

Parent Survival Kit

RIGHT CLICK ON ALL HYPERLINKS

Routine

Keeping children on a routine can be very helpful in maintaining your sanity while social distancing. We already have part of our schedules in place when waking up to get ready for our day and when we get home from work, school etc. that include homework, playtime, meals, hygiene and bedtime routine. Now is the time to try and extend that schedule to include the middle of the day, which can be frustrating for some parents who depend on school/child care to maintain routine for majority of their child's day.

Here is a sample schedule that can be adjusted to meet the needs of your family. This is also a great opportunity to strengthen your bond with your children by exploring their interests and having meaningful conversations (age appropriate of course) about important topics.

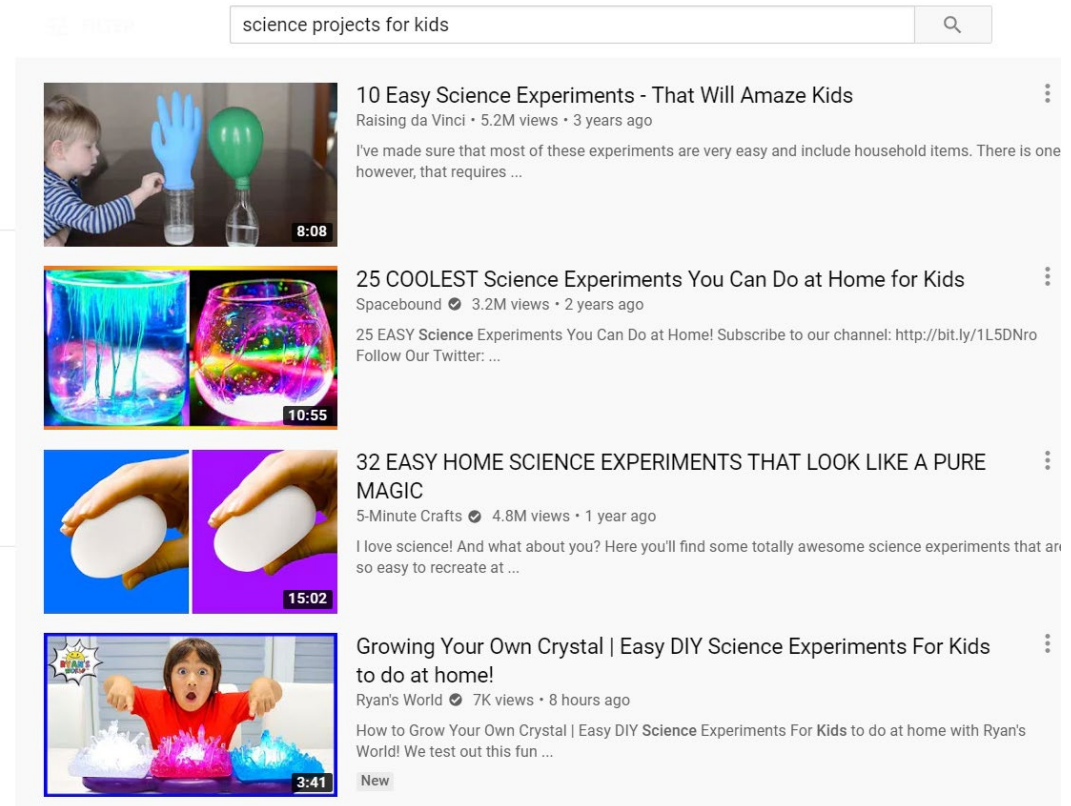
COVID-19 DAILY SCHEDULE

Before 9:00am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, put PJ's in laundry
9:00-10:00	Morning walk	Family walk with the dog Yoga if it's raining
10:00-11:00	Academic time	NO ELECTRONICS Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal
11:00-12:00	Creative time	Legos, magnatiles, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or bake, etc
12:00	Lunch	
12:30PM	Chore time	A - wipe all kitchen table and chairs. B - wipe all door handles, light switches, and desk tops. C - Wipe both bathrooms - sinks and toilets
1:00-2:30	Quiet time	Reading, puzzles, nap
2:30-4:00	Academic time	ELECTRONICS OK Ipad games, Prodigy, Educational show
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air	Bikes, Walk the dog, play outside
5:00-6:00	Dinner	
6:00-8:00	Free TV time	Kid showers x3
8:00	Bedtime	All kids
9:00PM	Bedtime	All kids who follow the daily schedule & don't fight

Make Learning fun

Some of the best memories are projects you do with my mom and dad

- ▶ Be Creative
- ▶ Look on Pinterest, Youtube and other social media sites for ideas
- ▶ Build memories and projects that children can take back to school for show and tell
- ▶ Share what they are doing on Social Media



Online Learning Resources

- ▶ [Scholastic Learning](#)
- ▶ [Ideas for Free Education at Home](#)
- ▶ [PBS Educational Shows and Games](#)
- ▶ [San Antonio Public Library](#)
- ▶ [Kids Learn to Type](#)
- ▶ [KSAT Educational Links](#)
- ▶ [Disney Imagineering](#)

Virtual Libraries and Tours

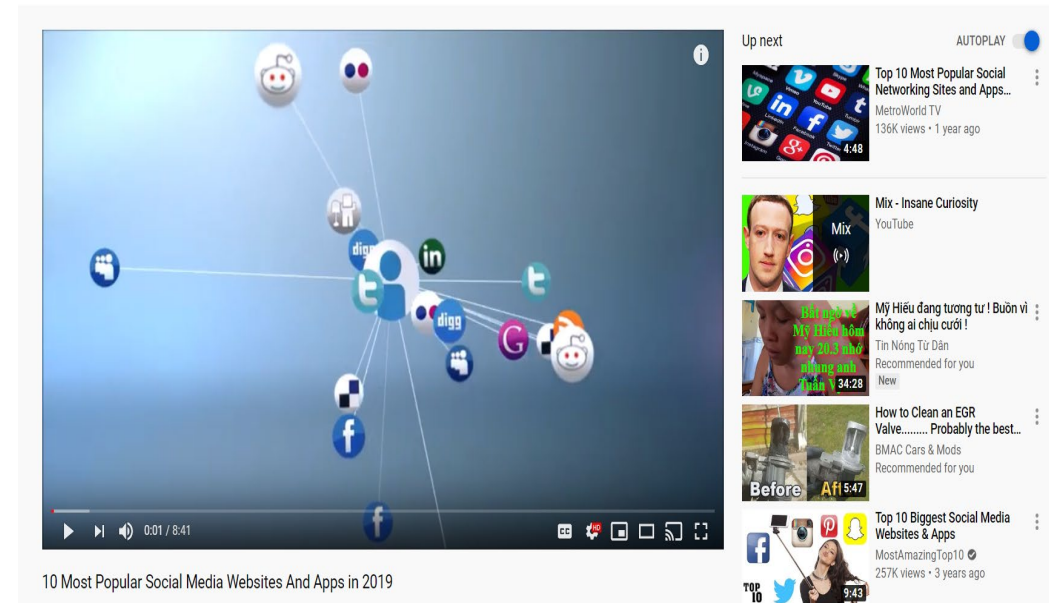
- ▶ [Virtual Tours of Museums](#)
- ▶ [SA Zoo Kangaroo Live Cam](#)
- ▶ [Cincinnati Zoo Live 2PM](#)
- ▶ [Digital Libraries and Magazine Access](#)

Have Fun Communicating

Use social media apps to communicate

- ▶ If you start now communicating by the popular apps with your children now...
 - ▶ These are habits that will continue when they get older.
 - ▶ Will make it easier to communicate when separated or deployed
 - ▶ You probably will not have to yell for them to come to eat...

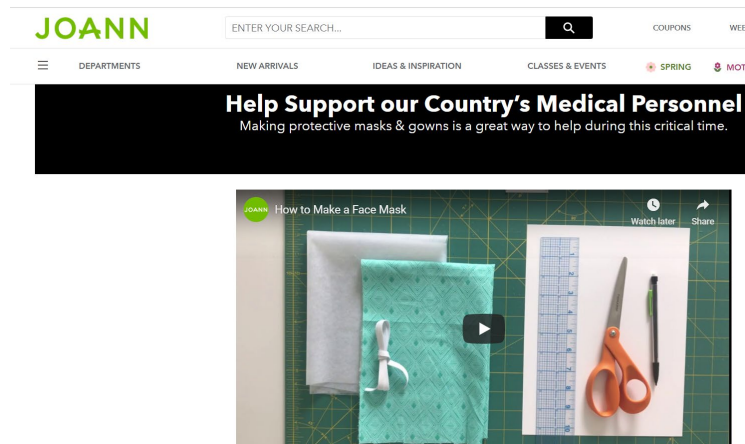
Find the App that works best for your children



Find ways for them to volunteer from home

Teach your children how to sew

- ▶ JOANN is giving away free material to make masks for hospitals



Get Creative

- ▶ Write letters, cards draw pictures for folks in Nursing Homes
- ▶ Now is a good time to clean out closets for charity
- ▶ Have your kids do extra chores to earn money for their favorite charity

Time to teach family values

What do you want your children to know?

- ▶ Spiritual Values
 - ▶ Importance of Prayer and Meditation
 - ▶ Gratitude
 - ▶ Have them write down three things everyday of what they are grateful for... Record them and post on social media
 - ▶ Start a family journal of gratitude

What do they need to know?

- ▶ Lessons about their ancestors
- ▶ Stories about you and your spouse.
- ▶ Stories about them
 - ▶ Start a journal with them, let them draw out the stories to illustrate and create their own book with they stories they will write.

Make Chores an Adventure

Bonus Points

- ▶ Make a chart with each chore and the amount of bonus points they get upon completion.
 - ▶ Prizes, money, fun stuff they can get for the bonus points
 - ▶ Make it challenging but not too difficult

Time to plant that garden

- ▶ Outside chores in the sunshine is great medicine.
- ▶ Make containers from recycled material to plant herbs and smaller vegetables
- ▶ Grow seedlings in small cups to be transplanted
 - ▶ Use recycled containers to catch rainwater for the plants

Take care of the whole family - Mindfulness

Stop, Breathe & Think

- ▶ With an emphasis on fun activities and meditations, this app is designed to help kids with focus, quiet, peaceful sleep, and processing emotions. Your little one will learn mindful breathing and the importance of checking in with herself. She'll also win stickers for completing "missions." Ages 5-10; [download for free.](#)

Thrive Global

- ▶ Here's another skill set from Amazon Echo. If your kid needs help quieting his mind during the day, he can say, "Alexa, open Thrive" and ask for a meditation. On nights when he can't sleep, a "power down" will do the trick—and keep screens out of the bedroom. [Download for free.](#)

More Great APPs Do these activities with your children

Smiling Mind

- ▶ This app offers mindfulness sessions, developed by a team of psychologists, that start with a quick series of questions to focus the mind followed by simple, easy-to-follow meditation exercises. [Download for free.](#)

Sleep Meditations for Kids

- ▶ The perfect app to incorporate into your bedtime routine, Sleep Meditations for Kids has four bedtime stories that are transformed into guided meditations designed to promote relaxation and contentment. [Download for free.](#)

Super Stretch Yoga

Download for free

- ▶ Top 100 Health & Wellness app on iTunes! Super Stretch is a fun, interactive yoga app created for kids, used by the whole family!
- ▶ Move, play and breathe as Super Stretch introduces you to his friends and their yoga poses. Super Stretch is your guide who takes you on your journey.
- ▶ Using storytelling, animation and video examples, kids enjoy making NAMASTE a part of their day.
- ▶ NAMASTE is The Adventures of Super Stretch's secret code to help kids learn to find balance and strength in their lives.
- ▶ Be the best you can be! Practice poses, collect 12 stars and get a team photo. Each of Super Stretch's friends helps us learn how to use movement and breathing to make every day balanced.
- ▶ Then, real-life kids demonstrate the pose. So easy and entertaining we forget that it's exercise.

Parents... Take care of yourself

The true definition of self-care is actually very broad. Self-care is any action that you do to improve your health. According to the National Institute of Mental Illness (NAMI), all self-care habits fall under the following six umbrella categories:

- ▶ Physical
- ▶ Psychological
- ▶ Emotional
- ▶ Spiritual
- ▶ Social
- ▶ Professional

A few examples of self-care that you might not have considered are

- ▶ Brushing your teeth, eating balanced meals, getting regular exercise, or taking medication for a physical or mental illness.
 - ▶ All of these practices fall under one of the above categories and help you maintain a healthy lifestyle. These and other self-care activities can help you feel your best so you can accomplish everything you need to do.
- ▶ Parents often focus so much on their children that they have no time for themselves.
- ▶ Sometimes, it might be hard to carve in time for something as simple as getting dressed—let alone anything that improves social or professional health.
- ▶ But when you take time to care for yourself every day, you're looking out for your loved ones just as much as you are caring for yourself.

Why Self-Care Is Important For Everyone, Including (and Especially) Parents

In many cases, a parent might be neglecting their needs because they worry that doing so is selfish or self-absorbed. Here are a few signs that you are stressed or overwhelmed and in serious need of self-care:

- ▶ Change in sleeping or eating habits
- ▶ Headaches, dizziness, or stomach upset
- ▶ Feeling unsafe, unhappy, guilty, vulnerable, anxious, or lonely
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating
- ▶ Withdrawn or irritated, crying or anger outbursts
- ▶ Because self-care and mental health are connected, neglecting one can have a negative impact on the other.
- ▶ Sometimes, parental stress or burnout may become severe enough that you can't overcome it on your own. In this case, one of the best self-care steps you can take is seek counseling or another form of professional help.
- ▶ A professional can help you figure out how to practice self-care in manageable ways.

Self-Care Tips and Ideas for Parents

It's time to make a game plan!

Try these five self-care tips and activities for adults so you don't have to sacrifice your health to maintain your busy parenting schedule:

- ▶ Sleep is a key component of both emotional and physical self-care, yet so many parents neglect it.
 - ▶ Aim to get at least seven hours of sleep every night, if possible.
- ▶ Use this [self-care assessment](#) from NAMI to help you discover which elements of self-care you're lacking and pinpoint how to improve.
- ▶ Try to do one thing every day that improves your mental or physical health in some way.
 - ▶ You could, for example, go on a walk after dinner or call a loved one you haven't seen in a while.
- ▶ Check out this list of the [best self-care apps](#) that make a few minutes of well-being just a tap away.
- ▶ Self-reflection is also a crucial part of self-care, so brainstorm what you're currently missing and how to best take care of yourself.
 - ▶ Put together a self-care journal and reflect every day on how you took care of your health.

Additional Resources focused on Mental Health

- ▶ Military One Source call center remains available 24/7/365 for personalized support at 1-800-342-9647. Counseling services remain available by phone, video and online. To schedule an appointment, call (1-800-342-9647) or [Military OneSource Live Chat](#) through their website.
- ▶ [Free Resource for Calm APP](#)
- ▶ [Parenting During a Pandemic Webinar](#)
- ▶ [Families Over Coming Under Stress](#)
- ▶ <https://cap4kids.org/sanantonio/>



Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

At this time, information about COVID-19 is rapidly evolving as new details are confirmed and new questions emerge. In the event of an outbreak in your community, as a parent/caregiver, your first concern is about how to protect and take care of your children and family. Knowing important information about the outbreak and learning how to be prepared can reduce your stress and help calm likely anxieties. This resource will help you think about how an infectious disease outbreak might affect your family—both physically and emotionally—and what you can do to help your family cope.

What You Should Know

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. COVID-19 is caused by a novel coronavirus; this means it is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that is mainly spread person-to-person. Currently, there is no available vaccine or curative treatment, so the best preventative strategy is to avoid exposure.
- So far, children appear to be much less affected by COVID-19, which was also seen after other coronavirus outbreaks.
- Children with pre-existing illnesses may have different risk, so you should discuss this with your child's medical team.
- To reduce the spread of the virus, a variety of approaches will be used, including keeping those who are sick away from others and promoting healthy hygiene strategies. Additional recommendations for ways to contain the virus's spread could include canceling of events that attract large numbers of people; closing schools, public transit or businesses; and required quarantine, which is the separation and restriction of movement of people who might have been exposed to the virus.

READINESS

Preparing your Family for a Potential Infectious Disease Outbreak

Being prepared is one of the best ways to lessen the impact of an infectious disease outbreak like COVID-19 on your family. Here are some steps that you can take to be better prepared:

Information & Communication

- Identify how you will keep up with the rapidly changing information on COVID-19.
In rapidly changing health events and outbreaks such as COVID-19, there can be large amounts of incorrect or partially correct information that can add to your stress and confusion as a parent/caregiver. Identify a few trusted sources of health information.

The NCTSN relied on the CDC resources to create this document.

Get the most up-to-date and accurate information at:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDC: information on children and COVID 2019:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html>

<https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.aspx>

Plan how you want to discuss COVID-19 with your family. Be sure to include:

What the current disease outbreak is

How it is contracted

What are the possible dangers

Protective steps being taken in the community/nation/global community

Protective steps everyone in the family can take

- Hold your family discussion in a comfortable place and encourage family members to ask questions. Consider having a separate discussion with young children in order to use language they can understand and to address specific fears or misconceptions they may have.
- Create a list of community resources that will be helpful during an outbreak. Make sure you know their emergency telephone numbers, websites, and official social media accounts. These may include: your family's schools, doctors, public health authorities, social services, community mental health center, and crisis hotlines.
- Develop a plan for maintaining contact with friends and family members via telephone and internet in the event that isolation or quarantine is recommended.
- Check in with your children's school about potential homeschool and distance learning opportunities that may be offered during a school closure. Also, if your child receives additional services at school, ask how these will be handled during a closure (e.g., meals, therapeutic services).

Reducing Your Family's Risk: Hygiene, Medical Care & Supplies

Have all family members practice preventive behaviors including:

- Regularly washing hands for 20 seconds with soap and water (length of the A-B-C song) or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home when sick.
- Covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or with the bend/crook of the arm when coughing or sneezing.

Keep basic health supplies on hand (e.g., soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues, and a thermometer).

Make sure you have a supply of medications taken regularly.

If your child takes medication for a chronic condition, talk with your child's medical provider about plans to get a supply at home that will last through any period of home isolation for your family.

Have your family work together to gather items that might be needed during an outbreak. These include drinking water, nonperishable food, and cash. Be sure to include activities, books, and games for children in case a lengthy time at home is recommended. Remember to include batteries in your item list if those are needed for certain activities and games.

**HAVE ALL YOUR
FAMILY MEMBERS
PRACTICE GOOD
HYGIENE AND
PREVENTIVE
BEHAVIORS.**

Coping with the Stress of an Infectious Disease Outbreak like COVID-19

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., CDC).
- 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 your 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 these
 - Help them express their feelings through drawing or other activities
 - Clarify misinformation or misunderstandings about how the virus is spread and that not every respiratory disease is COVID-19
 - Provide comfort and a bit of extra patience
 - Check back in with your children on a regular basis or when the situation changes

NOTE: During an outbreak, stigma and rejection can occur against individuals who live in affected communities, against health-care workers, and individuals with other illnesses.

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 family and cultural values.

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:
<https://arfamiliesfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cognitive-Distortions.pdf>.
 - 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 be done individually.

Seek religious/spiritual help or professional counseling for support. This may be available online or by telephone during an outbreak.

HELPING CHILDREN COPE

Your children may respond differently to an outbreak depending on their age. Below are some reactions according to age group and the best ways you can respond:

AGE GROUP	REACTIONS	HOW TO HELP
PRESCHOOL	Fear of being alone, bad dreams Speech difficulties Loss of bladder/bowel control, constipation, bed-wetting Change in appetite Increased temper tantrums, whining, or clinging behaviors	Patience and tolerance Provide reassurance (verbal and physical) Encourage expression through play, reenactment, story-telling Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements Plan calming, comforting activities before bedtime Maintain regular family routines Avoid media exposure

SCHOOL-AGE (ages 6-12)	Irritability, whining, aggressive behavior Clinging, nightmares Sleep/appetite disturbance Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches) Withdrawal from peers, loss of interest Competition for parents' attention Forgetfulness about chores and new information learned at school	Patience, tolerance, and reassurance Play sessions and staying in touch with friends through telephone and Internet Regular exercise and stretching Engage in educational activities (workbooks, educational games) Participate in structured household chores Set gentle but firm limits Discuss the current outbreak and encourage questions. Include what is being done in the family and community Encourage expression through play and conversation Help family create ideas for enhancing health promotion behaviors and maintaining family routines Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school Address any stigma or discrimination occurring and clarify misinformation
ADOLESCENT (ages 13-18)	Physical symptoms (headaches, rashes, etc.) Sleep/appetite disturbance Agitation or decrease in energy, apathy Ignoring health promotion behaviors Isolating from peers and loved ones Concerns about stigma and injustices Avoiding/cutting school	Patience, tolerance, and reassurance Encourage continuation of routines Encourage discussion of outbreak experience with peers, family (but do not force) Stay in touch with friends through telephone, Internet, video games Participate in family routines, including chores, supporting younger siblings, and planning strategies to enhance health promotion behaviors Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school Discuss and address stigma, prejudice and potential injustices occurring during outbreak

SEEKING ADDITIONAL HELP

If you or a loved one is having a difficult time coping with the outbreak and want to seek outside help, there are ways to get that help. For example:

- Get support regarding your anxiety or stress by speaking to a trained counselor at SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 or by texting TalkWithUS 66746.
- Contact your physician or your insurance company (if they have a consultation line) to ask health-related questions or to seek mental health support.
- Learn more ways to help your family. Additional resources can be accessed at:
www.NCTSN.org
www.healthychildren.org
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html

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