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Public Health Metrics and Guidance

- COVID-19 metrics to focus on: number of cases; number of deaths; disproportionate deaths; hospitalizations; 14-day decline in cases; test positivity rate
- All these key metrics have been trending down in Massachusetts in contrast to other states who opened too soon without enough precautions
- Most impactful actions: handwashing; wearing masks; social distancing; testing and contact tracing
- School Re-opening: What needs to be in place to make it as safe as possible?
 - Classroom configuration: 3-6 feet of distancing
 - Masks- look for ways to help children wear them all day especially on buses
 - Ensure enough hot water, soap, and space to wash hands frequently
 - Measures to protect teachers and school staff – 20% of teachers in state over age 60
 - Good data collection on positive cases and contact tracing
 - Mental health services: Adequate intervention for youth who will return with trauma

Lessons Learned and Best Practices for Agencies

- Follow recommendations of public health professionals- seek advice from local experts if needed
- Good communication with staff, volunteers and those using services about expectations and reasons behind them is key – all need to feel it is safe to return
- Train staff and volunteers on protocols – virtual with recording for those who cannot attend
- Ensure that adequate supplies of masks and hand sanitizer are available for those entering the building
- Create a reopening team that includes representatives of all departments
- Put your plan in writing and be willing to change the plan based on virus data and staff feedback
- If services can be effectively provided virtually, continue virtually for now – address technology gaps
- Prioritize which staff should return to the office – those whose jobs cannot be done remotely

Looking Forward – How Will Practices Shift

- Program delivery - Clients come to office by appointment only as a way to control numbers in the building
- Partnerships - Crisis has forced more collaboration between agencies that needs to continue
- Fundraising
 - Some opportunities like in-person events may not be available in near future
 - New opportunities are possible – i.e. virtual galas
 - Need to be realistic when projecting budgets