

Staying physically and mentally healthy during this stressful time.

5 Quick Tips to Make Stress Manageable:

1. **Create predictability.** There is little predictability as it relates to COVID-19 right now even though our government officials are doing their best to keep us updated. During this time we may feel the urge to constantly check the internet or the news about COVID-19 updates; however, this can just increase our stress unnecessarily. Limit checking to only a 2-3 times a day and don't do it before bed. In addition, create an adjusted routine to help you and your family adapt to these new circumstances. Build exercise, fun time, work time, and typical activities (eating, bathing, brushing teeth, etc.) into your routine. Be sure not to make dramatic changes to your usual schedule daily schedule. Consider making a schedule to help everyone see and follow the routine.
2. **Improve our sense of control.** Though we have little control over COVID-19, we do have control over other things that can help reduce our stress. This strategy relates to the suggestions in #1. The more predictability we create in our day with routines, the more we feel in control. When you are researching COVID-19 or looking for news updates be sure this information is from reputable sources. Practice good hygiene and social distancing. Stay home as much as possible and when you do go out don't touch your face after you have touched public surfaces until your hands have been washed. Eat healthy and exercise to keep your immune system functioning well.
3. **Maintain social connections and support.** It is easy during these times to isolate or only connect with others through social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.), but calling and seeing our friends and family can be more powerful when it comes to reducing stress. Set up times to check in with friends and family via phone or a video chat. Think of creative ways your children can maintain voice and visual contact with friends and family. For example, set up story time where your child reads to a relative or where a relative reads to your child. Set up video chats for you child and his/her friends.
4. **Find outlets for our stress energy.** When we are stressed, we often do things that give us short-term relief but usually do not help in the end. For example, we comfort eat, seek negative information, decrease our exercise, skip meals to get things done, binge watch shows/movies, binge play video games, stay indoors, and/or fall back into (or increase) bad habits. We have to realize that these behaviors are signs of stress. When we notice them, we need to do something that is good for us. Such as, go for walk in nature, play an active game with our kids, exercise, work in the yard, repair something around the house, create art, and/or play music. Remember numbers 1 and 2 above, create predictability and control by making these healthy outlets for stress part of your daily routine.
5. **Give ourselves a sense of improvement.** This sense of improvement should not be about COVID-19. Instead look for (or begin working toward) improvements related to your housework, exercise, self-regulation, teaching your children, projects, patience, cooking, etc. The more concrete and visual the improvements are the more they will help.

Staff:

This is a link to the National Association of School Psychologists website. There are several handouts for school staff and parents.

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center/family-and-educator-resources>

5 minute video related to anxiety caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4rPyOBWfkc>

A wealth of resources related to COVID-19 for everyone. Topics include anxiety, stress, supporting kids of varying ages during this time, self-care, behaviors, discipline etc.

<https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>

This website has several videos of Dr. Bruce Perry discussing stress and how to make stress manageable.

<https://www.neurosequential.com/covid-19-resources>

This is an online toolkit for supporting individuals with autism during this times.

https://ed.unc.edu/2020/03/19/unc-team-creates-online-toolkit-for-those-supporting-individuals-with-autism-during-covid-19-epidemic/?fbclid=IwAR3cdfzrUKrj1e_Z5-gfTEptM-1-En8uBJzchTHouX0FTyeDnGydOhe6Sw

This is Dr. Stuart Shanker's website related to self-regulation. There are some resources related to dealing with stress during this time but there are many other resources related to stress and self-regulation in general.

<https://self-reg.ca/>

Activities, strategies and resources to help with self-regulation and dealing with stress.

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources-for-schools-and-families-during-covid-19-coronavirus/>

Articles for adults trying to help students with stress management.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/stress-management-resources>

Students:

A calendar of activities for elementary school kids to do each day to help you feel better and stay healthy. <https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/2020/calendar/April-2020-Elementary-Calendar-English.pdf>

A calendar of activities for middle and high school kids to do each day to help you feel better and stay healthy. <https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/2020/calendar/April-2020-Secondary-Calendar-English.pdf>

An article middle and high school students, that teaches 6 strategies you can use to deal with stress.
<https://blog.collegevine.com/6-techniques-for-dealing-with-stress-in-high-school/>

Yoga videos for elementary aged students.
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=%23cosmickidsyoga

Kid president videos, helping us laugh and feel good in a time of stress.
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzvRx_johoA-Yabl6FWcU-jL6nKA1Um-t

Parents:

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Articles for adults trying to help students with stress management.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/stress-management-resources>

This guide teaches 9 stress reducing strategies.

<https://www.healthiersf.org/resources/pubs/StressReductionActivities.pdf>

A calendar of activities to do each day to help you feel better and stay healthy.

<https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/2020/calendar/April-2020-Elementary-Calendar-English.pdf>

A calendar of activities to do each day to help you feel better and stay healthy.

<https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/2020/calendar/April-2020-Secondary-Calendar-English.pdf>

CDC's resource for helping children cope in emergencies.

<https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html>

CDC's resource for talking to children about COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>