

School Social Work Newsletter

April 2020

MENTAL HEALTH AND COPING DURING CORONAVIRUS

REACTIONS YOU MAY FEEL INCLUDE:

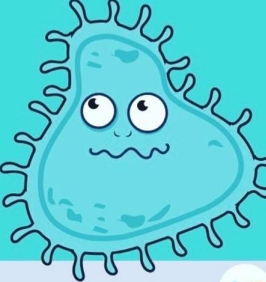
- Fear and worry about your own health status and that of your loved ones.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.


THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOURSELF:

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of Coronavirus.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
- Connect with others and share your concerns and how you are feeling with friends or family members.
- Maintain healthy relationships.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR WELLBEING:

- Connect with people
- Decide on your routine
- Try to keep active
- Keep your mind stimulated
- Take care with news and information
- Find ways to relax and be creative





These are challenging times and almost everything about our daily lives suddenly looks very different. Families may be struggling to balance work, distance learning, child care, and self care all while keeping your families' worries under control. It is common to feel stressed or anxious during this time. Even when you don't have full control of a situation, there are things you can do to help your family cope.

Here are a few ideas and actions you can take, to protect your family's mental health through these unusual and unprecedented times.

Maintain Connections

If you are self-quarantining with loved ones, did you know that a 20 second hug does

wonders? Oxytocin (the "cuddle hormone") is released, a hormone that relaxes us and lowers anxiety. When it's released during these 20-second hugs it can effectively lower blood pressure and reduce the stress hormone norepinephrine. (Air high fives and fist bumps work too!)

Phone a friend (or family member) - but text them first to make sure it's okay! Not a fan of phone calls? Write a letter or send a card to friends/loved ones. Nothing better than some handwritten snail mail!

Even the most introverted of us need some sense of connection from others to maintain our mental (and physical) health. Although we are in social isolation, we need to not feel alone.

Incorporate Mindfulness

Right now much of the personal time that was part of our daily routine is not available. It's important to be intentional about creating a time and space to recharge and make it a priority! Scheduling a time each day (5-20 minutes) to practice mindfulness is a great place to start. Keep it simple!

Try deep breathing, exercising, meditation or whatever works for you. You can even try mindful eating or mindful drinking during your morning coffee. Just sit and ENJOY being present in that moment. Having this

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time to practice mindfulness can truly set the tone for the whole day.

Here are some mindfulness activities for young children:

Blowing bubbles. Have your kids focus on taking in a deep, slow breath, and exhaling steadily to fill the bubble. ...

Pinwheels. Use the same tactics from blowing bubbles to encourage mindful attention on the pinwheels.

Playing with balloons. ...

Texture bag. ...

Blindfolded taste tests.

Notice 5 Things. Help your child to notice 5 things they can see, hear, smell, or touch.

Draw your emotions. Have your child pay attention to how they're feeling and try to express it through drawing.

MANAGING CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) ANXIETY

For You

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage
- Connect through calls/text/internet
- Add extra time for daily stress relief
- Practice self-care
- Focus on your mental health

For Kids

- Reassure them that they're safe
- Let them talk about their worries
- Share your own coping skills
- Limit their news exposure
- Create a routine & structure

For Quarantine/Isolation

- Keep in contact with your loved ones via social media, texts, and phone calls
- Create a daily self-care routine
- Keep yourself busy: games, books, movies
- Focus on new relaxation techniques

Have questions about **COVID-19**?
We have answers



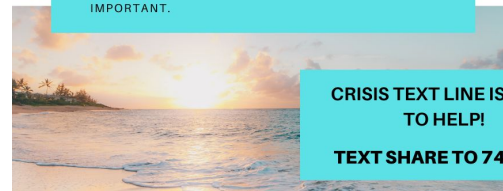
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the whatsapp number



World Health Organization

TIPS FOR CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY

- WASH YOUR HANDS AND REDUCE TIME SPENT IN PUBLIC SPACES.
- MODERATE NEWS INTAKE. LIMIT EXPOSURE TO MASS HYSTERIA ONLINE.
- IF WORKING FROM HOME OR IN SELF-QUARANTINE, ARRANGE YOUR SPACE SO IT CALMING.
- PRACTICE DEEP BREATHING EXERCISES OR OTHER METHODS OF MEDITATION.
- REACH OUT FOR HELP: YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IS ALSO IMPORTANT.




CRISIS TEXT LINE IS HERE TO HELP!
TEXT SHARE TO 741741

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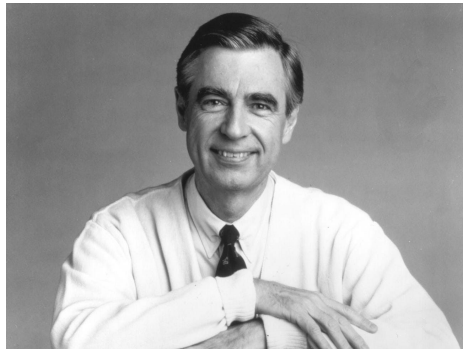
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Why The Coronavirus Is Triggering Mental Health Issues:

Despair	Mindset switch from "living" to "survival"	Triggers feelings of hopelessness
Increased health anxiety		Decreased job security
Fear for loved ones lives		Promotes social withdrawal
Decreased financial security		Loneliness

Quarantine makes it more difficult to distract oneself from existing mental health issues

 Coronavirus isn't just threatening our physical health, but our mental health too. Look after it. Please share to raise awareness.  @RealDepressionProject



Comforting Reminders from Mr. Rogers
"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

Please let us know if we can be of assistance to you during this unprecedented time.

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April 20, 2020