

COVID-19 CAREGIVER CHECKLIST #3 – PREVENT THE SPREAD

As a caregiver, it is important to protect the person you care for but also to protect yourself. It is essential to follow all precautions to limit exposure as well as any risk of transmitting the virus.

Wash Hands Regularly and Thoroughly: Wash your hands regularly and ask the children in your house to do the same especially after sneezing, coughing or being in a public place. To make sure, the family is washing hands thoroughly, you can practice washing together and teach each other a 20-second song. Children are taught the correct length of time to wash their hands, using hard to forget songs like Baby Shark and Happy Birthday. Your generation has music that can help pass the time too, whether it's the beginning of Blue Suede Shoes or Splish Splash I Was Taking a Bath, sing together and share a smile.

Avoid Touching Your Face: Avoid touching your own eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. Remind children of the same. For school-age children, you can make this into a game. For younger children, do your best to have them wash hands regularly after play and before and after eating.

Clean and Disinfect Daily: Focus your daily cleaning and disinfecting on high-touch surfaces in common areas in your home such as tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, and sinks. For small children focus on their most popular toys. For older children, remind them to regularly wipe down their phones, devices and computer keyboards.

Access Technology: Access to the internet is important for getting current up to date information about the Coronavirus and available resources and supports. It is also important for many students who will be doing homework at home and/or distance learning projects and for older adults to stay connected. Consider alternative ways to communicate with loved ones from a distance:

- Check with your phone, cable, and internet providers who may be offering discounts on equipment and services during this crisis.
- With the right equipment, applications like Skype, WhatsApp, and FaceTime can help you communicate using video while maintaining preventive measures.

Limit exposure: Reduce the need to go out by doing your best to ensure enough supplies such as food and medication are available for at least a two-week period, or maybe more. In many cases, you can mail order the medication and use grocery delivery services, as ways to further protect the older adults in the family. Do not invite visitors into the home.

Back-Up Planning: Planning helps reduce panic and anxiety, so communicate a care plan among family members including back-up plans to provide care should the caregiver become ill.

Additional Tips for Grandfamilies and Multi-Generational Families

Many family households are now multi-generational and include parents, children, and grandparents. While grandparents are being advised to isolate themselves physically from grandchildren, it is nearly impossible for older caregivers to distance themselves from the children they are raising. Today's challenges are making it much tougher to care for them. It's important to stay calm and do everything you can to stay healthy, informed and connected. Here are a few suggestions.

Stay Informed: The Ohio Department of Health has up to date, accurate information and recommendations about COVID-19. <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/>. For information specifically to help grandfamilies, contact your local kinship navigator or other grandfamilies support programs. Visit www.grandfamilies.org for a list of local programs.

Schools and Childcare Centers: Schools and childcare centers are working on solutions to ensure children get access to the food they need. Find out what your school's plans are and how you can access it for your children and, in some cases, for you too.

Stay Connected: Staying home doesn't mean you need to disconnect from friends, family, and other supports. If you are part of a grandparent support group, consider moving your meetings to conference calls or through technologies such as Google hangout. If it's not possible to connect the group, make individual calls to members to check in on each other. If there are other children and teens those in your care connect with during the regular meeting, encourage them to connect through technology. For more ideas check out Generations United's blog <https://buff.ly/3aJN2z8>.

Stay Connected: Utilize resources and activities for children at home.

- <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/4-h/learning-links-4-h-and-more/>
- <http://www.amazingeducationalresources.com/>
- <https://caribu.com/>