



Iowa's Area
Education
Agencies

Social-Emotional- Behavioral Health

SETTING ROUTINES FOR YOUR FAMILY DURING COVID-19



A letter from Iowa Educators

A team of Iowa's educators worked together to create this resource as a way to support your family during this health crisis. It includes guidance in helping children and adolescents understand the events that are occurring and cope with stressors. The resources also give strategies and activities for decreasing stress and boredom (including methods of structuring your time, ideas of activities, etc.) which may lead to parenting challenges.

None of us have experienced an event like this before. We're all learning what will work for our families. We'll all make mistakes. We encourage you to take time to talk with your family about what's working and not working. These resources may give you some ideas of where to start. Do what makes sense for you and your family.

We know that many Iowans are facing challenges that can't be addressed through these resources. Taking care of your family's basic needs is the priority. Our social emotional well-being is dependent on having basic needs met ... food, shelter, safety, connectedness with others. The resources that we are making available may help maintain your child's educational progress, keep your household running a little more smoothly, and increase coping during this situation. None of the suggestions are more important than finding a way to help meet your family's basic needs. Find more info in this video: [Maslow's Pyramid of Needs](#).

Community resources are still available in your area and are updated regularly. These include: your local schools, Area Education Agency, Doctor's office, Mental Health Center, religious organizations, food pantries, and Iowa's Department of Human Services. You can also find support through hotlines, and support groups ([NAMI COVID-19 Resource and Information Guide](#)). Stay connected if you're in need.

- Your Life Iowa (855) 581-8111; (emotional support line)
- Foundation2 Crisis Center (319) 362-2174 (crisis counseling)
- SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline (800) 985-5990 (natural disaster crisis counseling)

Staying physically connected with family and friends is hard to do right now. Some of the activities included may help. Also look for what your neighborhoods and communities may be putting in place to help families stay connected.

Look for additional resources to come out in the future to continue to help support your families social emotional well-being!

TIPS

- **Plan family activities together to decrease stress and boredom.**
- **Take time with family to talk through challenges.**
- **Don't try to do too many new activities at once. Do what makes sense for your family.**
- **Take care of your family's basic needs first. ([Taking Care of Yourself - NCTSN](#))**
- **Reach out through one of the included resources if you/your family needs support.**
- **Stay connected socially through new family and community activities.**

Talking to Children about COVID-19

The below resources were selected because they provide child-friendly ways of communicating about COVID-19. They include videos, infographics and short activities/learning lessons. How COVID-19 affects your family and routines may change over time. This creates uncertainty and potential for increases in stress. After taking time to talk about COVID-19 with your family, check in regularly and reflect on how you and your family are coping.

YOUNG CHILD

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- [Teddy Bear Kindergarten is Cancelled!](#) (Video – Treehouse Direct)
- [Washy Wash](#) (Video – Sesame Street)

MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL

- [To Help them Understand Coronavirus, Teach Students about Complexity](#) (Activity – Harvard)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- [Infographic for kids: Anatomy of the coronavirus](#) (Infographic – LiveScience)

ELEMENTARY

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- [Just for Kids: A Comic Exploring the New Coronavirus](#) (Infographic – NPR)
- [Coronavirus Lessons from BrainPop](#) (Interactive activities)
- [Ask A Scientist: How do People Become Infected with Germs?](#) (Graphic story – CDC)
- [Ask a Scientist: How does my body fight disease?](#) (Graphic story – CDC)

ALL AGES

- [How to Talk to Kids about the Coronavirus](#) (Video – Child Mind Institute)
- [Helping Children Cope with Uncertainty](#) (Video)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- [Covid-19 Parenting: Talking about COVID-19](#) (Infographic – WHO)



Family Activities & Routines that Promote Social-Emotional Well-Being

COVID-19 creates a lot of uncertainty for your family. Normal work, school, daycare and social routines have been upset. All these changes create unpredictability and uncertainty which can fuel anxiety, stress, tempers and emotions. It's important to work with your family to develop routines that support your basic needs as well as your social-emotional needs.

Focus on Basic and Emotional Needs First

- Meet basic needs first
- Create space to talk about stressors
- Slow down and enjoy little things, reconnect

ALL AGES

- [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) (NCTSN)
- [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#) (NASP)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- [COVID-19 Parenting: Keep calm and manage stress](#) (Infographic – WHO)

ELEMENTARY

- [Parent Tips for Helping School-Age Children after Disasters](#) (NCTSN)

YOUNG CHILDREN

- [Parent Tips for Helping Infants & Toddlers after Disaster](#) (NCTSN)
- [Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children after Disasters](#) (NCTSN)
- [How To Get Your Kids To Stop Touching Their Faces](#) (Huffpost)

TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS

- [Parent Tips for Helping Adolescents after Disasters](#) (NCTSN)



Structure the Day

- Build a family routine with your family.
- Allow children a choice of activities.
- Revisit the schedule regularly.

ALL AGES

- [Making the Most of COVID-19 School Closures](#) (NESCA)
- [5 Positive Behavior Intervention Supports for Families](#) (Webinar – FL PBIS)
- [Supporting Families with PBIS at Home](#) (Center on PBIS)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- [COVID-19 Parenting: Structure Up](#) (Infographic – CDC)
- [Essential PBIS Practices for Families](#) (Video – FL PBIS)

PRESCHOOL-ELEMENTARY

- [My kid's school is closed, so now what?:](#) Provides a short reading on how to set-up or structure the day. (Confident Parent Confident Kids)
- [Supporting Kids During the Coronavirus Crisis: Tips for nurturing and protecting children at home.](#) (Child Mind Institute)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- See also [Wide Open School \(PK-5\)](#) on the following page.

BIRTH-3

- [Creating Structure and Rules for Your Child](#) (Video – CDC)

TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS

- [Supporting Teenagers and Young Adults During the Coronavirus Crisis](#) (Child Mind Institute)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- See also [Wide Open School \(6-12\)](#) on the following page.

Select a Range of Stimulating Activities

- Include activities that are physically, socially and intellectually stimulating.
- Include natural family activities (read, explore nature, play outside etc.)
- Include alone-time (we all need a break from family)

ALL AGES

- [Simple Activities for Children and Adolescents](#) (Screen free list – NCTSN)

BIRTH-3

- [At-Home Activity Guide](#) (Zero to Three)

PRESCHOOL-ELEMENTARY

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- **Wide Open School:** Provides suggested age appropriate morning, mid-day, afternoon and evening activities across a range of content/topics including web-based activities/materials and/or suggested resources. (PK-5)

TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- **Wide Open School:** Provides suggested age appropriate morning, mid-day, afternoon and evening activities across a range of content/topics including web-based activities/materials and/or suggested resources. (6-12)

Keep Socially Connected

- Seek out virtual opportunities.
- Include community activities from Facebook/library page or newsletter (bear/scavenger hunts etc.).

YOUNG CHILDREN

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- **Growing Sound Youtube Channel:** Videos/songs to engage parents/children for SEL-as well as videos of songs and performances from around the world.

TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS

- **Covid 19 Compassion in Action: Nurturing Relationships While Social Distancing** (*Wise Wisconsin*)
- **Covid 19 Compassion in Action: Saying No to Support Our Yeses** (*Wise Wisconsin*)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- **Jot-Journal:** Share a journal between an adult and youth. FREE for a limited time.

SCHOOL-AGE

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- **Please Pass the Love: Live stream activities:** Free weekly live-stream events for you and/or your children. Focused on connecting with similarly-age peers in a moderated and safe environment. (K-12)

Write it Down!

- Use paper/dry-erase board, or have the kids draw pictures for each and/or use objects around the house to make a 3-dimensional schedule board.

ALL AGES

- **Kanban Board** (*Video – Spanish – Susana DeLeon*)
- **Object Schedules** (*Video*)
- **Visual Support Video Series: How to Use Picture and Object Schedules** (*Video*)

Child/Student Friendly Resources:

- **Kanban Board 4 Kids 2.0** (*Video*)
- **Scrum with Kids & Family** (*Video*)

Ramp-up Positive Engagement

Focus on what's going well. Provide praise and positive reflections when your child is engaged in an activity, has positive social interactions and makes positive choices. Ramping up positive engagement also means including your child's most preferred activities at opportune times during the day and particularly after they are successful on a challenging activity/task.

Keep it Positive!

- Provide praise more often during challenging tasks.
- Include plenty of quality one-on-one time.
- Don't sweat the small stuff!

ALL AGES

- [Covid 19 Parenting: Keeping it Positive](#) (Infographic – CDC)
- [Covid 19 Parenting: One-on-one time](#) (Infographic – CDC)

PRESCHOOL-ELEMENTARY

- [Positive Parenting & COVID-19: 10 Tips to Help Keep the Calm at Home](#) (Healthy Children)
- [Parent Cue Cards](#) (Great Schools): Tips about how to address various challenging behaviors.

BIRTH-3

- [Developing Social-Emotional Skills](#) (Zero to Three)

Supporting Social-Emotional-Behavioral Health During “School-at-Home”

Some families may choose to engage their children in a more school-like structure. The below resources are a few selected to support organizing your child's learning environment and accessing resources aligned to their Social-Emotional Learning Needs.

Set-up a “School-Like” Work Space

ALL AGES

- [Creating a Work Space and Routine While Homeschooling Due to Coronavirus](#) (Video – Dayton Children's Hospital)
- [SEL in an Unplanned Home School Setting](#) (Measuring SEL)