



## Protecting Your Mental Health:

### How to help your children cope?

The COVID 19 situation can be challenging for many of us, including our children. It is normal for them to feel stress during this time with so many changes in their lives.

There are some things that we can do to help our kids get through these times. And the good news is that the [resilience and coping skills](#) they learn now will help them later in life as well.

**1. Your children may experience many different emotions.**

Help your child decrease their stress by getting enough sleep, eating healthy foods and staying active.

**2. Be patient with yourself and with your children.**

Try to keep calm and help your children to understand the current situation. You may also be feeling stress and pressure at this time. Be patient with yourself and look for supports. Help your child to be more resilient. For example, try some deep breathing or meditation techniques together. For more information on how to support your children, visit our Parenting in Ottawa site.

**3. Maintain a routine.**

As much as possible, keep a similar routine to the one that you had before the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, try to go to bed and wake up at similar times every day. Having a routine will help both you and your children during this time.

**4. Ensure that you build in some fun into their day.**

Make sure to have fun with your children every day. Balancing school, work, and other pressures can be overwhelming. Take breaks and have fun with your kids. Try a board game, dance or sing together.

**5. Stay connected with loved ones.**

Even if you cannot visit your loved ones in person at this time, it is important to stay connected. Call or text your family and friends or stay in touch through social media. Consider video chats as a way for your children to see their loved ones.

## 6. Seek out more support if you need it.

It is important to ask for support when facing difficult situations. Some of the support available to you include:

- **Immediate crisis support** is available from [Distress Centre Ottawa](#) and Region 24/7 - 613-238-3311 (Bilingual). For children and youth ages 18 and under, please call **Youth Services Bureau's 24/7 Crisis Line** at 613-260-2360 or 1-877-377-7775 (toll free for Eastern Ontario)
- Use [1Call1Click.ca](#) to access support for anyone under 21 years of age. You can call 613-260-2360 or 1-877-377-7775 (toll free for Eastern Ontario) or use 1call1click website to fill the online form.
- [AccessMHA](#) helps adults to find support for mental health and substance use. Go to [AccessMHA.ca](#) and fill out the online form to get started.
- [Counselling Connect](#) provides quick access to a free phone or video counselling session. Go to [counsellingconnect.org](#) to book an appointment.
- The [Walk-In Counselling clinic](#) offers free counselling support without an appointment in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Somali, Cantonese, and Mandarin. Call 613-755-2277 for locations and availability.

For more support and information visit [OttawaPublicHealth.ca/COVIDMentalHealth](#) or call **Ottawa Public Health Information Centre** at **613-580-6744**.



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