

Tips to improve your well-being during a pandemic

All family members

- **Pay attention to your own needs and feelings.** Engage in healthy activities you enjoy and find relaxing.
- **Keep routines.** Exercise regularly, keep regular sleep routines, stay hydrated and eat healthy food as much as possible.
- **Support others and stay connected.** Help others in their time of need. You and the person receiving support will benefit. Keep connected with social networks. Find new ways to reach out to friends and neighbors for support.
- **Limit media.** Avoid watching, reading or listening to news or social media that cause you to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information 1-2 times each day that you can act on.

Parents and caregivers

- **Connection is important.** During times of stress and crisis, children often seek more attachment and time with parents. They need you. Use honest and age appropriate information when you discuss COVID-19 with your children.
- **Keep routines.** Maintain familiar routines in daily life as much as possible, especially if children must stay home. Engage children with age appropriate activities.
- **Children watch adults.** If your children have concerns, address them together to ease their anxiety. Children will observe your behavior and emotions for cues on how to manage their own emotions during difficult times.
- **Find positive ways to express feelings.** Every child has his or her own way to express emotions. Creative activities like playing and drawing can help children express their emotions. Children feel relieved if they can express and communicate their feelings in a safe and supportive environment.
- **Protect your children from your worries if you can.** Save detailed discussions of the stresses you are facing for times when the children are outside or asleep.

Youth

- **Keep routines.** Establish or stick to a normal routine and continue to complete daily tasks like schoolwork.
- **Get good sleep.** Go to bed no more than 1 hour later than you usually do on a school night. Get up no later than 1 hour later than you usually do for school.
- **Support others.** Help an elderly family member or neighbor. Offer to pick up groceries, babysit, do yard work or help with other tasks you can do safely.
- **Connect with your friends.** Find creative ways to connect with your friends through text, social media or online games. Check-in with your friends. This is a challenging time for all.
- **Help yourself and get help.** Meditate, pray, go for a walk, or find a way to take a “time out” when you feel overwhelmed or stressed. Call or email a school counselor or teachers when you need support.

First responders and healthcare professionals

- **Look for signs of secondary traumatic stress.** People can experience emotional stress when they hear about the firsthand trauma experiences of others. It can happen anytime during or after a traumatic event.
- **Remember self-care is important.** Take breaks, get good rest, and eat a balanced diet to maintain your well-being so you can take care of others.
- **Ask for help early.** Seek professional help if you feel mentally unwell, overwhelmed, exhausted, or stressed after rest.

Resources

Help lines for people who struggle with substance misuse, increased depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts:

- Pierce County Crisis Line, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: (800) 576-7764.
- Crisis Text Line: text 741741 (mobile fees waived).
- Other mental health resources: call 211.
- LGBTQ Trevor Project Support Center: (866) 488-7386.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: (800) 273-TALK (8255).

Resources to manage stress

- Kids Mental Health Pierce County: <https://kidsmentalhealthpiercecounty.org/youth-mental-health-resources/#COVID-19>
- Mary Bridge Children's Family Resources, Helping Children Cope, and Child & Family Resources: <https://www.marybridge.org/coronavirus/additional-resources/>
- Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health: <https://www.gizmo4mentalhealth.org/forkids/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/trauma-toolkit/secondary-traumatic-stress>