

# Family Mental Health Preparedness

Some ideas to  
prepare your family  
for the 2020-2021  
school year

The logo for Douglas County School District features a stylized blue figure of a person with arms raised, positioned to the left of the text. The text 'Douglas County' is in a bold, green, sans-serif font, and 'School District' is in a smaller, green, sans-serif font below it.

**Douglas  
County**  
School District

*Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow*

# Adult Mental Health and Well-being Opportunities

- Adults and Parents – put your oxygen mask on first!
  - Self care planning
    - 1st Aid – For the moment
      - Netflix
      - Ice Cream
      - Bubble Bath
    - For prolonged wellness –
      - Balanced Health – Physical, Mental, and Emotional
      - Develop a Response Plan
        - Identify triggers/behaviors that set you off
        - What will help you regulate?
          - Before:
          - During:
          - After:



# Build Community: Cultivate and Deepen Relationships

- Engage with family members
- Family Circles/Dinner Table
- All voices heard and respected
- Acknowledge anxiety/fear/concern/different perspectives



# Family Circle/Meeting Questions

1. What have you been thinking or feeling as this crisis unfolds?
2. What are your thoughts about: physical distancing, changes in our jobs, not seeing friends, etc.?
3. What has been the hardest thing for you?
4. What ideas can we come up with to move forward?
5. Who is one person you can reach out to connect with?
6. What is something in your control you can do during this time?
7. What are you most grateful for right now?
8. Have you started anything new to get through this time that you will want to keep moving forward?

# Restorative Family Practices

- Family Circles/Meetings
- Affective Language
  - “I feel....”
  - “I am frustrated...”
  - “I am happy...”
- Authentically engage everyone
  - All voices heard, valued, and considered
  - Explain why decisions were made
  - Set clear expectations around the decision
- When conflict happens
  - Authentically Engage
  - Consequences are more about accountability and making things right than punitive



# Family Practices for Mental Wellness

- Create a physical space to Calm Down
  - Learning Tools (fidgets)
  - Coloring
  - Music/Dance/Movies/Books
  - Mindfulness
  - Meditation
  - Spirituality
- Physical Activity
- Limits on Screens and Technology
- Consistent Meal and Sleep Schedules
- Regular Time to Connect

# Tips For Active Listening

- Take time to listen to concerns and remove distractions: turn off TV, put phones away and try not to interrupt or make judgement statements when a child is talking
- Face to face conversations can sometimes result in kids being more quiet
- Kids often talk more openly when their hands are busy
  - Playing a board game, petting the dog, etc.
- After you hear thoughts take time to process the information and respond calmly and authentically
- You are the biggest role model and your reactions and comments have an influence
- Avoid judgment statements, just listen.

# Resources for Parents

- [Second Step Resources for Educators and Families](#)
- [Child Mind Institute - Resources during Covid](#)
- [Hey Sigmund](#)
- [Stanford Medicine Early Support for Autism](#)
- [CU Anschutz Parent Support](#)
- [Dr. Cypers 90 Minute Presentation Supporting Kids With Anxiety](#)