



# Let's Stay Connected... Information for Our Parents



## Supporting Our Teens During the Coronavirus Outbreak

The disruption and isolation resulting from the coronavirus outbreak presents a particular challenge for teens. It interferes with normal teen desires to seek social connection with peers and to decrease dependency on parents. The abrupt loss of important activities, e.g. sports and participation in school organizations, etc. and the loss of the usual “rites of passage”, e.g. prom, graduation traditions, etc. is a further complication for teens.

***Parents can support their teens during this difficult time by:***

***Letting them know you understand the significant changes that have occurred in their lives and that you recognize that the social isolation they are experiencing is difficult for them.***

Listen to their concerns and acknowledge their feelings. Express support, reminding them that the current situation will eventually end. Life will return to normal.

***Informing them that maintaining social distance by remaining home is a requirement.***

Remind them that it is their contribution to keeping family, friends, and community safe.

***Limiting the time they watch television reports*** about the coronavirus outbreak to avoid creating unnecessary fears.

***Encouraging them to develop a personal schedule for learning activities, physical exercise, and responsibilities for home maintenance.***

Involve them in creating a family schedule for mealtimes, family time, walks, etc. Predictability and routine helps children of all ages (and adults) remain calm.

***Promoting a balance of private time and family time to avoid their excessive isolation.***

Teens need some privacy and tend to isolate themselves in their rooms. Let them know that you value being with them. Excessive time alone can lead to depression.

***Helping them maintain a balance between use of technology to stay connected with friends and for playing video games.***

Research shows that the longer a child or teen engages in screen time, the more likely they are to be anxious and depressed. *Preventive Medicine Reports 2017*

***Monitoring their sleep schedule and eliminating the use of technology an hour before bedtime.***

Sleep deprivation is common for teens who use devices during the night and lack of sleep can lead to depression and anxiety. Research shows the blue light emitted by devices at night interferes with sleep. *American Sleep Association 2017*

***Displaying the behavior and attitude you expect from them - calmness, kindness, and optimism.***

Parents are the most important role model for their child/ren.