



It's a **New School Year!** It's a **New Day!**



August 2020

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August is Back to School Month

As summer draws to a close and students and teachers prepare to head back to school, planning can get pretty hectic. Although this year during the COVID-19 pandemic, the school day structure may vary from remote to in-class, it is still important to recognize common classroom hazards to help keep your students and yourselves safe and healthy throughout the year.



Slip, Trip and Fall Injuries

Between the years 2018 and 2020, falls on the same level has been in the top 2 for cause of injury for all work-related injuries among Broward County Public Schools' employees, and has resulted in the highest total workman's compensation costs incurred for the same years. Nationally, slips, trips and falls has been the 2nd highest cause of nonfatal occupational injury resulting in days away from work.

In the last school year, 2019-2020, Slips, trips and falls was the number 1 cause of injury for students. Some hazards identified in the accidents included tripping on rugs, tripping over objects, slipping on wet surfaces, and tripping over loose clothing (i.e. shoelaces).

Slips, trips and falls can result in strains and sprains, fractures, and back injuries.



What causes a Fall?

Did you know that that when we walk our foot comes off the ground about a half inch before it steps down again? Consequently, anything that sticks up half an inch or more will cause you to trip and then your momentum will cause you to fall.



Hazard Recognition



By learning to identify existing and potential hazards in the school, you can create a safer environment. People tend to slip on things that are seen all the time, but not recognized as a hazard. Common slip, trip, and fall hazards include file drawers left open, curled floor mats, cords running on the floor, spills that have not been immediately cleaned up, and floor obstructions and uneven surfaces.

You might be thinking, what can I do to keep my classroom safe from slip, trip and fall hazards? Here are some key tips to avoid slip trip and fall hazards in the classroom:

- Cover cords using cord covers
- Maintain a clutter free work and classroom space
- Clean up spills immediately and mark wet surfaces with a wet floor sign
- Inspect rugs for signs of wear and tear and curled edges
- Mark uneven surfaces



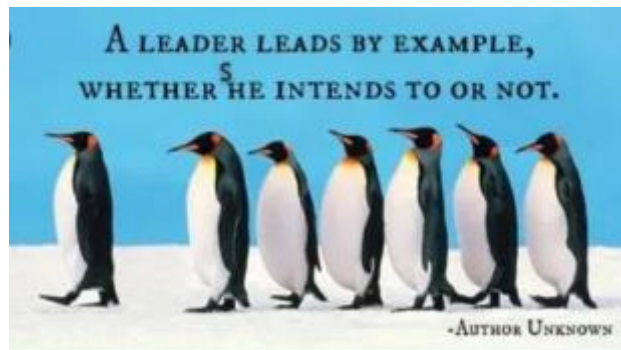
“Manager’s attitudes towards workers’ well-being can lead to safe and healthy behaviors: Study”

(NSC Safety & Health Magazine June 2020)

Researchers at the University of Colorado examined data from a study of small businesses in their state. “. . . They found that a one-point increase (on a five-point scale) in **perceived Leadership commitment to safety, boosted the safety climate by 0.67 points and increased safety behaviors by 0.45 points. . .**”

"Additionally, a one-point increase in **perceived leadership commitment to wellness** was associated with a **0.66 point increase in health climate and a 0.42 point jump in healthy behavior.**"

The data also showed that workers who have “. . . more positive perceptions of their managers were also more likely to participate in safety-related activities”.



Do you see a pattern evolving?

Leadership matters! Minor positive adjustments in leadership’s attitude/behaviors regarding safety and wellness accounted for an average of 50% point increase in workers' safety and wellness behaviors and overall safety/ wellness climate. Half a point may not seem like much today, but it’s 0.5 of a point more than before. Each day a leader’s safety and wellness attitudes increases; staff’s safety & wellness acumen grows proportionately!

Imagine what would happen if you dedicated yourself to making safety and wellness a core value in your department or school.

Today's challenges call for everyone to follow District & CDC guidelines. It will take all of us working together to get our students and staff back into our brick and mortar buildings and classrooms.

The data is in . . . Leaders must lead! Leading by example has always proven most effective.

When leaders demonstrate they are committed to safety and wellness, staff learns to adopt similar behaviors and attitudes.

Wear your PPE (face covering, gloves, etc.), observe social distancing, wash hands often, and keep them away from your face.



We've got You Covered!






Preventing Trip Hazards - Use Cord Covers

Tripping injuries are among the most common types of injuries in offices and school settings. Among tripping hazards, power cords contribute to a significant number of injuries. In addition to the direct injury resulting from tripping and possibly falling over a power cord, the result could also include damage to the power cord. Damaged power cords can pose an electrical shock or fire hazard and the computer, monitor or other connected equipment could become damaged as well. The equipment could also be pulled off the surface on which it sits and could contribute to the injury by striking or falling on a body part.

The best way to address the power cord tripping hazard is to eliminate the hazard by rearranging desks and equipment to avoid extending cords across walking paths. Running cords under furniture could pose an entanglement hazard and is thus not recommended. If crossing the power cords across a walking path cannot be prevented, placement of a cord cover helps to reduce the hazard.

Power cords are not permitted by fire codes to be placed under a rug/mat/carpet, with or without cord covers. Additionally, Environmental Health & Safety recommends the use of a highly contrasting color to improve visibility of the uneven surfaces created by the cord covers, regardless of location. Concealment of a power cords or cord covers under a rug or carpet defeats the purpose of using brightly colored covers and create a tripping hazard.

To ameliorate the risk of power cord trip hazards, Environmental Health & Safety has yellow cord covers available for distribution to the schools. [Covers](#) are provided on a first-come-first-served basis and are subject to availability.

<p>Single use</p> 	<p>Available lengths</p> 	<p>Cord cover request procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All cord cover requests must be made via email to Sandra Kanner: sandra.kanner@browardschools.com. 2. The request must be made either by the school principal, assistant principal, head facility service person, office manager, or IT/computer specialist, with the principal copied in all email communications regarding the cord covers. 3. Provide each FISH number where each cord cover(s) will be placed. 4. Indicate the quantity of each type of cover required (5-foot, 3-foot, 45 degree or 90 degree) for each FISH number. For example, if a room needs an 8-foot long cover, specify a 5-foot & 3-foot covers for that FISH number. <p>When assessing the quantities per room, keep in mind availability is limited. Equipment and furniture should be placed in such a way as to minimize the quantity and lengths needed.</p> <p>Unless the quantity of covers is very small (which can be sent to the school via pony), the cord covers need to be picked up at Environmental Health & Safety, located at 4200A NW 10th Avenue, Oakland Park, 33309.</p>
<p>Joined for longer lengths</p> 	<p>Two 45 degree turns joined for 90 degree turn</p> 	
<p>Single 45 degree turn</p> 		



Clutter - Storage - Clutter



Storage Safety

According to the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), office workers are at risk of injury by falling objects, lifting loads improperly, getting caught between objects, carrying loads that are too large or too heavy, and by falling materials that have been improperly stored. Proper storage is key to preventing storeroom injuries.

The Florida Fire Prevention Code and the State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF) also have requirements regarding storage rooms/areas, including limiting the height of shelving, walking area obstructions and storage in unapproved locations. The requirements are aimed at protecting workers from injuries and at preventing fire hazards.

Prohibited Storage Locations

Storage is not permitted in mechanical rooms, electrical rooms, kiln rooms, toilet rooms, dressing rooms, and office spaces. Storage is only allowed in designated storage spaces.



Storage is not permitted, AT ANY TIME (even temporarily) in any stairway, corridor, or other exit way.



General Storage Room Safety



Clutter: Always keep storage rooms clean, orderly and sanitary.

Chemicals: Poisonous or hazardous materials or liquids must be stored in designated storage areas and/or cabinets and are not permitted in general storage areas.

Hazards: Storage areas must be kept clear of slip, trip, and fall hazards. Do not store items in aisles/walking areas.

Obstructions: Maintain clearance around doorways, electrical panels, fire extinguishers, light fixtures and walking areas.

Clearance: Storage must be kept 2 feet or more below the ceiling in non-sprinklered rooms and 18 inches or more below sprinkler head deflectors.

Hand Sanitizer: Maximum dispenser size allowed in offices, school rooms and general storage spaces is 40 ounces. Dispensers must be spaced 48 inches apart. Storage is permitted in approved locations only.

Shelving Safety

Overstocking: Do not over-stack unsupported items or overhang items on counters or shelving.

Securing: Bookcases, cabinets and individual shelves must be anchored to walls or floor prevent tipping and falling.

Handling: Heavy materials should be stored low and lighter materials stored above.

Maintenance: Shelving shall be free of any sharp corners, splinters or any construction feature that would be hazardous to the occupants and shall be constructed to carry the loads imposed.

Appropriateness: Storage racks must be designed to safety support intended loads and not be loaded in excess of their design capacity.

Cleanliness: Shelving units should be kept in a clean, orderly and in sanitary condition.





Important Reminders

Annual Notification of Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Related Activities

The annual notification to Principals, Parents, Students, and Staff of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) related activities has been submitted for distribution through PIVOT to all schools and facilities. The memo is available on the Environmental Health and Safety web site at <https://www.browardschools.com/cms/lib/FL01803656/Centricity/Domain/13473/Annual%20Notification%20of%20Asbestos%20Hazard%20Emergency%20Response%20Act%20AHERA%20Related%20Activities.pdf>.

EH&S suggests creating a link utilizing the above website on your school website for easy reference by parents and students while we are in e-learning mode.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE REMINDER

To maintain movement within water lines for staff and student use, the Environmental Health & Safety and Physical Plant Operations Departments recommend all Facility Service Persons and cafeteria staff run the tap water for a full five minutes upon entering the building following extended absences. Please refer to the memo, available on the EH&S website at <https://www.browardschools.com/cms/lib/FL01803656/Centricity/Domain/13473/Facility%20Maintenance%20Reminders%20for%20Return%20to%20Facilities%20Following%20Extended%20Absences.pdf> originally submitted through PIVOT in May 2020.

AED Maintenance and 911 Posters Reminder

- You will **not receive** an AED Property Pass for the 2020-2021 school year. Last school year's (2019 -2020) will be used to cover this school year.
- If your **AED Contact person has changed** (most cases – Office Managers), **please notify EH&S** by providing a new contact name and phone number.

- **All AED checklists from the 2019 -2020 school year are now past due.** If your site has not sent in this required document, please do so immediately. Email completed documents to safetytraining@browardschools.com
- **AED Maintenance Check List 2020-2021 is available on the EH&S website** at <https://www.browardschools.com/Page/34819>. Please print and inspect your AED machine and update form.
- **911 Emergency Posters are available on the EH&S website** at <https://www.browardschools.com/Page/34819>. **Please print in color on cardstock and post throughout your site.** Make sure that the individuals listed as CPR certified are on campus frequently.
- **All CPR certifications that have an expiration date March 2020 – June 2020 have been extended 120 day by American Heart Association. We will advise you when we receive clearance on further CPR training.**

FYI: EH&S maintains a database of expiration dates of your disposable AED supplies (pads - every two years, and batteries - every 5 years). Several sites are currently due new pads and/or batteries, please be on the lookout for these items in the next couple of weeks being sent via pony. **Once received, replace old items with new ones.**

Burrowing Owls - Reminder

If you have, or previously noticed **owls** at your location, please check to see if the owls are still there or if they have shifted location and **notify Environmental Health & Safety immediately at 754-321-4200.** This is critical, especially if you find that the owls have chosen to relocate to a spot that is more “inconvenient” (i.e. sport fields, playgrounds and/or sandy spots in parking lots etc.).



EH&S' Updates on Savings and Projects



Energy Conservations and Utility Management

- *With a number of the District's schools closed and the continuation of the mandatory 4 day work week for Employees, the **District's Utility savings were more than 8 million dollars for FY 2020***
 - *Working closely with DSOC to develop a more efficient work-order process in order to minimize gaps in finding/resolving issues related to schools' network and security*
 - *Two (2) new **Gym lights LED retrofit** (Crystal Lake MS and Lauderdale Lakes MS) currently in the Bldg Dept for review and permit*
 - *Performance Contracting (PC) projects for **9 schools currently in the process of being permitted for LED lighting and water conservation***
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Something to Think About . . .

A recent NETSPEED Learning Solutions Newsletter, August 2020, opens with, **“We are working in unprecedented times.”**

True, no great revelation there.... However, the author, Cynthia Clay, President/CEO goes on to share observations that merit sharing regarding response to CHANGE, which is especially valuable during this period that is so different than anything most of us have ever experienced.

Whether we like it or not, our ability to “change” in response to our environment is what allows us as a species to survive and thrive; that, and our ability to influence other members of our species.

The article is called **“Resistance and Creativity”**. The following is an excerpt...

. . . The truth is that creative solutions often emerge from adversity. **Developing the habit of looking for opportunities during changing conditions allows us to pivot to the future.** I have noticed that **when I resist change, I attempt to hang on to the way things used to be, even though returning to “normal” may never be possible.** When I embrace the changing circumstances, I look at the new conditions and ask, “What can I create or build now?”

Here are some powerful questions I have been asking myself these days:

- **What changes am I resisting?**
- **How is my resistance preventing me from moving forward?**
- **How is my resistance creating anger or dissatisfaction in my life?**
- **What if the changes happening right now are exactly the right changes needed for my continued growth and development?**
- **If I let go of my resistance, what possibilities or opportunities do I see? How can I capitalize on those opportunities?**

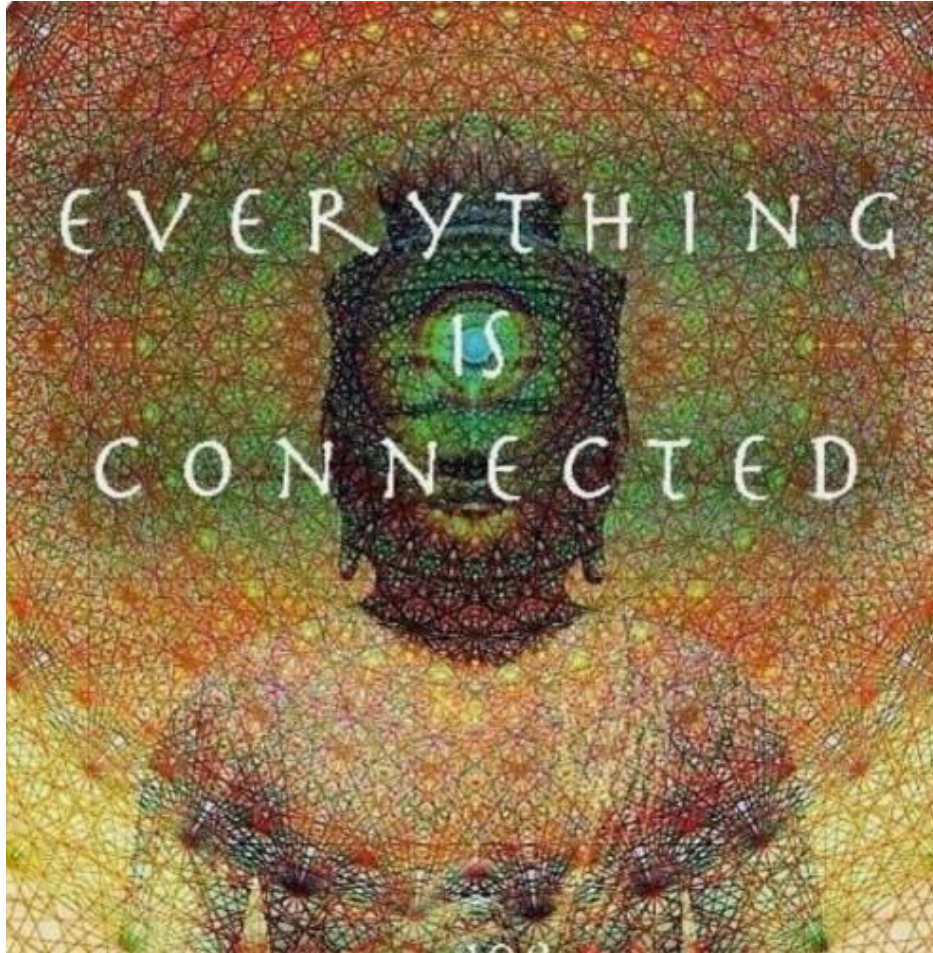


This might be the right time to embrace the development of new skills in areas that might enhance your future career..."

Our District has ramped up the use of a new software platform (TEAMS) and made a rapid shift to virtual learning (CANVAS). If you have been successful as an experienced classroom trainer or facilitator, the challenge of transitioning your talents to an online platform may feel daunting. However, go with the flow, it will come. The more you engage, the easier it gets. There are a variety of resources out there that can help in making this a successful transition. The virtual workplace is the new "normal" and we are doing this together.

"Change" it's your "choice" - Sucking on Lemons or a cool drink of Lemonade?





Contact Environmental Health & Safety 754-321-4200

website: <https://www.browardschools.com/Domain/13473>