A COVID-19 Quarantine Coping Guide for Families

Developed by the Broadmoor Improvement Association with special thanks to Shelby Gelfand-Toutant, a former educator and current Tulane School of Social Work master's level intern at the BIA. Our hope is that you and your family can use this guide to help ease some of the pressure of the current global public health crisis in your daily lives and family systems. We welcome you to reach out with any questions or needs for additional resources at wellness@broadmoorimprovement.com!
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All Families

Other Resource Guides

- Louisiana Center for Children’s Rights
- Greenhills Schools Resource Guide
- Podcast from Crescent Care Doctor

General Recommendations:

- Limit news consumption to reliable sources and share information with children based on developmental needs (outlined in age-range sections)
- Create a loose schedule for yourself and kids - but don’t fret if you have days where things don’t go as planned
  - Khan Academy suggestions
  - Customizable Schedule
- Change out of PJ’s and bathe every day
- Limit screen time and set expectations around it. Include this in your schedule.
- Include kids in household chores like cooking (if they are healthy), cleaning, laundry, and yard work.
- Do something outside every day (weather permitting). Walks around the neighborhood or outside yoga are great ways to practice social distancing while still getting out of the house.
- Socialize while maintaining social distance- Video chat, phone calls, write letters or emails to friends and family

Resources for Mental Health

- SAMHSA - What to expect, ways to support yourself
- CDC- Managing Anxiety and Stress for Adults
- CDC- Helping kids cope with emergencies
- Reach out to your current mental health care provider- they may be offering telehealth sessions
- Crisis Resources 24/7:
  - Metropolitan Crisis Response Team (504) 826-2675
  - SAMHSA- Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
  - ViaLink crisis line- dialing 211 or 504-269-COPE (2673) or 1-800-749-COPE (2673)
  - Suicide Prevention Hotline- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
    - Crisis Text Line: Text 741-741 and type in “hello” or ”start”
Coping Resource for Adults

- While the reflex to catastrophize can be strong, focus on the things you can do and control. Kids are emotionally attuned to the adults in their lives, and your strategies matter when it comes to being able to support them.
- Gratitude Journal
  - Templates and Ideas
  - Gratitude Journal Apps:
    - Gratitude Journal
    - Bliss Journal
    - Gratitude 365 Pro
    - Day One
- Mindfulness and Meditation Apps:
  - Headspace
  - Calm
  - Insight Timer
  - Smiling Mind
  - The Mindfulness App
- Podcasts
  - The Anxiety Guy
  - Selfie
  - The One You Feed
  - Happy Place
- On days where it may feel difficult to socially distance, focus on remembering that you are reducing risk of transmitting COVID-19 and protecting at-risk and vulnerable people, as well as your family.
- Remember, you’re not perfect, and stress is natural under these circumstances. All humans lose their tempers from time to time - you get to choose how you model repairing and apologizing when conflict arises.

Conflict Management and Resolution

- Between adults (partners)- via Love is Respect and Very Well Mind
  - Work through things as they come up- Don’t stockpile resentments
  - Maintain goodwill- if you are partnered, assume your partner is doing the best they can and aren’t trying to cause hurt intentionally.
  - Take responsibility for your feelings, needs, and behaviors- Use “I” statements whenever possible.
○ Find the real issue- typically arguments happen when one person’s needs are not being met. Ask yourself: what is it that I think I need from this person right now? Is it someone to listen, someone to help you brainstorm a solution? Try to talk about what you are feeling and focus on the real issue at hand.

○ Agree to disagree- If you can’t resolve an issue, press the pause button and give yourself some space (30 minutes or more) to cool down. You can’t and won’t agree on everything, but try to focus on what matters and revisit the conversation when you’re calm.

○ Compromise- Find a middle ground that you both can feel satisfied with and consider how individuals respond to stress differently and may have different coping strategies and needs at this time.

○ Between parents and children- via Nancy Eisenberg and Society for Research in Child Development

○ Make eye contact and reduce distractions when talking with each other- Kids will “tune out” noise if they are watching a screen or engrossed in another activity

○ Avoid power struggles
  ■ Control your reactions. Big reactions get big responses.
  ■ Walk away if you need to
  ■ Create compromises together
  ■ Let your child “save face” by giving them the opportunity to make a good choice and maintain autonomy

○ ACT strategy:
  ■ Acknowledge your child’s feeling. Let your child know that you understand their feeling or desire.
  Example: It seems like you’re angry and upset right now and you’d like to slam the door.

  ■ Communicate the limit. Let them know the limit for their behavior.
  Example: Even when we’re upset, it is not okay to slam doors.

  ■ Target alternative. Give your child an alternative behavior.
  Example: If you’re angry, you can punch a pillow or go for a run outside. Which would you like to do?

○ Have clear consequences and give choices
  ■ Give a choice for behavior. A choice will make your child feel valued. For example, ask your child to put their phone away in 2 minutes or let them know that choosing to stay on the phone longer will mean losing phone privileges for the afternoon.
- Use natural, logical, and related consequences. For example, if your child is refusing to get off their phone after giving choice, they lose phone privileges for a set time. Losing dessert after dinner won’t make sense to your child as a consequence for not putting down their phone.
- Explain the consequence as placing responsibility on your child to make the responsible choice.
- Follow through with consequences.

- Between siblings- via Very Well Family and Psychology Today
  - Conflict between siblings is normal, inevitable, and peaks in adolescence.
  - Set rules for disagreements. Respect is non-negotiable (i.e. no name calling, hitting or physical aggression). Taking time to calm down before engaging in conflict resolution is okay.
  - Creating structure in your family that values listening is important. Ensure that each sibling listens to the other’s point of view without interruption before sharing their experience.
  - Encourage kids to be specific and state the problem. Focus on what they are upset about, not sibling’s behavior. For example, a child can say “I want an equal say in the game we play,” rather than, “Sibling is not being fair.”
  - Give your children the opportunity to suggest solutions, putting themselves in each others’ shoes before suggesting a resolution.
  - Step in only if necessary. It is important to give kids a chance to learn how to resolve conflict independently, but if disagreements become disrespectful or aggressive, intervene immediately.
    - Make sure everyone is calm before engaging further.
    - Listen to each side without interruption or judgement
    - Guide children to look at problem and find solutions peacefully
  - **Micro-circle strategy**
    - Create a Space
    - Mutual Understanding
    - Action Plan
Elementary Schoolers

Developmental needs

- Elementary school children have a wide range of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive needs. This guide is meant to give you an idea of the general, typical, needs of this age range, but each child is unique and you know your children and their needs best. It is important to meet the needs of children while social distancing for long periods of time in order to keep them physically and mentally healthy.

- Physical Needs
  - Lots of active physical exercise and movement (at least one hour a day)
  - Plenty of fruits, vegetables, and protein. Limit added salt, fat and sugary foods.
  - 9-12 hours of sleep per night

- Emotional and Social Needs
  - Attention and affection from parents
  - Feeling independent
  - Process-oriented praise for positive behavior and effort - Growth mindset focused
    - Carol Dweck TED Talk on Growth Mindset
  - Ability to talk to others and have them listen
  - Interaction with peers (Tough while social distancing! Try video chats, walkie talkies with neighborhood friends, ...)

- Cognitive Needs
  - Support with homework - Have your child try it themselves first
  - Lots of reading - both independently and with a caregiver
  - Challenges and learning to try things multiple times before getting it “right.”
  - Frequent breaks from homework or schoolwork

Coping Strategies for Elementary Schoolers

- Label your feeling - express to your parents or siblings how you are feeling!
  - Putting a name on it helps you problem solve or cope with the feeling.
    - Feelings wheel

- Breathing exercises:
  - Bubble breaths - Imagine you are blowing bubbles through a bubble wand
  - Star Breathing
  - 4-7-8 Breathing

- Exercise
Yoga

- Apps
  - I Am Love
  - I Am Sun, I Am Moon
  - Super Stretch Yoga
- Videos
  - Cosmic Kids
  - Karma Kids Yoga

- Go for a run or bike ride around the block
- Jump rope
- Dance party!
- GoNoodle

Art

- Make a collage with magazines and photos
- Draw on the sidewalk or a fence to brighten up your neighborhood walks!
- Make cards to send to friends, family, neighbors, or nursing home residents
- More ideas

Listen to or play music

- Podcasts:
  - Noodle Loaf
  - Saturday Morning Cereal Bowl
  - Spare the Rock, Spoil the Child

Listen to a calming podcast

- Tales from the Lilypad
- Story Time
- Stories Podcast
- Storynory

Quick calm down exercises

- Name all the animals you can in alphabetical order (i.e. alligator, bear, cow, etc.)
- Squeeze something like play dough, silly putty, or a stress ball
- Get a drink of very cold water
- Think of 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.
- Do jumping jacks- It might sound crazy, but doing a short burst of exercise can help your body calm down if you're feeling overwhelmed!
- Smell something pleasant, like a candle or flower
How much information to share with your elementary schoolers

A NOTE OF CAUTION! Be careful not to pressure children to talk about an outbreak or join in expressive activities. While many children will easily talk about the outbreak, some may become frightened. Some may even feel more anxiety and stress if they talk about it, listen to others talk about it, or look at artwork related to the outbreak. Allow children to remove themselves from these activities, and monitor them for signs of distress.

- Brief, simple explanations that balance facts about COVID with reassurances that their homes are safe and adults are working hard to keep people healthy and take care of people if they get sick
- Media and news geared towards adults will be confusing or frightening at this developmental stage. If kids want to access news, direct them towards sites that are kid-focused
  - https://www.timeforkids.com/
  - https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/
- May need help separating reality from fantasy or rumors
- SAMHSA - Talking to kids about infection diseases
- National Association of School Psychologists - Talking to your kids about COVID-19
Middle Schoolers

Developmental needs

- Middle school is a time of rapid development, physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally. Emotions may feel “big,” so being supportive and available for your middle schooler is especially important in these times. Practicing social distancing will be challenging for middle schoolers, who crave lots of social interaction, so finding ways for them to interact with friends will be important.

- Physical needs
  - Lots of active physical exercise and movement (at least one hour a day)
  - Plenty of fruits, vegetables, and protein. Limit added salt, fat and sugary foods.
  - 9-12 hours of sleep per night
  - Awareness and preparation for puberty

- Emotional and Social Needs
  - Conversations about things that are important to them and ability to develop and share opinions
  - Privacy and independence
  - Support for mental health- seek outside help if necessary
  - Open communication from parents with explanations for rules and limits
  - Lots of peer interaction- Social media becomes important for middle schoolers. Keep lines of communication open about internet safety and your level of monitoring

- Cognitive needs
  - Ability to use flexible thinking- trying lots of different strategies and thinking about things from many different perspectives
  - Support for lots of questioning and thinking about the future
    - Middle schoolers may be worried about current events and will need to talk through their anxieties or worries.
  - Involvement in discussions and debates

Coping strategies for middle schoolers

- Mindfulness
  - Calm App
  - Headspace App
  - Change to Chill- Website with guided imagery, activities, music, and information about mindfulness for teens
• Exercise
  ○ At home workout
  ○ Run or ride your bike around the block
  ○ Yoga
    ■ Yoga For Teens
    ■ Yoga Ed

• Art
  ○ Coloring pages
  ○ Cross stitch or embroidery (etsy.com has great kits!)
  ○ Cook or bake

• Listen to or play music

• Podcasts
  ○ The Radio Adventures of Eleanor Amplified
  ○ Flyest Fables
  ○ YouthRadio

• Quick calm down coping skills
  ○ Get a drink of very cold water
  ○ Think of 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.
  ○ Hold something in your hand and really focus on it. What does it feel like? How heavy is it? What does it look like?
  ○ Do jumping jacks- It might sound crazy, but doing a short burst of exercise can help your body calm down if you’re feeling overwhelmed!
  ○ Smell something pleasant, like a candle or flower
  ○ Practice self kindness: repeat kind, compassionate phrases to yourself such as, “You’re having a rough time, but you’ll make it through,” and “You’re strong and you can move through this.”

How much information to share with you middle schoolers

A NOTE OF CAUTION! Be careful not to pressure children to talk about an outbreak or join in expressive activities. While many children will easily talk about the outbreak, some may become frightened. Some may even feel more anxiety and stress if they talk about it, listen to others talk about it, or look at artwork related to the outbreak. Allow children to remove themselves from these activities, and monitor them for signs of distress.
● Some children will not be able to understand and process news intended for adults, so limit exposure to news surrounding COVID or restrict content to developmentally appropriate sources
  ○ https://www.tweentribune.com/
  ○ https://www.nytimes.com/section/learning
  ○ https://www.dogonews.com/
● Honest, factual conversations can help middle school aged children feel in control
● Still may need some help separating reality from fantasy and rumors
● SAMHSA- Talking to kids about infection diseases
● National Association of School Psychologists- Talking to your kids about COVID-19
High Schoolers

Developmental needs

- Physical needs
  - Lots of active physical exercise and movement (at least one hour a day)
  - 8-10 hours of sleep per night
  - Encouragement to make healthy food choices
  - Honest conversations about drug and alcohol use and engaging in healthy sexual activity

- Emotional and Social Needs
  - Privacy and independence
  - Support for mental health- seek outside help if necessary
  - Close friendships and relationships with peers
  - Talk about how they are managing and maintaining relationships from afar

- Cognitive needs
  - Reasoning and critical thinking activities
  - Development of writing skills
  - Planning for the future- college and/or career

Coping strategies for high schoolers-Direct for high school audience

- Mindfulness
  - Calm app
  - Headspace app
  - Gratitude journal (see adult coping strategies for links)
  - Change to Chill- Website with guided imagery, activities, music, and information about mindfulness for teens

- Exercise
  - Born to Move online class
  - Yoga
    - Yoga For Teens
    - Yoga Ed
  - At home workout

- Art
  - Coloring pages
  - Cross stitch or embroidery (etsy.com has great kits!)
- Cook or bake
- Watercolor

- Podcasts
  - Welcome to Nightvale
  - Radiolab
  - The Past and Curious
  - YouthRadio
  - Stuff You Missed in History Class

- Quick calm down coping skills
  - Think of 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.
  - Hold something in your hand and really focus on it. What does it feel like? How heavy is it? What does it look like?
  - Do jumping jacks - It might sound crazy, but doing a short burst of exercise can help your body calm down if you're feeling overwhelmed!
  - Smell something pleasant, like a candle or flower
  - Practice self kindness: repeat kind, compassionate phrases to yourself such as, “You’re having a rough time, but you'll make it through,” and “You’re strong and you can move through this.”

### Advocacy - What can Teens do to help?

- Sew face masks to donate - Pattern
- Donate to Second Harvest or Broadmoor Food Pantry
- Offer to do errands for neighbors who are home-bound or high risk
- Make cards or write letters to seniors at assisted living and nursing homes
- Assist blind or vision impaired people with daily tasks on Be My Eyes

### How much information to share with high schoolers?

- Honest, factual conversations can help teens feel in control
- High schoolers will be able to understand and process news from most sources, but make sure they are getting information from reliable, legitimate sources
- Monitor your teen for signs of distress when talking about COVID and allow them time to not engage in these conversations. Consider limiting how much time they spend watching or reading the news or on social media if they seem distressed.
- SAMHSA - Talking to kids about infection diseases
- National Association of School Psychologists - Talking to your kids about COVID-19
For Teenagers- What You Can Do For Yourself and Others

Coping Strategies- What you can do for yourself
- Mindfulness
  - Calm app
  - Headspace app
  - Gratitude journal
    - Templates and Ideas
    - Gratitude Journal Apps:
      - Gratitude Journal
      - Bliss Journal
      - Gratitude 365 Pro
      - Day One
    - Change to Chill- Website with guided imagery, activities, music, and information about mindfulness for teens
- Exercise
  - Born to Move online class
  - Yoga
    - Yoga For Teens
    - Yoga Ed
  - At home workout
- Art
  - Coloring pages
  - Cross stitch or embroidery (etsy.com has great kits!)
  - Cook or bake
  - Watercolor
- Podcasts
  - Welcome to Nightvale
  - Radiolab
  - The Past and Curious
  - YouthRadio
  - Stuff You Missed in History Class
- Quick calm down coping skills
  - Think of 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.
○ Hold something in your hand and really focus on it. What does it feel like? How heavy is it? What does it look like?
○ Do jumping jacks- It might sound crazy, but doing a short burst of exercise can help your body calm down if you’re feeling overwhelmed!
○ Smell something pleasant, like a candle or flower
○ Practice self kindness: repeat kind, compassionate phrases to yourself such as, “You’re having a rough time, but you’ll make it through,” and “You’re strong and you can move through this.”

Advocacy and Volunteering- What you can do for others
- Sew face masks to donate- Pattern
- Donate to Second Harvest or Broadmoor Food Pantry
- Offer to do errands for neighbors who are home-bound or high risk
- Make cards or write letters to seniors at assisted living and nursing homes
- Assist blind or vision impaired people with daily tasks on Be My Eyes
For Middle Schoolers- Coping Strategies and Activities

- **Mindfulness**
  - [Calm App](#)
  - [Headspace App](#)
  - [Change to Chill](#) - Website with guided imagery, activities, music, and information about mindfulness for teens

- **Exercise**
  - [At home workout](#)
  - Run or ride your bike around the block
  - Yoga
    - [Yoga For Teens](#)
    - [Yoga Ed](#)

- **Art**
  - [Coloring pages](#)
  - Cross stitch or embroidery (etsy.com has great kits!)
  - Cook or bake

- **Listen to or play music**

- **Podcasts**
  - [The Radio Adventures of Eleanor Amplified](#)
  - [Flyest Fables](#)
  - [YouthRadio](#)

- **Quick calm down coping skills**
  - Get a drink of very cold water
  - Think of 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.
  - Hold something in your hand and really focus on it. What does it feel like? How heavy is it? What does it look like?
  - Do jumping jacks- It might sound crazy, but doing a short burst of exercise can help your body calm down if you're feeling overwhelmed!
  - Smell something pleasant, like a candle or flower
  - Practice self kindness: repeat kind, compassionate phrases to yourself such as, “You’re having a rough time, but you’ll make it through,” and “You’re strong and you can move through this.”
For Elementary Schoolers- Coping Strategies and Activities

- Label your feeling- express to your parents or siblings how you are feeling! Putting a name on it helps you problem solve or cope with the feeling.
  - **Feelings wheel**
- Breathing exercises:
  - Bubble breaths- Imagine you are blowing bubbles through a bubble wand
  - **Star Breathing**
  - **4-7-8 Breathing**
- Exercise
  - Yoga
    - Apps
      - **I Am Love**
      - **I Am Sun, I Am Moon**
      - **Super Stretch Yoga**
    - Videos
      - **Cosmic Kids**
      - **Karma Kids Yoga**
  - Go for a run or bike ride around the block
  - Jump rope
  - Dance party!
  - **GoNoodle**
- Art
  - Make a collage with magazines and photos
  - Draw on the sidewalk or a fence to brighten up your neighborhood walks!
  - Make cards to send to friends, family, neighbors, or nursing home residents
  - **More ideas**
- Listen to or play music
  - Podcasts:
    - **Noodle Loaf**
    - **Saturday Morning Cereal Bowl**
    - **Spare the Rock, Spoil the Child**
- Listen to a calming podcast
  - **Tales from the Lilypad**
Quick calm down exercises

- Name all the animals you can in alphabetical order (i.e. alligator, bear, cow, etc.)
- Squeeze something like play dough, silly putty, or a stress ball
- Get a drink of very cold water
- Think of 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.
- Do jumping jacks- It might sound crazy, but doing a short burst of exercise can help your body calm down if you’re feeling overwhelmed!
- Smell something nice, like a candle or flower