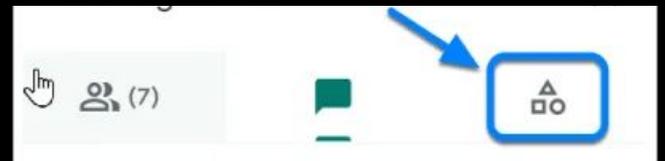


Anxiety and Coping with the Coronavirus: Managing Worry – Your Kids’ and Your Own

Genevieve White, Ed.S. NCSP
Dr. Leslie Eget, D.Ed. NCSP

While you’re waiting, please complete the poll by clicking on the Activities button in the top right of your screen.



Breathing Exercise

<https://gritx.org/breathing/>

What COVID-19 is Doing to Our Well-Being

- Our brains predict events from an early age
- When something isn't predictable our brains stay in a flight or fight state
 - More alert, quicker to respond - fluid state
 - We are constantly in this jittery state.
- Humans tend to choose a side - negative or positive - because it's more predictable and comfortable
- We do not like being in a fluid state

Tolerate the Jitters

- Acknowledge that we are in this unpredictable state
- Create routines/consistency/predictability where we can, especially for our kids
- Identify coping strategies for yourself and for your kids
- **BUILD RESILIENCY**
 - The struggle is good

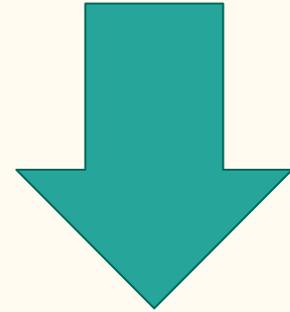
The single most common factor in children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.

Relationship Between Stress and Memory

Stress

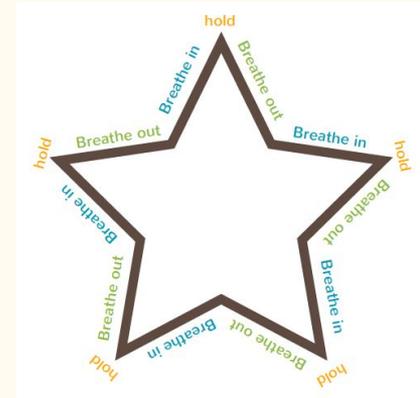


Working
Memory



Resources for Supporting Kids

- Quick ways to calm down:
 - Cognitive distraction - examples: name all the characters in Star Wars, say the alphabet backwards, name animals alphabetically
 - Grounding exercise (5 senses)
 - Create a calm down spot
 - Create a coping skills toolkit (calming jar, stress balls, list of coping strategies)
 - Box or star breathing
 - Put your worries on trial
- Story podcasts for children
- Mindfulness apps
 - Calm, Headspace, Smiling Mind, Breathe Kids, MyLife



Resources for Supporting Kids

- Reset routines to focus on more sleep and less screen time at night
- Make an action plan
 - Give your child a sense of control and reinforce their efforts even if it doesn't work
- Help others in need

<https://copingskillsforkids.com/calming-anxiety>

<https://www.wellnesstogether.org/blogs/news>

Resources for Teens

GritX is a mental health platform specifically designed for teens and young adults. It empowers users to take their mental health and wellness into their own hands.

<https://gritx.org/>

Monitor Behaviors and Seek Help if Needed

- Depending on their age, children may respond differently to COVID-19
- Preschoolers may have more physical responses & need reassurance
- School-aged children can increase in irritability & aggressive behaviors, needing more engagement & gentle but firm limits
- Adolescents may face issues with energy, sleep, & isolation. They may benefit from talking about their experiences & staying in touch with friends & loved ones
- All children can benefit from patience & routine

SOURCE: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Student Engagement and Motivation at Home

1. Demonstrate an authoritative approach to parenting by being both ***responsive*** and ***demanding***.
The authoritative approach consists of a healthy balance of responsiveness and demandingness.
 - a. In demonstrating responsiveness, you convey warmth, caring, and respect as you respond to your child's emotional, social, and academic needs. Responsiveness is critical to helping your child feel accepted, connected with others, competent, and self-confident. An example of demonstrating responsiveness is talking about your child's day at dinner each evening, and providing resources, support, and guidance when needed, such as when peer problems exist or schoolwork is too difficult or stressful.
 - b. Demonstrate demandingness by establishing clear behavioral and academic expectations and routines (such as completing homework) having fair rules and consequences, and closely monitoring engagement-related behavior

Student Engagement and Motivation at Home

2. Use praise and rewards wisely and strategically

- *Using Praise and Rewards Wisely: Helping Handout for School and Home*

3. Closely monitor and assist with homework assignments, as appropriate.

- *Homework: A Guide for Parents*

4. Communicate the benefits of education and the importance of being engaged in school

5. Build from your child's interests, values, and goals, and offer choices that match them

6. Provide variety, novelty, and fun in instructional methods and learning activities

Student Engagement and Motivation at Home

7. Challenge your child to set short-term and long-term goals and to develop plans for achieving them.

- *Ask questions such as: “What does it mean to be a successful student and adult?” What must you do to achieve your goals?”*

8. Emphasize mastery goals and mastery in external and self-evaluations

9. Emphasize effort and persistence more than ability

- *Growth mindset rather than a fixed ability mindset*

10. Encourage frequent self-evaluation

- *What didn't work? What can I try next time? What supports do I need?*

Student Engagement and Motivation at Home

11. Encourage self-comparisons rather than social comparisons

12. Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities

13. Provide and highlight models of engagement

- *“I can do it if I keep trying” “I might not be perfect at this, but I am getting better.”*

14. Take care of yourself

15. If your child is disengaged from school, or poorly motivated, work with the school.

- Increased home–school communication and collaboration
- Counseling or social skills training. Either individual or group counseling and training can be used to address your child's needs and build on strengths.
- Tutoring.
- Individual mentoring and guidance

Anxiety Reduction Strategies during COVID-19



Media Distancing

- Limit your time from the media- negative coverage 24/7 can drive catastrophic thoughts and feelings of uncertainty and spread anxiety
- The more anxiety you feel, the more you should distance yourself from the media
- If you are extremely fearful, stop watching all together; any vital information you need to know, you will find out.

Take Action

- The more you focus on “worst-case” scenarios, the more anxious you will feel
- Anxiety can be triggered by fear of the virus, a struggling business, keeping your employees safe, juggling work and your children being at home, unemployment, lack of childcare, etc.
- Focus your energy on problem-solving and confidence building that you will get through this
- Push yourself to take one uncomfortable step at a time
 - Seek out loans
 - Ask for help
 - Create a plan to cut back spending
 - Sell things on ebay
 - Organize a community cooperative group with similar risk tolerance for childcare and social outlets

Maintain Perspective

- All deaths are tragic
- Focusing on the negative and spinning your wheels with questions will only increase anxiety
- Remind yourself that the vast majority of people infected with COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms or no symptoms at all

Physical Symptom does not equal COVID-19

- Remind yourself that if you cough, it does not mean you have COVID-19 and that others who cough probably do not have COVID-19
- There are many more likely explanations for a symptom/symptoms than having COVID-19
 - Allergies, bronchitis, post-nasal drip, common cold, etc.
- Do not look for symptoms

Take Control!

- Although the pandemic is out of our control, we can control our response
- Try something new
 - Clean the garage
 - Decorate a room
 - Create a scrapbook
 - Go for a bike ride
 - Gardening
 - Research your genealogy
 - Couch to 5K
 - Have a virtual happy hour with friends
 - A new recipe
- Focus your attention on self-exploration and creating or accomplishing something
- Keeping busy will take your mind off of the pandemic

Stress Reduction

Engage in activities that relax, clear your head and give you a sense of peace

- Guided meditation (Headspace, Calm, Mindfulness)
- Yoga
- Running
- Journaling
- Family hike
- Focus on what you have and what you are grateful for

Maintain some sense of normalcy

- Unless you are in a high-risk category, a lockdown in your home is unnecessary
- To the extent that you can, maintain some resemblance of a normal routine to reduce anxiety
- Public health and journal articles stress the importance of wearing a mask but maintain that the risk of contracting COVID-19 comes from “sustained contact within 6 feet” and not from a “passing interaction”
 - Walking in the neighborhood
 - Running in a park
 - Going to the dog park
 - Biking
- If you find comfort in church and faith, many houses of worship offer links to participate virtually

Reach out to friends and loved ones

- Reaching out to those who are isolated will boost their spirit and yours
- Plan a virtual game night

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/entertainment/g32098665/best-games-to-play-on-zoom/>

- Attend a virtual event such as The Nutcracker, FREE (December 24th at 7:00)
<https://www.youtube.com/c/BardavonPresents/videos?fbclid=IwAR3rvROscLMUj76HetWpw7ziOqSAqdG8Hmayhq2WahQAqTCxPJXdt0Dnn5E>
- If you are financially able, continue to pay those who may be out of work such as your hairstylist or housekeeper. Perhaps you can book and pay ahead for a service (this may be incredibly helpful during the holidays)

Area Holiday Activities During COVID-19

Zoo Lights at the Maryland Zoo

https://www.marylandzoo.org/special_events/zoo-lights/?gclid=EA1aIQobChMImZvG46P97AIVA4eGCh2dAQXeEAAYASAAEgJjdfD_BwE

Merriweather Symphony of Lights, Columbia <https://www.merriweatherlights.com/>

Festival of Lights, Bowie <http://pgparks.com/742/Festival-of-Lights>

Annmarie Garden In Lights holiday outdoor light show, Solomons

<https://www.annmariegarden.org/annmarie2/content/garden-lights-magical-light-show>

Lights on the Bay, Sandy Point <http://www.lightsonthebay.org/>

Holiday Hunt, Westfield Annapolis

<https://www.westfield.com/annapolis/event-detail/The-Holiday-Hunt->

The Nutcracker, The Puppet Co. <https://www.thepuppetco.org/>

The Snow Queen, Imagination Stage

https://patrons.imaginationstage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=7958&fbclid=IwAR33n-NBuzHd2qkJOxCn0YX73JMZJT_VcJR6bpHF_fnGpuGwrU19MgmUg54

Holidays in the Park, Six Flags America <https://www.sixflags.com/america?lang=en/>

Virtual Holiday Scavenger Hunt

<https://watsonadventures.com/hunt/joy-around-the-world-virtual-holiday-savenger-hunts-for-kids/>

Child, Adult and Family Activities

Eco Adventures Camps <https://ecoadventures.org/before-after-school-careclubs/>

Eco Adventures Programs during pandemic

<https://ecoadventures.org/programs-during-the-pandemic/>

Pongos Learning Lab, Crofton <https://pongoslearninglab.com/>

Eventbrite online events <https://www.eventbrite.com/d/online/events/>

Anne Arundel County Public Library

https://aacpl.librarycalendar.com/events/upcoming?library_branch%5B346%5D=346&submit=Apply&form_id=lc_calendar_upcoming_form

Child, Adult and Family Activities

[Virtual activities for kids and adults](#)

[Family fun virtual activities](#)

You are not alone!

- If you are feeling an increase in anxiety and finding it hard to make it through this difficult time, seek professional help
- Most agencies are offering telehealth at this time
- Speak to your doctor about whether or not medication for anxiety, depression or insomnia might be needed

Anne Arundel Mental Health Agency, Inc. <http://www.aamentalhealth.org/>

AAMG Mental Health Specialists <https://www.myaamg.org/mental-health-specialists>

Test HOME to 741741 to speak with a crisis counselor

<https://www.crisistextline.org/>

Annapolis Child and Family Therapy Center

https://annapoliscftc.com/?gclid=CjwKCAiAiML-BRAAEiwAuWVggqR6ZKcsoaTEPxioGXknEbBIfpgsSPdWB25HRI2orCqdPAsDuKXsvBoCtYoQAvD_BwE

Anne Arundel Counseling <http://www.annearundelcounseling.com/>

Arundel Psychological Associates <https://apacares.com/>

CPE Clinic, LLC <https://cpeclinic.com/>

Waypoint Wellness Center <https://www.waypointwellnesscenter.com/>

Annapolis Psychological Associates <https://www.annapolispsychological.com/>

Resources

Stay up to date on CDC facts: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.wellnesstogether.org/blogs/news>

<http://worrywisekids.org>

<https://consciousdiscipline.com>

<https://adaa.org/learn-from-us/from-the-experts/blog-posts/consumer/top-ten-covid-19-anxiety-reduction-strategies>

Mindfulness Apps

Smiling Mind

Headspace

Calm

Breathe Kids

MyLife

Thank You!

Questions and Comments

For more information please contact The Summit School:

www.thesummitschool.org

410-798-1005

For information about upcoming Community Talks:

Jessica.Palmeri@thesummitschool.org

