



Youth & Family FOCUS

MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION FROM SUMMIT POINTE

While many individuals will try to avoid exposure to COVID-19 by staying inside or working from home, this new "normal" presents a number of new challenges to everyone's daily routine. Social distancing and isolation measures can be effective methods of preventing the spread of the disease,



but the economic, social, and subsequent mental health impacts of these strategies must be recognized and targeted early in order to maintain health while enduring the current pandemic. A group that is particularly vulnerable includes families and children. For caregivers, sheltering in place often requires balancing work responsibilities, childcare, and self-care (for themselves and their children).

Not only will routines change, but families may experience a lack of privacy, personal space, resources, entertainment, and recreation. Furthermore, many families have chosen to shelter together, leading to extended family members (e.g., grandparents, older children, aunts, uncles, or cousins) staying with caregivers and their children. These visitors may require additional support and care, and potentially add an additional layer of financial burden on the heads of households. As a result, caregivers, children, and their family members will experience new and increased stressors as a result of the preventative measures associated with avoiding the spread of COVID-19. Below we hope to provide you with some tools and tips to best support yourself and your family through these times.

What can I do?

Be Proactive. The best strategy for families is to plan ahead. The CDC recommends creating a house checklist and household readiness plan. Consulting your resources and creating a routine to anticipate potential stressors ahead of time can avoid unnecessary conflict, anxiety, and turmoil in the home.



Stay Engaged. Be sure to keep your bodies moving with physical activity, but also stay connected by communicating! Make sure you check in with one another to ensure every member of the family has the support they need. Beyond this, get to know your neighbors to include them in your emergency plan.

Give Space. Be sure to draw boundaries and maintain them. Ensure that all family members have privacy and the ability to "step away" when they need.

Build Structure. As our routines and daily activities continue to be disrupted, it can be extremely helpful to identify new routines for your home and to build a schedule. This is the perfect time to develop a menu, build a chore list, or identify a quiet time in the home for people to keep to themselves.

Find New Connections. Spend time with your loved ones learning new things about them and participating in family activities such as board games, home improvement projects, or building a family tree.

Ask for Help. This is the time to lean on our communities and support systems. This public health crisis is new for everyone, and will be difficult to navigate. Remember there is no shame in asking for help! These interactions can be to gather information or to participate in an online social support group, please use some of the links below to connect to resources!

Resources (links):

- World Health Organization - #HealthyAtHome Healthy Parenting Guide
- National Association of School Psychologists - Resources to help children cope with changes resulting from COVID-19
- Children's Institute - Parent resources to support the social emotional health for children during COVID-19
- Child Mind Institute - Telehealth, remote support groups, & parent resources for mental health Youth and Families
- National PTA COVID-19 Resources for Families
- Administration for Children & Families COVID-19 Resource List
- CDC Guide for Stress & Coping with COVID-19
- Voices of Youth - Connecting & Supporting Youth Through Art
- www.headspace.com/mi

For More Information:

Summit Pointe: 269/966-1460

24-Hour Crisis: 1/800-632-5449 Youth Crisis: 269/441-5945



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