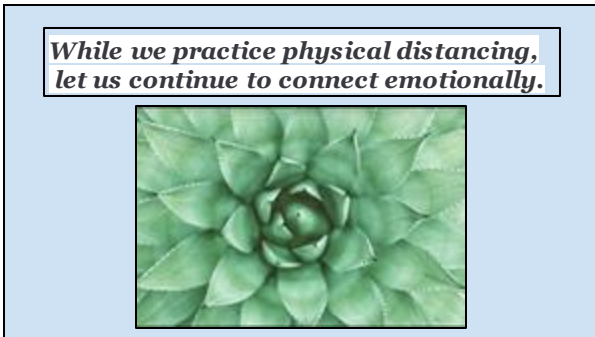
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**References/Resources**

- NASN: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 Resources](#)
- [The virtual health offices of NJ certified school nurses are open](#)
- [Join a daily yoga class with Medford School Nurse Kathy Gigantiello](#)
- [An open letter from school nurse Robin Cogan to parents & caregivers](#)
- [On the Pandemic Front Line: Children and Schools - 2020 Resources](#)
- [School Nurses Are Still Providing Medical Care to Students During Coronavirus](#)
- [Robin Cogan Youtube Channel](#)

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Please follow me on Twitter: [@RobinCogan](#)  
 Visit my blog [www.relentlesschoolnurse.com](http://www.relentlesschoolnurse.com)  
 Join my Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SchoolNurseRobin/>

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Staying connected with your teenage students

Adria Pavletic, M A, M N, RN, NCSN

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### An abrupt change to a "new normal"

- What are the losses?
- Routine
- Ritual
- Peers
- Illness and worry
- Scholastic pressure
- Sports
- Extracurricular
- Uncertainty for the future
- "Senior Spring"

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### School connectedness

- Kids feel "someone at school cares about me" or "I belong"
- Associated with: higher graduation rates, standardized test scores, attendance rates
- YOU** may be the reason that some kids even come to school

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### What is their "new normal?" Who is at risk?

- Challenge and opportunity; self agency/self care
- Chronic illness
- Insecurity at home
- Learning issues
- Social anxiety
- Difficulty with peers

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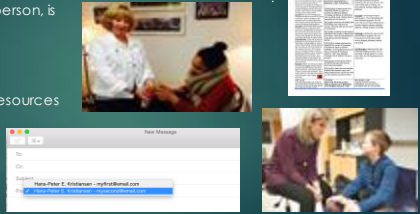
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Acceptable avenues of communication

What was once in person, is now remote!

- School website
- ZOOM conference
- Weekly email with resources
- One to one email
- Office hours




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“Stress is caused by being ‘here’ but wanting to be ‘there.’  
– Eckhart Tolle

Be in touch!  
adriapavletic@stmarksschool.org

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Cultivating Resilience  
During COVID-19

Dr. Kristen Lee  
Lead Faculty  
Behavioral Science  
@TheRealDrKris




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## Guiding Questions



- What is resilience?
- How can protective factors be leveraged within this crisis?
- What types of strategies can help you cultivate resilience personally and collectively?




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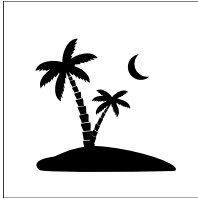
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## Resilience



- A process involving positive adaption after enduring adversity
- Buffering process/protective factors
- Mindset that allows for "Reserve capacity" to prepare for ongoing change, adaption and growth




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## COVID Resilience



1. Stay apprised; avoid "infodemic" & extremes of panic or denial (mindfulness vs. mindfulness)
2. Rethink "social" distancing as "physical" distancing; forge and seek community
3. Harness creativity; innovation, resourcefulness
4. Align values to behavior-spread kindness and compassion
5. Prioritize and practice break rituals and micro techniques and strategies consistently




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All energy must be 100%  
focused on everyone else.

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Self-care is selfish or  
superficial and won't work.

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Discussion

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**Which  
myths/barriers to  
resilience are you  
grappling with?**



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## Take-away strategies



1. Harness principles of mindfulness to create space to cope with difficult emotions and identify salient strategies (Kabat-Zinn, 2017)
2. Practice awe, gratitude, Appreciative Inquiry (Lyubomirsky, 2015)
3. Engage in acts of solidarity, kindness, compassion (Lee, 2017; Twist, 2010)
4. Develop self-care that cultivates resilience, optimal well-being and sustainability (Brooks & Goldstein, 2015)




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## Discussion



**What are some  
action steps you  
can implement  
now?**




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**Thank you**

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**LVX  
VERITAS  
VIRTUS**

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**Northeastern University**  
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### Resources & Handouts

NEUSHA is not responsible for any third-party content that may be accessed through this website.

How Do I get my contact hours?

How do I get my Contact Hours and Certificate after attending this Conference

#### COVID-19 Resources

- STUDENT PRIVACY POLICY OFFICE FERPA & Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) March 2020
- NASN COVID-19 Resources
- CDC Resources
- MA DPH Resources
- For Text Message Updates in MA: Text COVIDMA to 888-777
- NEUSHA COVID-19 Handouts from webinar on 3/26/2020

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## Thank you

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