PARENT & CAREGIVER GUIDE TO COVID-19
A Message from Dr. Melissa Merrick, President and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America

The outbreak of the coronavirus, or COVID-19, is clearly foremost on all our minds. As a mother, I have been comforted to know that the risk to our children’s physical health from the outbreak itself appears to be low. However, as a scientist, I know that the risk to our children for experiencing child abuse and neglect in times of extreme stress and uncertainty—like in anticipation of natural disasters and outbreaks such as this—is actually quite high.

School and workplace closings greatly increase stress in parents’ lives, resulting from loss of income due to unpaid leave; an unexpected or irregular need for child care; and even food insecurity, when school meal programs and other resources become unavailable. Also, an unintended consequence of social distancing is separation from social support and connectedness, which science shows are protective of mental health and positive parenting and discipline strategies.

At PCA America, we work every day to ensure healthy, thriving children and families. One way we do this is by supporting smart/sound policies, like paid family leave, to help reduce stress on our parents and caregivers. We also support expanding evidence-based home visiting programs like Healthy Families America, so we can help families cope with stress and trauma and employ positive parenting practices.

Please visit the coronavirus resource page on our website for regular updates and helpful tips on how to keep you and your family safe and calm in this uncertain, stressful time. Together, we can prevent child abuse, America…because childhood lasts a lifetime.

About Melissa T. Merrick, PhD

Melissa T. Merrick, PhD, is President and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America, the nation’s oldest nonprofit organization dedicated to the primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. She has nearly 20 years of clinical, research, and leadership experience related to the etiology, course, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

For NH COVID-19 updates, visit: https://www.nh.gov/covid19
Understanding COVID-19*

What is COVID-19?
The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is a mild to severe respiratory illness that is caused by a coronavirus and is transmitted chiefly by contact with infectious material (such as respiratory droplets). COVID-19 is characterized especially by fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

What are the symptoms?
Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases. The following symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure.*

- FEVER
- COUGH
- SHORTNESS OF BREATH

*This is based on what has been seen previously as the incubation period of MERS-CoV viruses.

If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include*:
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

For more information, please visit the CDC website.

How does it spread?
The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?
- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
- Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with COVID-19, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

For NH COVID-19 updates, visit: https://www.nh.gov/covid19

How do I keep track of the spread in my area?
The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services has developed a COVID-19 webpage that tracks the number and location of New Hampshire-based incidences of the virus.

The webpage includes important notices, current situation updates, an ongoing summary report, and links to important resources. You can access the webpage here and on the lower left-hand side of every page of this resource guide.
How to Protect Yourself*

Know how it spreads

- Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
- COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
  - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. (These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.)

Take steps to protect yourself

CLEAN HANDS OFTEN

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

Avoid close contact with people who may be sick or asymptomatic

Maintain 6 feet of physical distance between yourself and other people to stop the spread of COVID-19. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

WEAR A FACEMASK

Cloth face coverings: You should wear cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

Medical grade masks and respirators: Surgical masks or N-95 respirators are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Cover coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Stay home

Stay home except to get medical care or essential supplies. Governor Sununu has issued a stay at home order effective until May 4th.

If you travel, clean them:

- Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.

Options include:

- Diluting your household bleach—to make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water, OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.
- Alcohol solutions—Ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol.
- Other common EPA-registered household disinfectants--Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses.

For more information, please visit the CDC website.

*Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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What to Expect*

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, local officials may require the public to take measures to limit and control the spread of the disease. The government has the right to enforce federal and state laws related to public health if people within the country get sick with highly contagious diseases that have the potential to develop into outbreaks or pandemics.

Please note that while recommendations around COVID-19 involve words and phrases like “social distancing,” “quarantine,” and “isolation,” social interaction is foundational to emotional and behavioral health. Physical distancing may better describe current guidelines. Maintaining 6 feet of physical distance between individuals is recommended, as is connecting with loved ones via telephone, social media platforms, and video chat.

Typical Reactions

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations such as an infectious disease outbreak that requires social distancing, quarantine, or isolation. People may feel:

- Anxiety, worry, or fear related to:
  - Your own health status or the health status of others.
  - Time taken off from work and the potential loss of income and job security.
  - The challenges of securing things you need, such as groceries and personal care items.
- Concern about being able to effectively care for children or others in your care.
- Uncertainty or frustration about how long you will need to remain in this situation.
- Loneliness associated with feeling cut off from the world and from loved ones.
- Anger if you think you were exposed to the disease because of others’ negligence.
- Boredom and frustration because you may not be able to work or engage in regular activities.
- A desire to use alcohol or drugs to cope.
- Symptoms of depression: feelings of hopelessness, changes in appetite, sleeping too little or too much.
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), such as intrusive distressing memories, flashbacks (reliving the event), nightmares, changes in thoughts and mood, and being easily startled.

If you or a loved one experience any of these reactions for 2 to 4 weeks or more, contact your health care provider.

*Information from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Ways to Cope

Feelings of loneliness and isolation affect all types and ages of people, although some, like adolescents and older adults, are more likely to be impacted than others. Suffering from loneliness is somewhat like suffering from physical pain. Additionally, loneliness can heighten the fight-or-flight response—the physiological reaction a person has when facing a threat.

Measures You Can Take:

- Empathize: A recent Rance study stated ‘if you know a lonely older person, try tea and empathy.’ Oftentimes, the only people older adults talk to are mail and delivery workers or customer service representatives. Clearly, there is a need for greater empathy and social connections. Empathy is something that benefits everyone. New mothers also identify low empathy in relationships as a factor contributing to loneliness.
- Give Yourself Compassion: Try building more compassion not only towards others, but, also towards yourself. Self-compassion is known to enhance life-satisfaction, overall psychological and emotional well-being and mood. People who are self-compassionate may also be likely to have better social connections. The opposite of self-compassion is excessive self-criticism. Self-criticism is very common, but, harms self-esteem as well as relationships even though it may not appear to be doing so.
- Exercise: Study shows that people who exercised adequately may be less likely to feel lonely as compared to others.
- Interact with family/friends: Make it a point to have some meaningful conversations with loved ones/friends as often as possible. Many people nowadays end up prioritizing other activities in life at the cost of real social connections. If you do not have family members around and are having difficulty initiating or maintaining friendships, seek professional help from a psychotherapist. This can unearth what’s causing or perpetuating this difficulty, and will help you find specific ways to overcome it. Therapy can help you develop a better relationship with yourself which itself can reduce loneliness and in turn, can enhance other relationships. Even one good relationship can make a marked difference.
- Carve Time for Yourself: Sometimes, people can get lonely if they are overworking for a prolonged period of time, or have piled up more activities than they can handle. People may end up feeling like they are just trying to catch up. This can leave little time to build and maintain meaningful social relationships. If you are at ease and not hurried, you may be more likely to want to talk to others and may be more likely to be able to develop meaningful, social connections. Start with baby steps- attempts to de-clutter can go a long way if you have too much on your plate.

*Information from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
Ways to Cope

Managing Stress*

Even if your family is prepared, an outbreak can be very stressful. To help your family cope with this stress, following these recommendations can help:

**Information & Communication**
- Keep updated about what is happening with the outbreak and additional recommendations by getting information from credible media outlets, local public health authorities, and updates from public health websites (e.g., NH.gov, CDC.gov).
- Seek support and continued connections from friends and family by talking to them on the telephone, texting, or communicating through email or social media. Schools may have additional ways to stay in contact with educators and classmates.
- Although you need to stay informed, minimize exposure to media outlets or social media that might promote fear or panic. Be particularly aware of (and limit) how much media coverage or social media time your children are exposed to about the outbreak.
- E-mail and texting may be the best ways to stay in contact with others during an outbreak, as the Internet may have the most sensational media coverage and may be spreading rumors. Check in regularly with children about what they have viewed on the Internet and clarify any misinformation.
- Focus on supporting children by encouraging questions and helping them understand the current situation.
  - Talk about their feelings and validate them.
  - Help them express their feelings through drawing or other activities.
  - Clarify misinformation or misunderstandings about how COVID-19 is spread.
  - Provide comfort and a bit of extra patience.
  - Check back in with your children on a regular basis or when the situation changes.

**Scheduling & Activities**
- Even if your family is isolated or quarantined, realize this will be temporary.
- Keep your family’s schedule consistent when it comes to bedtimes, meals, and exercise.
- Make time to do things at home that have made you and your family feel better in other stressful situations, such as reading, watching movies, listening to music, playing games, exercising, or engaging in religious activities (prayer; participating in services on the Internet).
- Have children participate in distance learning opportunities that may be offered by their schools or other institutions/organizations.
- Recognize that feelings such as loneliness, boredom, fear of contracting disease, anxiety, stress, and panic are normal reactions to a stressful situation such as a disease outbreak.
- Help your family engage in fun and meaningful activities consistent with your values.

*Information from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Hygiene & Medical Care

- Find ways to encourage proper hygiene and health promoting behavior with your children (create drawings to remember family routines; sing a song for length needed to wash hands like the A-B-C or Happy Birthday song; twice). Include them in household jobs or activities so they feel a sense of accomplishment. Provide praise and encouragement for engaging in household jobs and good hygiene.
- Reassure your children that you will take them to the pediatrician and get medical care if needed. Explain, however, that not every cough or sneeze means that they or others have COVID-19.

Self-care & Coping

- Modify your daily activities to meet the current reality of the situation and focus on what you can accomplish.
- Shift expectations and priorities to focus more on what gives you meaning, purpose, or fulfillment.
- Give yourself small breaks from the stress of the situation.
- Attempt to control self-defeating statements and replace them with more helpful thoughts. Here’s a helpful checklist for identifying unhealthy thoughts and coping with them.
- Remember, you are a role model for your children. How you handle this stressful situation can affect how your children manage their worries.
- If your family has experienced a serious illness or the death of a loved one, find ways to support each other, including:
  - Reach out to your friends and family, talking to them about the death of your loved one. Use telephone, email, or social media to communicate if necessary.
  - Find ways to honor the death of your loved one. Some activities may be done as a family, while additional activities may done individually.
  - Seek religious/spiritual help or professional counseling for support. This may be available online or by telephone during an outbreak.

To reach the Disaster Distress Helpline, call 1-800-985-5990 for a 24/7 national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human–caused disaster.

*Information from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

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Ways to Cope Financial Stress*

Although any stress can take a toll on your health, stress related to financial issue can lead to:

- **Poor physical health:** Ongoing stress about money has been linked to migraines, heart disease, diabetes, sleep problems, and more. Left untreated, these conditions can lead to life-threatening illnesses, which can plunge you even further into debt.

- **Delayed healthcare:** With less money in the budget, people who are already under financial stress tend to cut corners in areas they shouldn’t, like healthcare. According to Gallup's annual Health and Healthcare poll, 29% of American adults held off seeking medical care in 2018 because of cost. Though this tactic may seem like a good way to keep costs down, delaying medical care can actually lead to worse health outcomes and higher costs, both of which can lead to more stress.

- **Poor mental health:** In many instances, the link between mental and financial health is cyclical—poor financial health can lead to poor mental health, which leads to increasingly poor financial health, and so on. For years, studies have shown that people in debt have higher rates of mental health issues like depression and anxiety than those who are debt-free.

- **Unhealthy coping behaviors:** Financial stress can cause you to engage in a variety of unhealthy behaviors, from overeating to alcohol and drug misuse. According to an APA survey published in 2014, 33% of Americans reported eating unhealthy foods or eating too much to deal with stress.

Coping With Financial Stress

Learning to effectively manage your financial situation can help you feel more in control, reduce your stress, and build a more secure future. Try some of the following tips to get started:

- **Talk to your lender now.** Regulators like the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation have encouraged banks and financial institutions to work with customers to defer payments, make smaller payments or change the due date.

- **Arrange for a break on housing payments.** Mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac suspended foreclosures, ordered lenders to allow homeowners flexibility in payments, including offering them a break for up to a year, and suspended late charges and penalties. As part of the package, they also put a stay on reporting late payments to credit bureaus by borrowers who are experiencing hardships.

- **Use the check from the government.** Current proposals in congress provide Americans a direct payment as a means of assistance is taking shape. The “recovery rebates” may be up to $1,200 for individuals and $2,400 for couples earning below a certain income threshold.

- **De-clutter your budget.** Since life is rarely constant, regular budget checkups are essential to improving your financial health. Take control of your finances by setting aside some time to de-clutter all of the money coming in and out of your bank account. The more control you have, the less stress you will feel.

- **Don’t forget general stress management.** As you work on improving your financial situation, you can reduce stress by practicing stress-reducing techniques.

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With regards to financial strain caused by COVID-19, Governor Sununu has announced the following:

Seeing what the lack of an appropriate response has resulted in around the world requires that we make some difficult decisions here in New Hampshire to ensure we stem the tide of this worldwide pandemic within our own communities. We are taking steps to help Granite Staters, ensuring they have the support and services for themselves, their families, and their businesses throughout this crisis.

**EMERGENCY ORDER #5:** All providers of electric, gas, water, telephone, cable, VOIP internet service, and deliverable fuel services will be prohibited from disconnecting or discontinuing service for non-payments for the duration of the State of Emergency.

**EMERGENCY ORDER #4:** Landlords will not be allowed to start eviction proceedings for those unable to pay due to their financial situations. To do so would be against the law. All judicial and non-judicial foreclosure actions will also be prohibited during the state of emergency.

**Unemployment Insurance Benefits** have been expanded during COVID-19. Call NH Employment Security at 603-271-7700 or visit www.nhes.nh.gov/ to assess eligibility and get further instructions, e.g. call times.

**Cash and other Assistance:** For TANF and other state assistance, visit https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/ or call 1-800-852-3345. Visit www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/covid19-changes.htm for temporary eligibility and program changes.

For further announcements from the Governor, [click here](https://www.nh.gov/covid19).

To reach the Disaster Distress Helpline, call 1-800-985-5990 for a 24/7 national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.
Ways to Cope
Grief/Related Anxiety*

Learn a little about how anxiety works. Anxiety is the mind’s response to a fearful situation, setting off our fight-or-flight response, putting you on alert and heightening physical sensations. Reminding yourself that this is a normal reaction and that it is your body’s way of managing stress can help keep you calm.

Check in with your grief. One reason we develop anxiety is due to unprocessed grief. Take some time to check in with yourself about your grief process. Are there emotions or memories that you are avoiding out of fear or pain? If so, open yourself up to doing some work in these areas (on your own or with the support of a professional) and doing so will be sure to ease the pressure on your accompanying anxiety.

Make amends. One of the reasons we get stuck in our grief and anxiety is because there is something left unsaid, or something we feel guilty about. Finding ways to ease your guilt and even make amends with your loved ones can help with that pervasive sense of unease that comes with anxiety. It’s never too late.

Embrace resilience. Find ways to begin moving forward and healing. Sometimes we resist doing this because it feels like if we choose to move forward then it means we are letting go of our loved ones. We will never get over the loss of a loved one but we can find ways to build a meaningful life in their absence.

Write your way through. There is serious power in writing through your grief. Writing helps us explore our own process, release tension, and connect with others. Put a pen to paper to quell some of that anxiety.

Exercise. Research shows aerobic exercise is especially helpful. A simple bike ride, dance class, or even a brisk walk can be a powerful tool for those suffering from anxiety.

Don’t go it alone. Grieving is lonely business, but it doesn’t have to be. One of the reasons we get so anxious is because we don’t know how we’re supposed to do this. Reach out and find some support, either in an online grief group, one-on-one tele-therapy or call a friend who understands.

*Information From Modern Loss.

To reach the Disaster Distress Helpline, call 1-800-985-5990 for a 24/7 national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.
Strengthening Families™ & the Five Protective Factors*

Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. The five key protective factors (listed below) are attributes that serve as buffers, helping parents find resources, support, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

PARENTAL RESILIENCE:
Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS:
Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental and spiritual support.

KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:
Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development.

CONCRETE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED:
Access to concrete support and services that address a family’s needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:
Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships.

For more information on Strengthening Families™, click HERE.

*Information from the Center for the Study of Social Policy.
New Hampshire Family Resource Centers

For NH COVID-19 updates, visit: https://www.nh.gov/covid19

New Hampshire Children’s Trust
(603) 224-1274
info@nhchildrenstrust.org
www.nhchildrenstrust.org
**For NH COVID-19 updates:** [https://www.nh.gov/covid19](https://www.nh.gov/covid19)

**Center for Disease Control (CDC):** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has up-to-date, accurate information and recommendations about COVID-19:


**County Health Department:** Contact your state’s [https://www.naccho.org/membership/lhd-directory](https://www.naccho.org/membership/lhd-directory) to learn more about your state’s response and recommendations.

**Kinship Navigators and Other Grandfamilies Support Programs:** For information specifically to help grandfamilies, contact your local kinship navigator or other grandfamilies support programs. Visit [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org) for a list of local programs in your state.

**Area Agency on Aging:** Area Agency on Aging: For information to help older caregivers contact your area agency on aging. You can find them through the eldercare locator at 1-800-677-1116 or visit [elderare.acl.gov](https://www.elderare.acl.gov).

**American Academy of Pediatrics** has more information on children and Coronavirus at [https://www.healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)

**Child Mind:** Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus: [https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/](https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/)


**Answering Your Child’s Questions During the Coronavirus from ZERO TO THREE:** [https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus](https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus)

**Internet for Students:** This article highlights internet options for accessing the internet for students on a low income: [https://www.reviews.com/blog/internet-options-for-students-on-low-income/](https://www.reviews.com/blog/internet-options-for-students-on-low-income/)


**Managing Anxiety and Self-care:**

- [https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus](https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus)

**Resources and Activities for Children at Home:**

- [https://extension.wsu.edu/king/4-h/learning-links-4-h-and-more/](https://extension.wsu.edu/king/4-h/learning-links-4-h-and-more/)
- [https://www.amazingeducationalresources.com/](https://www.amazingeducationalresources.com/)
- [https://www.childcareaware.org/state/new-hampshire/](https://www.childcareaware.org/state/new-hampshire/)
- Caribu is offering 60 days free access

**Staying Connected:** For more ideas check out Generations United’s blog [https://buff.ly/3aPN2z8](https://buff.ly/3aPN2z8)

**Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990 for a 24/7 national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotion distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

**NH Servicelink:** [https://www.servicelink.nh.gov/](https://www.servicelink.nh.gov/)

**211:** [http://www.211nh.org](http://www.211nh.org)
What should I do if...

- **Who has tested positive for COVID-19?**
  - Self-quarantine and self-monitor
- **Who is being tested?**
  - Self-monitor and practice social distancing
- **Who might have been exposed?**
  - Practice social distancing
- **Who is experiencing symptoms?**
  - And is NOT experiencing any symptoms (yet)?
- **Who has been in close contact with someone ELSE who might have been exposed?**
  - Self-quarantine AND self-monitor

How do I...

- **Self-quarantine?**
  - Stay home for 14 days.
  - Avoid contact with other people.
  - Don’t share household items.
- **Self-monitor?**
  - Be alert for symptoms of COVID-19, especially a dry cough or shortness of breath.
  - Take your temperature every morning and night, and write it down.
  - Call your doctor if you have trouble breathing or a fever (temperature of 100.4°F or 38°C).
  - Don’t seek medical treatment without calling first.
- **Practice social distancing?**
  - Stay home as much as possible.
  - Don’t physically get close to people; try to stay at least 6 feet away.
  - Don’t hug or shake hands.
  - Avoid groups of people and frequently touched surfaces.
  - And practice great hygiene!
  - Wash your hands frequently.
  - Avoid touching your face.
  - Wipe down frequently touched surfaces.

Social Distancing

- Avoid touch with the general public.
  - That means no hugs, handshakes or high-fives! It’s also a good idea to use payment methods that avoid propitiously touch screens.
- Keep your distance.
  - Stay at least 6 feet away from others when you’re out in public, especially if someone seems sick, or is coughing and sneezing.
- Consider rescheduling parties and playdates.
  - A child’s birthday party may be hard to say no to, but consider how many people will be present and the potential of a virus to spread.
- Support remote learning.
  - Even restaurants and movie theaters are all places where people congregate in high numbers and sit close together. Ask yourself if the benefits outweigh the potential risk.
- Postpone or cancel social gatherings.
  - Bars, restaurants and movie theaters are all places where people congregate in high numbers and sit close together. Ask yourself if the benefits outweigh the potential risk.

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https://www.nh.gov/covid19
Supporting Child and Family Wellbeing during the COVID-19 Emergency

April, 2020 - We all have a collective responsibility to make sure kids are healthy, safe, and thriving – especially during challenging times. Parents and other caregivers are their children’s most important protectors and may need extra support during the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage you to check in with caregivers and children you interact with to ask how they’re doing and what they need. Lending an ear and helping families access available supports can go a long way to keeping families well.

Thank you for doing your part to support New Hampshire’s children and families!

Check in with Families in your Community to see how you can help

It is important to remind caregivers and children that you are there to help, not judge them. If a child raises a concern, consider if you can safely follow-up with their caregiver. Validate that this is a difficult time, everyone is struggling, and that support is still available. See page 2 for a list of resources you can connect families with based on their needs.

Questions you might ask Parents/Caregivers

- Is now a good time to talk? If not, is there a better time?
- Now is a difficult, stressful time for everyone. How are you? Are you okay and safe? Is there anything you need?
- We all need support right now. Who are the supports in your life? Are you able to connect with them right now?
- Since the COVID-19 emergency started, what’s changed for your family? Has anything been more of a struggle? Are you facing new worries or needs?
- Is everyone in your family able to get what they need to get by (for example, you can ask the family about food, housing, income/employment, safety, education, health, heat, internet, etc.)?
- Do you need help connecting to _________? (see page 2 for local resource suggestions based on family’s needs)

Questions you might ask Children

- How is virtual learning working for you? How is it affecting you? Your family? Do you need help with anything?
- How are things going at home for you and your family? Are you feeling okay? Are you worried about anything?
- What do you like most about staying at home? What do you like least? Why?
- What was the best part of your day? What was the hardest part of your day?
- Who is taking care of you? What are they doing? Who makes sure you have everything you need?
- Who do you feel safe talking to about needs or worries? Do you have a way to talk to that person right now?
- If you were stranded on a desert island, what would you need? Are those things in your house right now?
- What did you have to eat for breakfast today? Yesterday?
- What are the rules in your house? What happens when someone breaks a rule? (Sibling, pet, mom, dad?)
- How is everyone getting along? Is anyone having a hard time? Are you worried about anyone? Why?
- Ask the child to describe a typical day – what they eat, who makes the food, where do they play, who comes to
- or leaves the house and when, do they have electricity, etc.?
- To follow up, ask open-ended questions: Tell me more about that... What happened next? What is happening right now?

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