

# CORONAVIRUS MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

## HELPING YOUNG KIDS COPE

### Be honest with them, but focus on two things

- Everyone is working together to keep people safe and healthy
- We can do some things to help keep ourselves and others safe and healthy like:



Washing our hands



Staying home if we're sick



Staying home from school and work



Changing some plans, even vacations



### Make sure they know they can ask you any questions

- Answer questions honestly, but try to stay focused on the here and now
- It's OK to say you don't know



**Feelings are OK! It's OK to feel scared, but we can be scared and brave at the same time and do things to keep ourselves and others healthy**



**Keep the television off for most of the day. Even if you think kids aren't paying attention, they are and they are likely to be scared by adult-level information**



**Parents should try as much as possible to model calm coping. Kids will pick up on your reactions**

### If school is closed:



Develop a daily schedule



Set a time to wake up



And get dressed



Schedule time for schoolwork



Create play areas if possible



Put fun activities, like art projects



### Get out of the house on a regular basis in a safe manner

- The weather is getting nice, so play outside. Get the bike out!
- Go for a family walk. Go to some uncrowded outdoor places like parks

## TIPS FOR TEENAGERS AND ADULTS



### Balance staying informed with taking breaks from the news

- Too much time reading about or listening to information will just increase stress levels.
- Watch out for spending too much time scrolling through news feeds on social media
- Limit information seeking to reliable sources. Parents can help teenagers learn to fact-check



### Try to focus on the practical, recommended steps rather than getting caught up in panic-driven behaviors such as stockpiling unreasonable quantities of certain products



### While large gatherings are not recommended at this time, social isolation also carries risk

- As of now, it is still OK to get together with small groups of people who aren't sick
- Video calls can help maintain social contact if physical contact can't happen; this is particularly important if there are family members in assisted living facilities where visits are restricted or if anyone is quarantined

If adults find themselves with more time at home than usual, they may benefit from a schedule as much as the kids!



Develop a daily schedule



Set a time to wake up



Get dressed



Schedule time for work



Work on projects around the house

## TIPS FOR EVERYONE

Good self-care is always important, but even more important when we're dealing with stressful events.

At the core of self-care are three things



**SLEEP** - Our minds and bodies don't work well if we're sleep deprived



**EAT** - try to eat healthy, balanced meals and keep junk food where it belongs—in your diet, but as a special treat



**EXERCISE** - regular exercise keeps our minds, bodies and immune systems in top shape. Make it fun and try to get outside if possible