

Dealing with Mental Health Concerns During the COVID 19 Pandemic

The COVID 19 pandemic has changed many people's daily lives. It is common for children and adults to experience feelings of stress, anxiety, fear and uncertainty during times like this. If you or someone in your family is struggling; please take a moment to visit one or more of these links for helpful information on coping and how to get help if you need more support.

Resources for Managing Anxiety, Stress, and Mental Health during COVID 19 Pandemic:

- Overview Managing Stress and Anxiety:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- Talking to Children about COVID 19:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>
- Children and COVID 19:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/children.html>
- Teens, Mental Health, and COVID 19:
<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-teenagers-can-protect-their-mental-health-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Self Care: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>
- Brochure Coping With Disaster:
https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/pdf/Coping_with_Disaster.pdf
- Kids Informational Brochure:
https://f5756585-7585-427a-ad65-2c4640fcd142.filesusr.com/ugd/580d9c_993b451466a1436c88bd3f540bac1976.pdf
- Parent Informational Brochure:
https://f5756585-7585-427a-ad65-2c4640fcd142.filesusr.com/ugd/580d9c_d9fae6feb70e401899d1f523df16af3d.pdf
- Coping Skills Tool box:
<https://www.bcbe.org/cms/lib/AL01901374/Centricity/Domain/1760/Coping%20Skills%20Toolkit.pdf>

Videos for Parents:

- <https://globalnews.ca/video/rd/0aa49c2a-6aed-11ea-9c99-0242ac110002/?jwsource=cl>
- <https://youtu.be/IsJus1R15Ds>

Videos for Kids:

- Color Monster- A story about Emotions: <https://youtu.be/PWujGPb6mgo>
- Little Children, Big Challenges:
<https://www.cfchildren.org/resources/sesame-street-little-children-big-challenges/general-resilience/>

Dealing with Mental Health Concerns During the COVID 19 Pandemic

- Breathing Exercise: <https://youtu.be/UxbdX-ScOOo>
- Corona Virus for Kids: <https://youtu.be/kiVpWZBXLug>

If you or someone you know are struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues, there are ways to get help. Here are a few good places to start looking for professional mental health support.

Getting Help with Mental Health:

- Contact your doctor or existing mental health care provider. They may be able to meet with you via phone or video session, or refer you to additional resources.
- Washington County Crisis Line is available for immediate emergent mental health and Behavioral concerns: 503-291-9111
- National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Hotline- 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273- 8255:
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- Kids Help Line: 1-800-55-1800 <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

In addition to mental health needs, we recognize that our community members still need access to food and shelter. We are working to provide food service to our students; as well as linking families with resources through Washington County.

Food Resources:

- Banks School District is working to provide breakfast and lunch to children ages 1-18. Pickup will be at Banks Elementary School from 10-12 daily beginning week of March 30th.
- Forest Grove School District also has food available for children ages 1-18:
<https://www.fgsdk12.org/apps/news/article/1188215>
- Banks Community Food Bank: 503-647-5511
- Forest Grove 4 Square Church Food Bank:503-357-4400
- SVDP St. Anthony Food Bank: 503-357-9647
- Forest Grove Spanish SDA Food Bank: 503-430-1859
- Washington County Oregon: <https://www.co.washington.or.us/covid-19> -or call- 211

Rent/Housing/ Financial Resources:

- Washington County Oregon: <https://www.co.washington.or.us/covid-19> -or call- 211

If you need assistance accessing these resources, please contact

Dealing with Mental Health Concerns During the COVID 19 Pandemic

Leann Gallien at leanng@banks.k12.or.us or 503-324-3111 ext: 3124

General Q&A Regarding COVID 19 and Children's Mental Health:

Q: Can you provide some tips for maintaining mental and emotional health during this crisis?

A: Health officials acknowledge that feelings of anxiety and stress are normal during times like these. Social distancing is critical to physical health, both for individuals and to protect the health of our community and our frontline responders. But mental health professionals suggest that it's important to continue to make safe social connections at this time. Safe connections might include: regular phone calls, group texts, FaceTime, email, going on walks with household family members, time with a family pet and more.

Q: Do you have tips for helping children manage stress and anxiety?

- Meet children's concerns with validation, compassion
- Listen carefully to their concerns and learn where they heard their information. Validate their fears by saying something like, *"It can be frightening when a new illness comes around that we don't know everything about."*
- Maintaining a routine can provide children a sense of security. Keeping a usual schedule – including school, activities and chores – will protect mental and physical health.
- Stick to developmentally appropriate facts
- Reassure kids by empowering them
- Telling kids how they can help provides a sense of agency and can turn anxiety into an actionable goal.
- Emphasize kindness
- Remember to model positive behavior

Q: How about tips for parents?

- Remain calm and reassuring: If true, emphasize to your children that they and your family are fine.
- Make yourself available: Let your children talk and give them plenty of time and attention.
- Talk to children in language they can understand: The CDC suggests telling children that, from what doctors have seen so far, most kids aren't getting very sick. In fact,

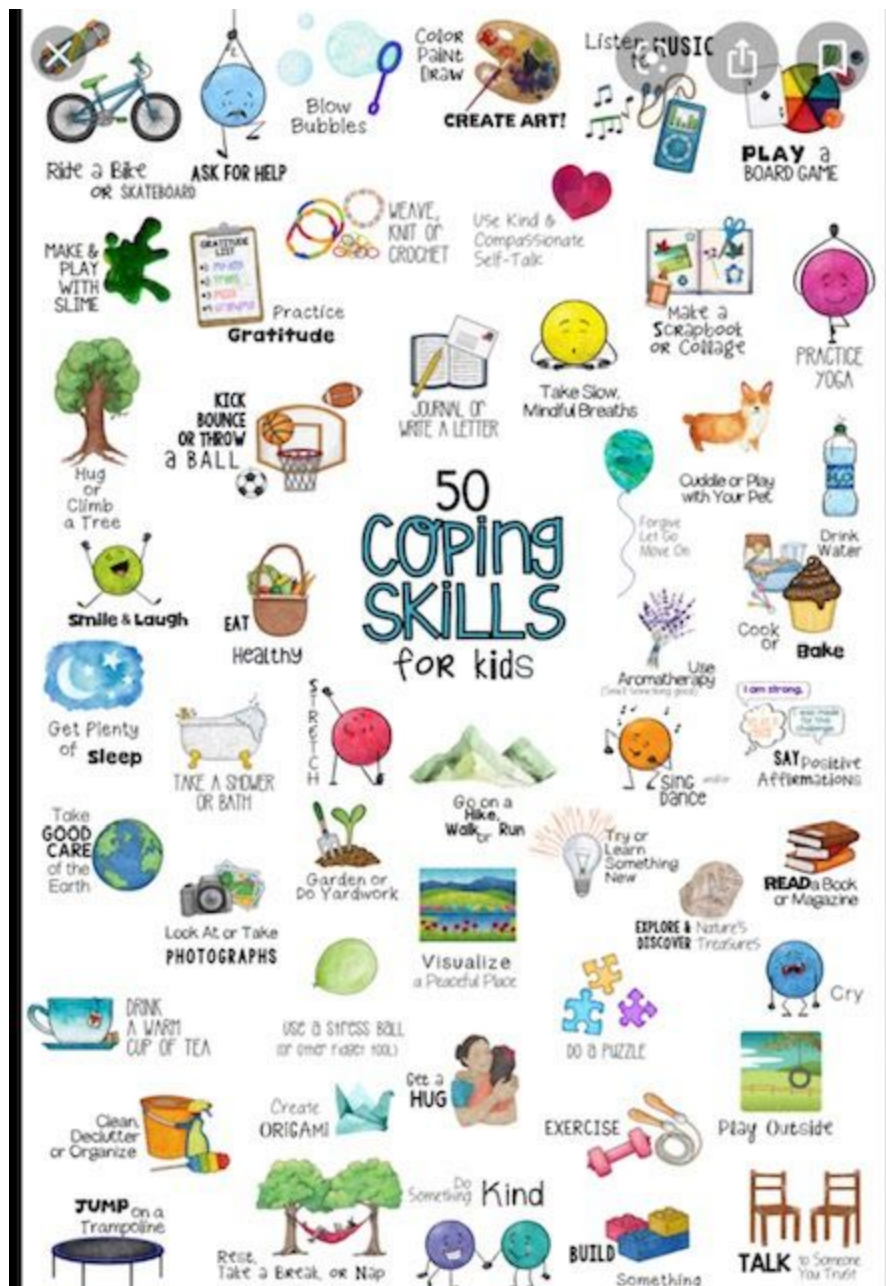
Dealing with Mental Health Concerns During the COVID 19 Pandemic

most people who have gotten COVID-19 haven't gotten very sick. Only a small group have had serious problems. Keep the conversation going. Make time to check in regularly as the situation develops. Take cues from your child if they become afraid or overwhelmed offer comfort. If you need help, seek professional health.

- Avoid language that stigmatizes or assigns blame: Remind children that viruses can make anyone sick, regardless of a person's race, ethnicity or national origin.
- Monitor television viewing and social media: Try to limit children's exposure to media and talk about what they're seeing. Use only reliable sources of information.
- Maintain healthy behaviors and household routines: Serve nutritious meals, encourage adequate sleep and exercise, and maintain household routines to the extent possible.
- Teach strategies to prevent infection: Remind children to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds (or the length of two "Happy Birthday" songs) when they come in from outside, before they eat, and after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the bathroom.

Dealing with Mental Health Concerns During the COVID 19 Pandemic

Many of these suggestions still apply while practicing social distancing, while others may need to be adjusted. Encourage your child (and maybe even yourself) to try out some of these skills each day!



15 PRACTICAL WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH



01 Each night before bed help your child to write down 3 good things they have achieved



02 If your child is experiencing a worry why not try to problem solve and think of all possible solutions with them



03 Work through some deep breathing with your child. Try teaching them ratio breathing



04 Set aside a time each day for your child to allow themselves to experience their worries



05 Develop a thought diary where your child can write down their thoughts and reflect on them



06 Help your child to try and use imagery to imagine themselves in a calm relaxing and happy environment



07 Exercise is a great way to reduce stress and boost mood



08 Use an activity diary or calendar to schedule in some fun and pleasurable activities with your child



09 Progressive muscle relaxation is great for helping your child to reduce tension



10 Develop a gratitude jar. Each time you are grateful for something write it down and put it in the jar



11 Help your child identify their feelings by using a mood chart. They can either write down their feelings or draw something to express how they feel



12 Involve them with what you are doing. Why not allow them to help you cook or bake



13 Engage in play and fun activities with your child. Allow them to be creative with art



14 Ask your child to take photos of things they are grateful for each week



15 When your child experiences an unhelpful thought, sit down with them and help them to challenge it

 @BELIEVEPHQ



Dealing with Mental Health Concerns During the COVID 19 Pandemic

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH

@BELIEVEPHQ www.BelievePerform.com

- LOVE**
Be there for your child and show care and love
- EXERCISE**
Encourage play, exercise and sport
- BEHAVIOUR**
Keep an eye out for any changes in behaviour
- SUPPORT**
Regularly support, encourage and praise your child
- REST TIME**
Help your child to manage stress by building in some rest time
- BE PROUD**
Tell your child that you are proud of them
- PATIENCE**
Be patient. Don't pressure your child
- HELP**
Don't be afraid to seek help from professionals
- FEELING**
Get to know how your child is feeling
- EDUCATE**
Educate yourself about mental health problems
- PROBLEM SOLVING**
Help your child to effectively problem solve
- LISTEN**
Make sure you take time to listen to what your child has to say
- COPING**
Help your child to learn some simple coping skills such as relaxation
- SYMPTOMS**
Be aware of signs and symptoms
- CONVERSATION**
Encourage your child to engage in conversation
- ENVIRONMENT**
Provide a positive environment for your child where they can thrive