

## SMT Mental Health Resources for Families Amid School Closure

Dear Parents,

**We know this is a challenging time for everyone and we appreciate your continued patience and support. The following information may be useful in coping with these circumstances.**

- ❖ Children will look to you to know how to react and to see if they should be worried. Try to stay calm.
- ❖ If they are anxious, validate their feelings ("I know you are worried") and then add reassurance ("and here's why you are safe...")
- ❖ If young children sense that you are concerned, you can acknowledge that you have some worries but that all is well at home.
- ❖ If young children are unaware of the current coronavirus, there is no need to give them details.
- ❖ Answer questions about the epidemic with facts but without drama. Let children's questions be your guide to developmentally appropriate responses.
- ❖ Older children may want to talk about the epidemic or watch news reports. Limit TV/internet news for Middle School students. Discourage Lower School students from watching the news.
- ❖ Encourage the continuation of daily routines.
- ❖ Some children may revert to outgrown behaviors in response to being upset (such as: separation anxiety, clinginess, reluctance to leave parents and comfort zones, sleep troubles).
- ❖ Remember that temporary worry and fear are all normal reactions.
- ❖ For more detailed information, please refer to the following resources:

### **Perspectives on the Coronavirus (for Parents)**

- 5 Ways to View Coverage of COVID-19 – American Psychological Association
  - <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/pandemics>
- Updates on Coronavirus that may be especially helpful to individuals with mental illness - NAMI
  - <https://nami.org/About-NAMI/NAMI-News/2020/NAMI-Updates-on-the-Coronavirus>
- Coping with Stress During an Outbreak – SAMHSA
  - <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4885.pdf>
- Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health During an Outbreak – SAMHSA
  - <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4894.pdf>

### **Talking to Your Child/ren about COVID-19 the Coronavirus**

- How to Talk to Your Kids - PBS Kids – by Deborah Farmer Kris
  - <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

- How to Talk to Your Child – KidsHealth from Nemours
  - <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>
- Talking to Your Child: A Parent Resource – National Association of School Psychologists
  - [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)
- Comic on Corona for Kids – NPR
  - <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>
- Video for Children Explaining COVID-19 – Brain Pop
  - <https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>
- Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>
- Guidance and Resource for Households
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/index.html>

### **Tips from the CDC**

- Creating Structure and Rules for Your Child
  - This is a quick video outlining a few helpful steps for parents who are not usually home with children 7 days a week
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPEm7khwoKk>
- Managing Anxiety & Stress
  - A webpage that outlines typical reactions individuals may experience during this time; scroll down to find the section “For Parents”
    - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
  - Webpage on helping children cope with emergencies
    - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

## Daily Schedule for Younger Children

# COVID-19 DAILY SCHEDULE

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Before 9:00am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, put PJ's in laundry
9:00-10:00	Morning walk	Family walk with the dog Yoga if it's raining
10:00-11:00	Academic time	NO ELECTRONICS Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal
11:00-12:00	Creative time	Legos, magnatiles, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or bake, etc
12:00	Lunch	
12:30PM	Chore time	A- wipe all kitchen table and chairs. B - wipe all door handles, light switches, and desk tops. C - Wipe both bathrooms - sinks and toilets
1:00-2:30	Quiet time	Reading, puzzles, nap
2:30-4:00	Academic time	ELECTRONICS OK Ipad games, Prodigy, Educational show
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air	Bikes, Walk the dog, play outside
5:00-6:00	Dinner	
6:00-8:00	Free TV time	Kid showers x3
8:00	Bedtime	All kids
9:00PM	Bedtime	All kids who follow the daily schedule & don't fight

## 101 Ways to De-stress

- This is a general tip sheet of de-stressors to have on hand. Of course, not all of these ideas will work during quarantine but some of them can still be applied to life at home

# 101 Ways to Cope with Stress

- ◆ Simplify meal times
- ◆ Set priorities in life
- ◆ Dance
- ◆ Do it today
- ◆ Use time wisely
- ◆ Look at challenges differently
- ◆ Be aware of the decisions you make
- ◆ Find support from others
- ◆ Memorize a joke
- ◆ Unclutter your life
- ◆ Smile
- ◆ Plant a tree
- ◆ Read a poem
- ◆ Go to a ball game and scream
- ◆ Learn to whistle a tune
- ◆ Say "no" more often
- ◆ Play in the rain
- ◆ Read a story while curled up in bed
- ◆ Go on a picnic
- ◆ Take stock of your achievements
- ◆ Work at being cheerful and optimistic
- ◆ Put on your favorite clothes
- ◆ Feed the birds
- ◆ Strive for excellence NOT perfection
- ◆ Look for the silver lining
- ◆ Schedule play time into every day
- ◆ Get to work or class early
- ◆ Have a support network of people, places, and things
- ◆ Practice preventive maintenance
- ◆ Share a meal with a friend
- ◆ Look up at the stars
- ◆ Prepare for the morning the night before
- ◆ Quit trying to "fix" other people
- ◆ Say hello to a stranger
- ◆ Schedule appointments ahead
- ◆ Recognize the importance of unconditional love
- ◆ Stand up and stretch
- ◆ Stop a bad habit
- ◆ Clean out one closet
- ◆ Put safety first
- ◆ Ask a friend for a hug
- ◆ Repair anything that doesn't work
- ◆ Believe in yourself
- ◆ Look at a work of art
- ◆ Practice grace under pressure
- ◆ Stop saying negative things to yourself
- ◆ Ask for help with the jobs you dislike
- ◆ Always make copies of important papers
- ◆ Know your limitations, and let others know them too

- ◆ Learn the words to a new song
- ◆ Throw a paper airplane
- ◆ Listen to a symphony
- ◆ Stretch your limits a little each day
- ◆ Watch a movie and eat popcorn
- ◆ Fly a kite
- ◆ Name three things you like about yourself
- ◆ Pet a friendly dog or cat
- ◆ Get enough sleep
- ◆ Remember that stress is an attitude
- ◆ Avoid relying on chemical aids
- ◆ Leave work early (with permission)
- ◆ Buy yourself flowers
- ◆ Watch a ballet
- ◆ Put air freshener in your car
- ◆ Avoid negative people
- ◆ Visualize yourself winning
- ◆ Learn to meet your own needs
- ◆ Keep a journal
- ◆ Don't rely on your memory-write it down
- ◆ Take a bubble bath
- ◆ Make a duplicate set of keys (for those "I've lost my keys" moments)
- ◆ Ask someone to be your "vent-partner"
- ◆ Have goals for yourself
- ◆ Practice a monster smile
- ◆ Cook a meal and eat it by candlelight
- ◆ Exercise everyday
- ◆ Get up 15 minutes earlier
- ◆ Read or watch something funny
- ◆ Break large tasks into bite-size ones
- ◆ Become a better listener
- ◆ Anticipate your needs
- ◆ Say something nice to someone
- ◆ Have a plan "B"
- ◆ Remember you always have options
- ◆ Hum your favorite tune
- ◆ Freely praise other people
- ◆ Do something new today
- ◆ Take a different route to work or school or home
- ◆ Be responsible for your feelings
- ◆ Don't know all the answers
- ◆ Tell someone to have a good day
- ◆ Meditate or pray
- ◆ Feel the sun on your face
- ◆ Color, draw, or doodle
- ◆ Do a puzzle
- ◆ Make healthy snacks for tomorrow
- ◆ Go to a yoga class
- ◆ Contact an old friend
- ◆ Take a five-minute break
- ◆ Express gratitude
- ◆ Breathe

BREAKING:

GETTING OUTDOORS **NOT CANCELLED**

MUSIC **NOT CANCELLED**

FAMILY **NOT CANCELLED**

READING **NOT CANCELLED**

SINGING **NOT CANCELLED**

LAUGHING **NOT CANCELLED**

HOPE **NOT CANCELLED**

LET'S EMBRACE WHAT WE **HAVE.**

unsinkable.