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FAMILY AFFAIR

Family Strategies to Deal with Stress During COVID-19



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The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic may cause stress, fear, and anxiety -- especially in older people, those with chronic disease, children and teens, health care providers, and people who have mental health and substance abuse conditions. Learning how to cope with these feelings will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. For further information, visit health.mypgc.us/coronavirus or call (301) 883-6627.



ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

Create a daily routine to help regain a new sense of "normal." Try to structure your day to as close as possible to what it was before COVID-19. Some examples include:

- Wake up, get dressed and eat breakfast at the same time each day.
- Set up a workspace in your home, away from distractions, to complete assignments or projects during normal hours for school or work.
- For students, try to replicate their school's schedule by switching activities or subjects every 30-40 minutes.
- At "lunchtime," eat lunch together.



ENGAGE IN SELF CARE

It's always important to get enough sleep, eat healthy food and engage in physical exercise. During times of anxiety, these self-care activities become even more essential.

- Build relaxing activities into your routine, especially actions that have helped your children in past stressful events.
- Encourage each other to have healthy habits like washing hands regularly.
- Practice and teach coping skills such as meditation, identifying triggers, or active listening.



STAY CONNECTED

Social distancing measures are meant to keep people healthy. Use technology like Skype, Zoom, Facetime or other apps to talk to friends and family. Parents can set up virtual playdates for kids or schedule times they can talk with their friends on the phone. Play board games or puzzles together. Shop online for elderly relatives or neighbors and let everyone choose items.