

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR HOME

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Remain calm and reassuring.

- Children will react to and follow your verbal and nonverbal reactions.
- What you say and do about COVID-19, current prevention efforts, and related events can either increase or decrease your children's anxiety.
- If true, emphasize to your children that they and your family are fine.
- Let your children talk about their feelings and help reframe their concerns into the appropriate perspective.

Make yourself available.

- Children may need extra attention from you and may want to talk about their concerns, fears, and questions.
- It is important that they know they have someone who will listen to them; make time for them.
- Tell them you love them and give them plenty of affection.

Avoid excessive blaming.

- When tensions are high, sometimes we try to blame someone.
- It is important to avoid stereotyping any one group of people as responsible for the virus.
- Be aware of any comments that other adults are having around your family. You may have to explain what comments mean if they are different from the values that you have at home.

Monitor television viewing and social media.

- Limit television viewing or access to information on the Internet and through social media. Try to avoid watching or listening to information that might be upsetting when your children are present.
- Speak to your child about how many stories about COVID-19 on the Internet may be based on rumors and inaccurate information
- Talk to your child about factual information of this disease—this can help reduce anxiety.
- Constantly watching updates on the status of COVID-19 can increase anxiety—avoid this. Have children continue to follow consistent bed-time and wake-up times/routines.

Create a new structure and routine.

- Remain consistent with mealtimes.
- Maintain boundaries around screen time.
- Get up and move and move as much as possible! Get fresh air.
- Explain that proactive measures are being taken to protect our greater community.
- Engage your child in games or other interesting activities instead.

Be honest and accurate.

- In the absence of factual information, children often imagine situations far worse than reality.

- Don't ignore their concerns, but rather explain that at the present moment very few people in this country are sick with COVID-19.
- Children can be told this disease is thought to be spread between people who are in close contact with one another—when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- It is also thought it can be spread when you touch an infected surface or object, which is why it is so important to protect yourself by washing your hands frequently with soap and water.
- For additional factual information contact your school nurse, ask your doctor, or review updates at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Know the symptoms of COVID-19.

- The CDC believes the following symptoms appear a few days after being exposed to someone with the disease or as long as 14 days after exposure:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness for breath
- For some people the symptoms are like having a cold; for others they are quite severe or even life threatening. In either case it is important to check with your child's healthcare provider (or yours) and follow instructions about staying home or away from public spaces to prevent the spread of the virus.

Review and model basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices for protection.

- Encourage your child to practice everyday good hygiene—simple steps to prevent spread of illness:
- Wash hands multiple times a day for at least 20 seconds (singing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star slowly takes about 20 seconds).
 - Cover your mouths with a tissue when you sneeze or cough and throw away the tissue immediately, or sneeze or cough into the bend of your elbow. Do not share food or drinks.
 - Practice giving elbow bumps instead of handshakes. Fewer germs are spread this way.
- Giving children guidance on what they can do to prevent infection gives them a greater sense of control over disease spread and will help to reduce their anxiety.
- Encourage your child to eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly; this will help them develop a strong immune system to fight off illness.
- Engage in social distancing whenever possible!
- Mitigation efforts like social distancing help reduce the disease caseload on any given date, and can keep the healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed. Please stay home and away from others when at all possible. Help flatten the curve!



What To Do When We Don't Know What to Do

Calming Strategies for Students:

1. Talk to about your feelings to an adult or someone you trust
2. Move your body
3. Draw or color
4. Engage in an activity that distracts you and makes you feel positive
5. Listen to music
6. Take a deep breath

1. Stretch your hand like a star
2. Trace your fingers with index
3. Inhale up, exhale down
4. Notice your breath

Take 5 Breathing



Helpful Websites for Meditation and/or Mindfulness :

1. Calm
<https://www.calm.com/schools>
2. Go Noodle
<https://www.gonoodle.com/blog/using-gonoodle-to-calm-your-noodle/>
3. Stop, Breathe, Think for Kids
<https://www.stopbreathethink.com/kids/>
4. Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/breathe-think-do-with-sesame/id721853597?mt=8>
[Belly Breathing with Elmo](#)
5. UCLA Free Guided Meditations
<https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations>

Things to do at home to keep busy:

1. Exercise:
 - Go for a walk/hike and get fresh air
 - Go for a run
 - Dance in the living room
2. Create something
 - Draw/paint
 - Use recyclable materials to make new things.
 - Make sock puppets
 - Knit
3. Plant seeds / Start a garden.
4. Bake something!
5. Have kids write and send letters to family members.
6. Read together.
7. Play board games.
8. Do science projects with household items.
9. Journal.

Community Resources

1. 211:
 - General information about Covid-19
 - Mobile Crisis
 - Connection with basic-need resources
2. Middletown City Website updates on Covid-19
<https://www.middletownct.gov/1123/2019-Coronavirus-COVID-19>
3. [FREE WEBINAR March 18, 3:30 p.m.: Supporting Student Stress, Anxiety, and Mental Health During COVID-19](#)