

# NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

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**Dr. Kerry Parker**  
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear NMPS Family,

Our Leadership Team and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) support staff are reaching out today to acknowledge the turmoil and pain many have experienced as a result of the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and police killings of many other unarmed Black people over time. These deaths and the ensuing violence can be confusing for children and may leave adults wondering how best to support them. The unrest in our country, coupled with the traumatic effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, are challenging to the emotional wellbeing of our entire school community. We want you to know our school administrators, school counselors, social workers, and psychologists are available should you or your child wish to speak to one of us.

Throughout this year we have focused on four elements of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Program, which are Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness, and Compassion in Action. Perhaps there has been no greater need for us to model and practice each of these for our children than right now. We can't ignore the fact that many of our students and adult family and friends are trying to understand the recent actions of policemen, protesters, civic leaders, and others. The one thing we might all be able to agree on is that we are dealing with a very complex problem. It is our responsibility as educators to work with parents to help our young people to continue their journey towards creating a better, safer, kinder world for all Americans. The Choose Love Program is doing this!

With summer break on the horizon, we have compiled a list of community and web-based supports to assist you in gaining knowledge, talking with your child about racism and social justice, as well as community-based, mental health resources. These resources can also be found on the Family Resources page on our district website.

Our schools will continue to provide developmentally appropriate social emotional assistance through various curricula, programs, and resources; but most of all by drawing upon the strength of the relationships built as a school community. As we plan for the new school year, we are striving to create an even more comprehensive social emotional perspective in our schools to assist them with the greater needs that are anticipated. Our mental health staff and administrative team are committed to ensuring that the school community's social emotional needs are met. We stand together with you as a supportive, caring New Milford community.

*Kerry Parker and the District Leadership and Social/Emotional Learning Teams*

## **Webinars for Students**

School-based Health Alliance is featuring two upcoming webinars in the coming weeks:

<https://www.sbh4all.org/events>. Two events for Youth to be able to speak up about their thoughts the pandemic and racial injustice- conversations on how to adapt and move forward and “Be the change”

## **Racial Justice Resources**

[www.revelationsineducation.com](http://www.revelationsineducation.com)

[www.acalltomen.org](http://www.acalltomen.org)

Non-fiction anti-racist resource list: [www.publishersweekly.com](http://www.publishersweekly.com)

[www.readbrightly.com](http://www.readbrightly.com)

Recommended books for children about race (divided by age group): <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/arts-and-culture/g32743703/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-racism-books/>

Lists of children’s books on various subjects related to racism, social justice, self-concept, and diversity: <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature>

## **Support for Families**

New Milford Youth Agency: <http://youthagency.org/> 860-210-2030

Connecticut State Department of Education: <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Press-Room/Press-Releases/2020/Moving-Forward-Together>

Center for Children’s Advocacy: <https://cca-ct.org/racial-justice/>

Connecticut Children’s Medical Center (discussing race and social justice with your child): <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/developmental-pediatrics/discussing-racial-inequality-and-social-justice-with-children/>

Suggestions on how to talk with children about bias and diversity: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-young-children-social-justice-jinnie-spiegler>

Craft and activity ideas to spark natural conversations about identity and race: <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/thinking-about-social-justice-through-crafts-and>

<http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/>

## **Local Mental Health Resources**

Fortitude Center: <http://www.fortitude-center.com/> 860-799-5750

Family and Children’s Aid, New Milford: <http://www.fcaweb.org/> 860-354-8556

Interface Center: <https://interfacecenter.org/> 860-354-5116

Time for a Change LLC: 860-210-1795

New Milford Counseling Center: <https://newmilfordcounselingcenter.com/new-milford-counseling-center/> 860-740-2228

New Milford Hospital, Behavioral Health  
Services: <https://www.newmilfordhospital.org/departments/new-milford-hospital-behavioral-and-mental-health> 860-354-3762