

Hello Hyde-Addison Families!

We hope that you are taking care of yourselves and your loved ones. The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. Please take some time to read these tips that will help relieve stress during this difficult time.



Mrs. McLaurin, School Social Worker

Mrs. Leopold, School Psychologist

Take Care of Yourself and Your Community

Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

Ways to Cope with Stress

- **Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media.**
 - Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.

- **Take care of your body.**
 - Take deep breaths, stretch, pray, meditate, practice mindfulness (lots on YOUTUBE!)
 - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals (during this time it's easy to under eat or overeat, mindless eating = unhealthy mindset)
 - Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep
 - Take your vitamins!

- **Make time to unwind.**
 - Try to do some other activities you enjoy.

- **Connect with others.**
 - Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

- **Take care of your mental health.**
 - Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

For Parents

Children react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents can be more reassuring to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared.

Watch for Behavior Changes in Your Child

Not all children respond to stress in the same way. Some common changes to watch for include:

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors in teens
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain

Ways to Support your Child

- **Talk with your child** about the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **Answer questions** and [share facts about COVID-19](#) in a way that your child can understand.
- **Reassure your child** that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
- **Limit your family’s exposure to news coverage** of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- **Try to keep up with regular routines.** If schools are closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities. When a child knows what to expect and notices regular family activities, they begin to understand what's important. This strengthens shared values, beliefs, and interests and decreases stress and anxiety.
- **Be a role model.** Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members.
- **Create virtual connections.** Set up playdates, dance parties or book clubs. As humans, it's important we stay connected with other humans on an authentic level.