

Changes

Dealing with change can be hard. Some people can easily roll with the punches, others not so much. As adults, we are currently experiencing so much change it all feels so overwhelming, just imagine how our children feel! Some young children may not realize (or even care) they are not in school or can't see their friends, but at the same time, cannot understand *why* they can't go to the park or see close family members. For older children, they may be feeling the loss of fun activities such as sports, going to school and most importantly their social life. Our new normal is a 180 degree turn from the way we were living and can cause feelings of constant worry, exhaustion, sadness, loneliness, anger or panic. One way we can learn to cope with some of these feelings is to understand and realize what is and *isn't* in our control. We cannot control how long the Safe at Home order is in place, but we can control what we do with the time we have.



Some ways we can help our children through this major change, and others to come (because life is FULL of changes), are keeping things as much the same as possible such as maintaining consistent morning and nighttime routines and answering any questions they have about what is going on (see video links below for talking to children about the Coronavirus). Expect some regression in behaviors (they will pass, stay the course) and allow for grieving and practice seeing the current situation in a positive light.

**Kids' Sadness About COVID-19
May Look Like:**

Anger "This stupid remote doesn't work!"	Resisting the "new order" "I'm not doing four math problems! I'm only doing one!"	Tiredness "I don't want to go for a walk. I'm too tired!"
Numbing Out ("Just 30 more minutes on the iPad!")	Displaced frustration "I didn't want lasagna for dinner. I wanted tacos!"	Boredom "I'm bored" = code for "I'm sad"

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COVID-19 GOT YOU STRESSED?

Here are some strategies for combating stress and anxiety during the pandemic, provided by the Maxwell Mental Health Clinic

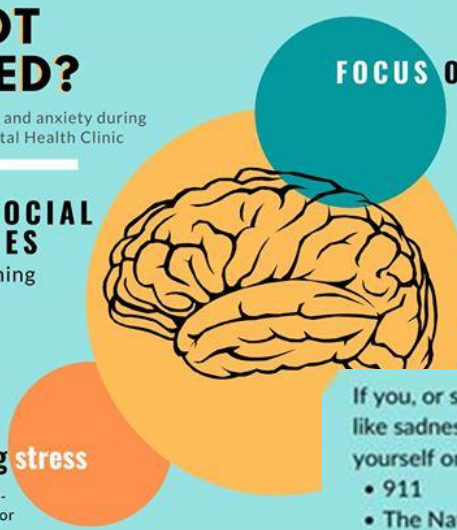
LIMIT EXPOSURE TO SOCIAL MEDIA & NEWS SOURCES

Constant reading/watching/listening about COVID-19 can exacerbate anxiety & stress.

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

It might be helpful to use a sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle. In one column list "Things I Can't Control" and in the other column "Things I Can Control."

You can't control how the virus spreads around you, but you can control your prevention measures.



More resources for managing stress

Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html> for additional guidance and strategies

If you, or someone you know, is feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others, call:

- 911
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

When talking about the Coronavirus to your child the CDC, Kids health org and many other sources suggest listening to what your child is saying (or what they are not saying), answer their questions age appropriately, monitor the media intake and where it is coming from, teach children ways they *can* help stop the spread such as hand hygiene, social distancing, covering any coughs or sneezes and lastly, offer comfort, empathy and honesty.

TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT COVID-19

PROMEDICA
Your Health. Our Mission.

BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Showing empathy and support to those that are ill is a great way to be an example to your children.

WATCH FOR SIGNS OF ANXIETY

Children may have trouble sleeping, act out, or seem distracted. Continuing reassurance and keeping your normal routine can help.

MONITOR THEIR MEDIA

Keep young children away from frightening images they may see on TV, social media, or computers. For older children, talk together about information they may be seeing.

GIVE THEM CONTROL

Give children examples of what they can do to help - washing their hands, covering their cough and getting enough sleep.

SIMPLE REASSURANCE

Remind children that researchers and doctors are learning everything they can about the virus to keep everyone safe.

One more EXTREMELY important aspect of helping children (of all ages) in dealing with change is giving them some extra attention. If you have one or multiple children, give them some

undivided attention to play a game, bake cookies, play a video game, dance or sing a song. This not only forces you to practice your patience, but also reinforces to your child that although things are rapidly changing your love, care and attention will be a constant.

Brain Pop- What is the Corona Virus

<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

The infographic is divided into three vertical columns. The first column is titled 'RELATIONSHIPS' and features an icon of two stylized human figures. Below the icon is a list of three tips: 'Group activities—games, cooking, etc.', 'Connect with teachers and peers', and 'Give to others in need'. The second column is titled 'ROUTINES' and features an icon of a clipboard with a checklist and a pencil. Below the icon is a list of five tips: 'Eat meals together', 'Exercise at least 20 minutes', 'Hold family COVID meetings', 'Sleep at least eight hours', and 'Practice mindfulness'. The third column is titled 'RESILIENCE' and features an icon of a human head profile with a jagged line graph and an arrow pointing upwards. Below the icon is a list of five tips: 'Co-regulate emotions and responses to stress', 'Limit media', 'Solve problems together', and 'Create things to look forward to'. At the bottom left of the infographic is the URL 'turnaroundusa.org' and at the bottom right is the logo for 'TURNAROUND FOR CHILDREN'.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Group activities—games, cooking, etc.
- Connect with teachers and peers
- Give to others in need

ROUTINES

- Eat meals together
- Exercise at least 20 minutes
- Hold family COVID meetings
- Sleep at least eight hours
- Practice mindfulness

RESILIENCE

- Co-regulate emotions and responses to stress
- Limit media
- Solve problems together
- Create things to look forward to

turnaroundusa.org

TURNAROUND FOR CHILDREN

How to talk to your child about the Corona Virus

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=45&v=WhVad8ToCiU&feature=emb_logo

Signs of Anxiety

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubDvUAFD6ps>

Storybots immune system

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBKvbQ12X1U>

Managing anxiety

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7g8Atv27Q8>

Parent Tip

Parents, as we enter the third week of distance learning it is normal to feel as though things will never return to normal. For many, this is a less than ideal situation but hopefully the resources

shared with you will make this new reality a bit more bearable. To recap, some ways we can cope with all this change are:

- Understand your own anxiety
- Stay informed (reputable sources and just check-in, don't obsess)
- Focus things you can control
- Stay connected (through phone calls and virtual meetings)
- Take care of body and mind
- Help someone else
- Ask for help ([Crisis Hotlines](#))
 - [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) – Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
 - [Crisis Text Line](#) – Text HOME to 741741 to speak with a trained Crisis Counselor. Also available in the UK and Canada.
 - [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) – If you're feeling suicidal, please call 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
 - [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)-Isolated at home in an abusive situation and need help? Call 1-800-799-7233.

